

# 직장 내 질투심의 조절변수 효과: 리더-종사원 교환이론과 직장 내 일탈 행위 및 조직 시민 행동을 중심으로

## The Effect of Work Jealousy as a Moderator on the Relationship between Leader-member Exchange and Counterproductive Work Behavior/Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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### 요약

본 연구는 직장 내 질투심을 조절변수로 하여 리더-종사원 교환이론과 서로 다른 두 개의 조직 행동, 즉 직장 내 일탈 행위와 조직시민행동의 관계를 살펴본 연구이다. 연구 결과, 직장 내 일탈 행위와 리더-종사원 교환이론 간 직장 내 질투심이 조절변수로 작용한 것을 알 수 있었다. 즉, 직장 내 질투심이 높을 때 리더-종사원 교환이론과 직장 내 일탈 행위의 관계가 부정적인 것을 확인하였으나, 리더-종사원 교환이론과 조직시민행동 사이에서는 직장 내 질투심의 조절변수가 없는 것으로 나타났다. 총 139명의 서비스 종사원들을 대상으로 연구를 하였고, 관련 산업에서의 실무적인 방향과 후속 연구에 대해 논의하였다.

■ 중심어 : | 질투심 | 리더-종사원 교환이론 | 직장 내 일탈행위 | 조직시민행동 |

### Abstract

We hypothesize work jealousy can moderate the relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and two different work behaviors, counterproductive work behavior(CWB) and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The results supported our hypotheses and found an interaction between LMX and work jealousy such that the relationship between LMX and CWB is negative when jealousy is higher but not when jealousy is lower. We did not find an interaction between LMX and work jealousy on OCB, however. We test our hypotheses in a service organizational sample consisting of one hundred thirty-nine. Managerial implications and directions for future research are discussed.

■ keyword : | Work Jealousy | Leader-Member Exchange | Counterproductive Work Behavior | Organizational Citizenship Behavior |

## I. Introduction

The importance of the service industry as one of the largest employers in the world economy has been growing. We noted a couple of

components in service organizations also crucial, employee-supervisor working relationship (LMX), the emotion of front-line employees such as work jealousy, counterproductive work behavior (CWB), and

organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Because everyday interactions between employees and supervisors are inevitable in such an organization, LMX may play a crucial role in front-line employee performance that is required to provide better service; however, employee performance can be precluded from coworkers' intentional harmful behavior or can be better by coworkers' voluntary helpful behavior to some degree. This harmful behavior can affect bad customer service[1], while the helpful behavior can increase customer service and profits[2]. We question if and how the employee-supervisor working relationship (i.e., LMX) affects employee intentional counterproductive behavior (i.e., CWB) and helpful behavior (i.e., OCB). CWB and OCB are different constructs and have shown a negative relationship.

Front-line employee emotions may play an important role in employee performance as well, given that those employees are required to regulate their emotions as their jobs necessitate [3]. Employees often report emotional stress not only from the outsiders of their jobs (i.e., customers), but from the insiders (i.e., supervisors and coworkers)[4]. Competition and thus tension can arise among coworkers with limited opportunities for promotion and few resources available to everyone. In such circumstances, employees can easily be exposed to jealousy[5]. Jealousy is a distinct concept from envy and it has unique characteristics. Triadic relationship is required to create a jealous situation (i.e., three elements), whereas a required condition for envy is dyadic (i.e., two elements)[6].

Jealousy is felt when a person perceives fear of losing the relationship has already been

establishing well to a potential/actual rival. The relationship that has already been concrete is a required part in a jealousy provoked situation. When it comes to the context of LMX, the LMX relationship can represent the concrete relationship and we predict that the rise of jealousy can emerge with LMX relationships.

Work jealousy is an unknown research topic at organizational studies. Although jealousy is universal and can be observed almost in everyday life[7], work jealousy has been ignored by organizational researchers with an exception of Vecchio's (2000). Most of jealousy studies in psychology and social psychology have shown its negative reactions; however, jealousy has reported its positive reactions as a coping strategy after experiencing jealousy[8]. We, therefore, hypothesize an interaction between LMX and jealousy on CWB as a negative effect of jealousy and suggest that the LMX-CWB relationship can become positive if there is sufficient amount of work jealousy. In other words, work jealousy can moderate the relationship between LMX and CWB in such a way that LMX is negatively related to CWB when work jealousy is higher, but not when work jealousy is lower. We also hypothesize an interaction between LMX and work jealousy on OCB. Work jealousy can moderate the relationship between LMX and OCB in such a way that high quality LMX is related to OCB when work jealousy is lower, but not higher.

## II. Theoretical Framework and Research Hypotheses

### 1. Work jealousy and LMX

LMX presents and develops leaders' different

and dyadic working relationships with members within the same work group, which makes LMX theory unique among leadership theories[9]. Due to constraints of time and resources, leaders develop close relationships with only a few key employees (e.g., high-quality LMX), but may keep their distance from other employees (e.g., low-quality LMX). The greater the valued tangible and intangible resources, information, and support exchanges, the higher the quality of the LMX relationship. Simultaneously the members in lower-quality LMX relationship are less expected to have the valued tangible and intangible resources, information, and support exchanges[10].

Since jealousy comes from our childhood, it has long been considered universal and unavoidable. Jealousy is a negative emotion and shows a physical and mental disruption. Jealousy is triadic, involving three elements: the jealous person, the valued partner, and the rival. Jealousy can occur when a person perceives losing a valued relationship with another person to a rival person. This feeling comes from a fear of personal loss or rejection; therefore, a jealous person often feels losing a valued relationship when a rival intrudes his/her relationship[11].

There is a concern that jealousy needs a careful understanding of the mechanism because of its destructive consequences[12]. It has, however, surprisingly long been ignored by organizational researchers with an exception of Vecchio's study [5]. Until the time when social psychologists introduced the importance of situational attributions, feeling jealous had just been explained by a dispositional way of feeling. In other words, if you feel jealousy, you say "I feel jealous as I am a jealous person". It

does not mean that, however, the social psychologists ignored individual traits, or dispositions; rather, they suggested that social basis, component or environment make experience jealousy. Since then, if you feel jealousy, you can say "*I am experiencing jealousy, because the current situation or the person (i.e., a rival) made me jealous.*"

It might be the right time to examine work jealousy and its characteristic of jealousy presumes a social context. Since relationships are a required condition for jealousy, jealousy has been a concern in the context of relationships. Specifically, Vecchio described work jealousy as "a pattern of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that results from an employee's loss of self-esteem and/or the loss of outcomes associated with a working relationship" [5, p. 162].

In general, emotional reactions of jealousy from earlier work of the psychology and social psychology literature are negative such as anxiety, fear of loss, pain, anger/hostiles, vulnerability, and hopeless with, at times, bitter and violent physical reactions. We need to mention Vecchio's (2000) study that has interesting results from his study. With the responses of one hundred sixty-seven employed masters students, the results supported his hypotheses that individual differences (i.e., self-esteem and Machiavellianism) are negatively related to jealousy and envy. The results also supported that supervisor considerateness is negatively related to jealousy and envy. He first differentiated work jealousy and work envy such that work jealousy involves competition with a rival for a valued relationship, while work envy does not involve such competition or contest, because there is

no real or potential rival: however, he did not use the distinction when hypothesizing relationships with jealousy/envy and variables, and thus, took both constructs together when measuring actual relationships with variables. Yet, this study is noteworthy to review, given that there is rare organizational research on work jealousy.

## 2. CWB, OCB, and LMX in the context of work jealousy

CWB is defined as an employees' intentional harmful behavior that is against to the legitimate interests of members in the organization and the organization per se[13]. CWB has been categorized in different dimensions in terms of targets: one way of classifications is that CWB is behavior directed to the organization (organizational deviance), and the other is that CWB is behavior directed to members in the organization (interpersonal deviance). With some previous studies of the relationship between LMX and CWB, we predict the LMX and CWB with a focus on interpersonal deviance have a negative relationship.

Unlike CWB, OCB is employees' extra-helping behavior that is discretionary, not described by job definitions or not formally rewarded by organizations, and that promotes the effectiveness of organizations when such behaviors are aggregated[14]. For an organization to operate more effectively, employees' OCB is critical. When employees involve OCB, they select and engage in different OCB[15]. Given that the positive relationship between LMX and OCB, OCB that benefits directly organizational members is our main focus. OCB toward organizational members consists of assisting coworkers who have been

absent, helping coworkers with heavy workloads, or taking a personal interest in coworkers[16]. A theoretical foundation of the relationship between LMX and OCB was based on the concept of social exchange theory, which represents cooperation between two or more individuals for mutual benefit that is based on a trust and implicit obligation for each party's benevolence[17]. As such, LMX is associated with employee OCB in that the higher quality LMX employees are also the higher OCB performers[10]. Therefore, we predict a positive relationship between OCB and LMX from numerous studies.

Yet, this theoretical linkage of social exchange theory between LMX and OCB/CWB seems overlook the effect of situational factors. The relationship can be changed in and influenced by different situations and contingencies. In other words, we borrow the concept from contingency theory that relationships can be changed in different contingencies or situations[18]. The influence of situations where, for example, negative emotions are pervasive among employees, seems to be strong, given the effect of negative emotions on important organizational outcomes such as performance, turnover, and satisfaction [3]. Jealousy amongst negative emotions is particularly notable to focus on, as it is experienced with an extremely negative physical, emotional, and mental state while showing others hostile, bitter and violent actions[8]. It also has reported detrimental impacts of employees and the organization on performance and outcomes. The approach with social exchange theory, however, does not seem to consider such a critical contingent factor when mentioning CWB. Moreover, there might

be a potential threat of employee behaviors from unmanaged work jealousy[5]. Anger, one of the negative reactions of jealousy, for instance, can be released by showing CWB and this expressing emotion can directly go to coworkers. Given that negative emotions as an antecedent of CWB can lead us to predict more accurate and valuable conclusions. hostility, one of the negative reactions of jealousy, was reported to predict CWB[19]. Taken together, we consider the potential serious effect of work jealousy and, therefore, examine the relationship between LMX and CWB in the context of work jealousy.

The results of earlier work on jealousy have suggested the negative effect of jealousy that arises a bit stronger than the positive effect of jealousy[20]. We can consider that the effect of work jealousy could be either negative or positive. If it is negative, CWB might be more appropriately related to work jealousy, but if it is positive, OCB might be more suitably related to work jealousy. Therefore, we hypothesize an interaction between LMX and jealousy in two different situations: if the effect of work jealousy is negative, then the LMX relationship is stronger and is negatively related to CWB when jealousy is higher but not when jealousy is lower (Hypothesis 1). If the effect of work jealous is positive, then the LMX relationship is stronger and positively related to OCB when jealousy is lower but not when jealousy is higher (Hypothesis 2).

### III. Methodology

#### 1. Sample and procedures

For the current study, we collected a sample

from hotel service employees participated in our study with the number of one hundred thirty-nine in the US. Front-line service employees are mainly composed of the sample, showing about 63%, followed by back-office employees. Almost two third of them were female employees (about 63%).

#### 2. Measures

##### *LMX*

Leader-member exchange was measured by LMX7 with seven items on a seven point Likert-type scale (1: strongly disagree to 7: strongly agree) that assesses the overall working relationship with employees' immediate supervisors[21]. A sample item includes "my supervisor and I get along well together."

##### *Work jealousy*

DeSteno et al.'s (2002) jealousy scale was used [20]. The measure was originally developed to see jealousy in romantic or sibling relationships, it has to be changed to fit better for working relationships. For example, the word "my partner" to "my superior." Three items of Vecchio's jealousy scale (2000) were also used to measure work jealousy. A sample item is "I would feel depressed when my supervisor speaks favorably about another employee."

##### *CWB*

We used a interpersonal deviance scale as a counterproductive work behavior scale[13]. A sample item includes the frequency an employee "said something hurtful someone at

work.” A sample item includes the frequency of “insulting or making fun of someone at work.”

#### OCB

We used Williams and Anderson’s OCB scale and it was divided by two sub-scales, OCBI and OCBO. A sample item is “I would typically take over a co-worker’s duties if they are absent from work.”

To check common-method bias, measures of socially desirable responding and positive/negative affectivity were used. Given the characteristics of each variable and the potential relationship among variables, these two constructs were most likely to occur in this study.

## IV. Results

To check if there was possible common method bias, positive/negative affectivity and socially desirable responding were measured; however, positive/negative affectivity and socially desirable responding did not show significant correlations with the main variables. The result was somewhat surprising with the two reasons followed. Socially desirable responding as one of the common-method biases seemed to correlate with the self-report of CWB and OCB. Work jealousy did not relate to positive/negative affectivity. This result can be explained in that the situational factors are stronger antecedents than the dispositional ones.

**Table 1. Means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliability of main variable scales (N = 139)**

	Means	SDs	1	2	3	4
1. LMX	4.62	1.90	(.96)			
2. Jealousy	3.97	1.44	-.732**	(.97)		
3. CWB	2.44	.73	-.598**	.312**	(.85)	
4. OCB	5.09	1.68	.134	.014	-.002	(.89)

*Note.* Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  reliabilities for the scales are shown along the diagonal. \*\* $p < .01$ .

Means, standard deviations, and correlations among all variables in the study are presented in [Table 1] As shown, LMX is significantly and negatively related to CWB, which has to be prerequisite for the next analysis, a moderating relationship. However, unlike previous research regarding the relationship between LMX and OCB, there was no significant relationship between LMX and OCB. Therefore, our second hypothesis was not supported by our data.

**Table 2. Hierarchical regression analysis of the interaction between LMX and work jealousy on CWB**

	CWB			
	$\beta$	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta$ R <sup>2</sup>	VIF
LMX	-.59**	.35	.35	1.00
LMX	-.79**	.38	.04	2.15
Jealousy	.27			2.15
LMX	-.89**			2.62
Jealousy	.31	.39	.02	2.23
LMX x Jealousy	-.15*			1.30

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

To test our first hypothesis, hierarchical regression analysis was used. The result shown in [Table 2] illustrated the significant moderating effect on the relationship between LMX and CWB, support our first hypothesis. That is, the interaction was predicted such that the relationship will be stronger for individuals with higher jealousy. CWB will become higher for individuals with lower levels of LMX with

higher levels of jealousy.

## V. Discussion and Implications

Organizational climate can stimulate work jealousy[5]. This study was designed to explore a possible negative effect of LMX on the workplace. Since it is hard for hotel service employees to work without interacting with their superior in their everyday life, the findings are especially important for practitioners as well.

Researchers need to pay attention to dispositional factors as one of the predictors of OCB. From this perspective, studying jealousy also contributes to OCB research, because once an employee perceives jealousy, this fostered emotion may decrease helping behaviors or increase behaviors that may harm organizational performance. Factors that promote OCB have been explored more than factors that inhibit OCB; however, there is still need to explore factors that counteract the effects of positive antecedents of OCB[22].

Relationship between employees and managers are of special importance when it comes to the service industry. As our study showed, bad relationship with managers may hurt effectiveness of organization through employees' harmful behaviors to their colleagues. Furthermore, studying jealousy at work may be also important in service organizations for several reasons. Service employees react frequently with people and, in turn, they need to regulate their emotional expressions in mandated ways. The employees should control their emotions as their jobs demands (e.g., emotional labor) and, in turn,

because of such emotional labor, hospitality employees are likely to experience emotional exhaustion and burnout. Given that service employees have to deal with their emotions by the nature of their jobs and may easily feel emotional exhaustion and burnout, hotel managers who are responsible for their employees need to minimize their employees' burden of emotions from other sources. In other words, unnecessarily negative emotions in the workplace such as jealousy need to be managed and controlled, if possible. In doing so, managers may increase the quality of their leadership as well as the quality of service for customers.

Managers in such industries should consider the following actions on the job to lessen low-quality LMX, CWB, and feelings of jealousy, which may prevent OCB. As affective event theory (AET) or appraisal theory provided a possible theoretical linkage between organizational events and emotions, this study supports such potential theoretical linkage. In this study, LMX acted as an organizational affective-eliciting event, while inducing jealousy at work. From the support for this theoretical framework and the results of this study, the managerial role is critical at work. It has been suggested that managers need to pay more attention to lower-quality LMX employees in order to salvage relationships. Given the notoriously high turnover rate in the service industry, it would be crucial to focus on low LMX employees who are more prone to quit their jobs than high LMX employees. A potential result may be improvement in the quality of service for customers.

Despite important findings and contribution, there are limitations of the study. First, this

study was a non-experimental and cross-sectional design instead of a longitudinal design; therefore, causality was unwarranted and stated with caution, or reverse causality can be possible. Despite the increasing interest in the role of time in organizational research as well as in theory building, time was not considered in this study because of the difficulty of collecting data for a longitudinal study. Macro environments such as organizational culture or climate may influence the relationships with variables. This study, however, did not focus on such macro environments. Only employees rated their LMX, CWB, jealousy, and OCB. Designing an objective measurement of these variables or measuring supervisors' perceptions of the same variables was outside the scope of this study. This study may have common-method bias (e.g., common source or rater bias) because employees rated their perceptions with one survey.

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