



The Effect of Self-Leadership on Job Satisfaction and Customer Orientation: The Role of Supervisor Support

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to derive practical implications for human resource management to improve service quality by demonstrating the moderating effect of perceived supervisor support in the relationship between self-leadership, job satisfaction, and customer orientation.

Research design, data, and methodology – 800 questionnaires were distributed and collected for beauty service companies with two or more employees. Among them, 602 data were analyzed using SPSS 24 and AMOS 24. For the assessment of goodness of fit of the models, TLI, CFI, RMSEA indices were used.

Result –The empirical results are as follows. First, it was found that self-leadership had a positive effect on job satisfaction and customer orientation. Second, job satisfaction was found to have a positive effect on customer orientation. Third, it was found that job satisfaction had a mediating effect in the relationship between self-leadership and customer orientation. Fourth, empirical data showed that the moderating effect of supervisor support in the relationship between self-leadership on job satisfaction was significant.

Conclusion –This study contributed to the expansion of related theories by analyzing the moderating effect of perceived supervisor support in the relationship between self-leadership, job satisfaction, and customer orientation, and provides practical implications for efficient human resource management.

Keywords: Self-leadership, Job Satisfaction, Customer Orientation, Perceived Supervisor Support, Moderating Effect

JEL Classification Code: M10, M12, M19, M50, M53

1. Introduction

In the service industry, products are not visualized, production and consumption occur at the same time, and the experience of customers participating in the service production process and receiving services is considered important (Liao & Chuang, 2004). In this process, service quality becomes a factor that is directly linked to management performance. The behaviors and attitudes of employees who provide services face-to-face with customers at the service point of contact are essential factors that lead to service quality and create a sustainable competitive advantage. In particular, the customer orientation of employees is known as an important factor influencing service quality and even organizational performance (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992). Customer orientation can also be defined as the attitude of a company and employees' approaching to customers to satisfy the needs of customers (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992). At the individual level, customer orientation means thinking from a customer-centered perspective and performing a job. Customer-oriented companies or employees can gain a competitive advantage by predicting customer desires and providing products or services with excellent value, leading to greater satisfaction to customers (Rindfleisch & Moorman, 2003). Therefore, service companies promote a customer-oriented atmosphere within the organization so that employees make efforts to improve customer satisfaction (Saxe & Weitz, 1982), while maintaining positive relationships with customers to improve corporate profits. (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992).

Accordingly, research has been conducted to clarify the antecedents that influence the customer orientation of the employees, and as the role of the employee providing the service increases, the interest in the job satisfaction of the employee is increasing. This is because employees who are satisfied with their job can provide quality services to customers and at the same time bring out results such as customer satisfaction. As found in previous studies, job satisfaction increases cooperation among employees and can lead to a positive attitude toward the organization (Mathieu & Farr, 1991). If the employee's job satisfaction is high, it affects job performance and thus the absenteeism rate and turnover rate decrease, and as a result, it has a positive effect on productivity improvement (Brooks & Zeitz, 1999). Therefore, it is important to show a positive attitude toward the job in order to improve organizational performance. According to previous studies, job satisfaction positively affects employee behavior and customer evaluation of the organization by making the organization perceived as a positive state (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992). Employees who are satisfied with the job have a higher level of customer orientation (Donavan, Brown, & Mowen, 2004).

Previous studies suggest job satisfaction as a major antecedent for customer orientation, and emphasize the role of the organization, such as providing incentives, salary increases, and education, as factors that promote job satisfaction (Han & Kim, 2012). However, individual characteristics of employees are also regarded as a major factor influencing the improvement of job satisfaction and customer orientation.

This study is interested in the role of self-leadership, which is being actively studied in recent years. Self-leadership is the process of directing one's thoughts and actions in a desirable direction in order to perform a job successfully (Manz & Sims, 1989). Self-leadership sets one's own goals and motivates them. Therefore, they set their own goals and motivate them by self-determining the rewards for achieving the goals, which in turn affects performance variables such as job satisfaction and customer orientation (Baek & Kim, 2010).

In addition, this study attempts to explore the contingent variable that influence the process of self-leadership affecting customer orientation through job satisfaction. Specifically, this study aims to demonstrate the influence of the perceived supervisor support. Perceived supervisor support refers to the degree of recognition that it is helpful in solving problems related to work in addition to being emotional, which is a factor that influences the attitude of employees of the organization (Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997). Supervisor support perception directly or indirectly affects the behavior of employees. When employees feel that their supervisor is supporting them, they strive to achieve results not only in their own work but also in areas other than their work (Bhantumnavin, 2003; Malatesta, 1995). From this point of view, it can be predicted that self-leadership will play a positive role in improving customer orientation through job satisfaction.

In the beauty service industry, which is highly dependent on human services, the importance of human resource management is recognized to improve the competitiveness of the organization, and members should be able to lead themselves in organizations where autonomous work performance is more important. Thus, this study aims to provide practical implications from the perspective of human resource management to improve service quality by demonstrating the moderating effect of supervisor support in the relationship between employee self-leadership, job satisfaction, and customer orientation. Although this study was aimed at the beauty industry, the results of the study could be applied to human resource management in other service industries.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses

2.1. The Relationship Between Self-leadership, Job Satisfaction, and Customer Orientation

Self-leadership is the process of influencing oneself in order to perform the task given to them (Manz & Sims, 2001), the ultimate source of control over their behavior and self-encouragement (Manz, 1992). Employees who demonstrate self-leadership have a high sense of ownership in the tasks they perform and effectively utilize their capabilities for their tasks, indicating that their job satisfaction is high.

Job satisfaction refers to a positive emotional state obtained from evaluating one's work as an emotional reaction (Nathanson & Becker, 1973). This reflects the degree to which employees believe they will actually provide expectations for their work (Potter & Lawler, 1968). It is argued that job satisfaction has a positive relationship with other job attitudes such as job participation (Brown, 1996) and career satisfaction (Bowling & Beehr, 2006). According to previous studies, autonomy is asserted as an important antecedent for job satisfaction. Therefore, it can be inferred that members with strong self-leadership will have high satisfaction with their work by setting their own goals based on their autonomy and taking the lead in their work.

In an empirical study for nurses, it was also confirmed that the higher the self-leadership score, the higher the organizational commitment and job satisfaction appeared (Sung & Lee, 2017). Based on the above discussion and empirical results, the following hypothesis was established.

Hypothesis 1: Self-leadership will be positively related to job satisfaction.

On the other hand, customer orientation is the attitude of an employee to understand from the customer's point of view to satisfy the customer's needs, and to satisfy the customer's desire in a direction consistent with it (Donavan & Hocutt, 2001). It can be said that it is an activity to keep promises with customers by paying attention to the needs of customers and providing services quickly. Customer-oriented organizations that strive to satisfy customer needs can improve service quality and increase customer satisfaction, thereby enhancing corporate performance. In an empirical study targeting public officials, it was also found that self-leadership had a significant effect on customer orientation (Kim, 2014). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis was established.

Hypothesis 2: Self-leadership will be positively related with job satisfaction.

With According to an empirical study by Kim and Lee (2017), job satisfaction of service workers has a positive effect on customer orientation. This means that job satisfaction of employees helps to improve productivity and strengthen competitiveness by forming a customer-oriented attitude. In addition, in a study by Park (2019), it was confirmed that job satisfaction has a significant effect on customer orientation. They confirmed that the employee's satisfaction is an important factor in searching customer needs, thinking from their standpoint, and improving customer orientation to provide services.

Hypothesis 3: Job satisfaction will be positively related with customer-orientation.

2.2. Mediating Effect of Job Satisfaction

The mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between self-leadership and customer orientation can be explained by the combination of hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 3 logic. In other words, employees with strong self-leadership will set their own goals based on autonomy and take the lead in their tasks, thereby increasing job satisfaction, and increasing customer orientation to understand customers' desires, think from their standpoint, and provide services.

In a previous study, Kim(2014) demonstrated the mediating effect of job satisfaction in the relationship between self-leadership and customer orientation of public officials. Therefore, it can be inferred that self-leadership is not only an antecedent for job satisfaction, but also can affect dependent variables through job satisfaction.

Based on the above discussion and the results of empirical research, the following hypothesis is established.

Hypothesis 4: Job satisfaction will mediate the relationship between self-leadership and customer orientation.

2.3. Moderating Effect of Supervisor Support

When employees feel that they are being supported by their supervisors, they work not only in their assigned tasks, but also in areas other than their roles, and endeavor to achieve positive results (Bhantumnavin, 2003; Malatesta, 1995). Perceived supervisor support is related to economic and social exchange relations for employees, and leads to commitment in the relationship with the supervisor in terms of reciprocity, and leads supervisors and members to share the same perspective (Eisenberger et al., 2001).

Supervisors are facilitators who understand, help, and encourage subordinates who are struggling to achieve organizational goals (Latham & Locke, 1979). When a supervisor discusses a problem-solving method together, employees perceive the supervisor's interest and support as high, thereby increasing job embeddedness, reducing turnover, and enhancing the organization's competitiveness by increasing work performance (Dawley et al., 2010), job satisfaction (Kim & Jogaratnam, 2010).

Based on the above discussion and the results of empirical research, the following hypothesis is established.

Hypothesis 5: Supervisor support recognition will positively regulate the relationship between self-leadership and customer satisfaction.

2.6. Research Model

The objective of this research is to prove the relationship between self-leadership, job satisfaction, and customer orientation. Moreover, to test the mediating effect of job satisfaction along with the moderating effect of perceived supervisor support. Figure 1 shows the research model.

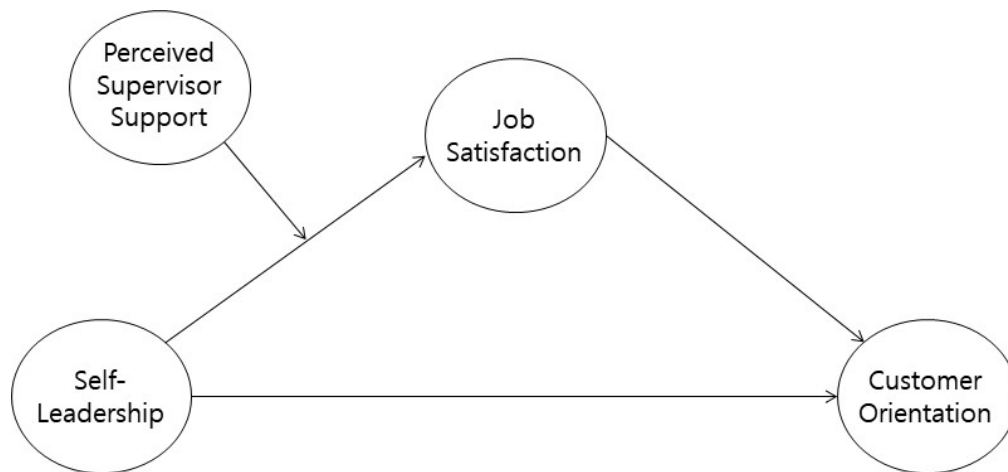


Figure 1: Research Model

3. Methodology

3.1. Sample

In order to verify the hypothesis of this study, a survey was conducted on beauty service companies with two or more employees. A total of 800 questionnaires were distributed, of which 602 were used for analysis, excluding 198 questionnaires with many unfaithful responses or missing values. The survey was conducted from September to October 2020.

The characteristics of the sample are as follows. First, the ratio of women was higher with 77 men (12.8%) and 525 women (87.2%). Ages under 20 years old 14 (2.3%), 20 to 29 years 302 (50.2%), 30 to 39 years 208 (34.6%), 40 to 49 years old 69 (11.5%), 50 years old These were nine (1.5%). Work experience: 34 people (5.6%) under 1 year, 90 people under 1-2 years (15%), 110 people under 2-3 years (18.3%), 149 people under 3-5 years (24.8%), 5219 people (36.4%) over a year were found. In terms of education level, the number of high school graduates was 317 (52.8%).

7%), followed by 202 (33.6%) college graduates, 71 (11.8%) college graduates, and 4 graduates (0.7%). In the case of regions, 180 people (29.9%) in Seoul, Gyeonggi-do, and Incheon, 175 (29.1%) in Jeolla province, 115 (19.1%) in Daejeon, Chungcheong, and Sejong, 76 (12.6%) in Jeju-do.), followed by 56 (9.3%) in Gyeongsang province.

3.2. Measurements

All the questions were based on the Likert scale (1=most disagreeable, 5=most agreeable).

3.2.1. Self-Leadership

Self-leadership is the process of deliberately controlling one's own thinking, exerting influence on oneself, and leading oneself, and is defined as a broad sense of intellectual ability that determines how to deal with tasks or problem solving situations (Manz, 1992). The measurement items of this study were composed of 3 items in each of the 3 sub-dimensions of behavioral awareness, task motivation, and constructive cognition, citing the questionnaire items of Houghton et al. (2012).

3.2.2. Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is defined as the level of satisfaction an employee feels about his or her job (Warr, Cook, & Wall, 1979). The measurement items of this study consisted of 9 items by referring to the overall job satisfaction questionnaire developed by Warr et al. (1979).

3.2.3. Customer Orientation

Customer orientation is defined as an effort to understand the needs of customers in order to achieve the organization's goals and to satisfy the needs of customers (Hoffman & Ingram, 1991). For the measurement items of this study, the items developed by Saxe and Weitz (1982) and reduced by Periatt, LeMay and Chakrabarty (2004) were referred. It consists of 5 items.

3.2.4. Perceived Supervisor Support

Perceived supervisor support is defined as an employee's belief in an organization's evaluation of the employee's contribution and interest in improving the quality of life (Eisenberger et al., 1986). The questionnaire was constructed by referring to the study of Greenhaus, Parasuraman, and Wormley (1990). It consisted of 6 items in one dimension.

4. Analysis

4.1. Validity and Reliability

As shown in Table 1, the concept reliability and average variance extracted of the variable exceeded .70 and .50, respectively. Therefore, it was found that there is reliability and convergence validity for the measurement tool (Ha, Youn, & Moon, 2020; Yang & Moon, 2019). In addition, as shown in the correlation table of Table 2, it was found that the average variance extracted of all variables exceeded the square of the correlation coefficient between concepts (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Therefore, the discriminant validity was also confirmed.

Reliability was evaluated by the degree of internal consistency between the measurement items of each variable, and it was shown as self-leadership (.816), perceived supervisor support (.944), job satisfaction (.946), and customer orientation (.952). All the items have good reliability and were used without removing the questions.

Table 1: Result of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Factor	Indicator	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	Standardized Factor Loading	AVE	C.R	Cronbach's Alpha
Self-Leadership	SLH	1				.799	.597	.816	.816
	SLJ	.947	.051	18.749	***	.777			
	SLI	.865	.048	17.937	***	.742			
Perceived	SSR1	1				.949	.859	.948	.944

Supervisor Support	SSR2	1.058	.024	44.123	***	.935			
	SSR3	.973	.025	38.677	***	.896			
Job Satisfaction	JOB1	1				.882	.815	.929	.946
	JOB2	.958	.029	33.333	***	.921			
	JOB3	.982	.030	32.289	***	.905			
Customer Orientation	CO1	1				.862	.831	.936	.952
	CO2	1.111	.036	31.02	***	.894			
	CO3	1.146	.032	35.851	***	.976			
Goodness of Fit Index		X ² =551.045, df=152, P=000, X ² /df=3.625, GFI=.852, AGFI=.796, CFI=.939, NFI=.919, IFI=.940, TLI=.924, RMR=.016, RMSEA=.093							

Note: *** p<.001

4.2. Correlation

Table 2 shows the correlation of variables used for hypothesis testing and the analysis results of descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation). There is a significant positive (+) relationship between the variables used in this study, so a hypothetical relationship can be expected.

Table 2: Result of Correlation Analysis

Factor	Mean	S.D	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
(1) Self-Leadership	3.842	.638	(.597)			
(2) Perceived Supervisor Support	3.975	.654	.388***	(.859)		
(3) Job Satisfaction	4.047	.635	.644***	.575***	(.815)	
(4) Customer Orientation	4.157	.665	.581***	.455***	.619***	(.831)

Note: *p<.05, **p<.01, *** p<.001

The inside of the parentheses is AVE

4.3. Hypotheses Test

The structural equation model was analyzed to analyze the relationship between self-leadership, job satisfaction, and customer orientation. The analysis results are shown in Table >. The fit of the model is X²=476.768, df=80, P=000, X²/df= 5,960, GFI=.908, AGFI=.862, CFI=.946, NFI=.936, IFI=.946, TLI=. 929, RMR=.019, RMSEA=.091, the model fit index is generally satisfactory compared to general evaluation criteria(Kim, Youn, & Moon, 2021).

The effect of self-leadership on job satisfaction was found to be significant as the route coefficient = .601 (p<.001), and the effect of self-leadership on customer orientation was also significant as the self-leadership's route coefficient = .326 (p<.001). In addition, the influence of job satisfaction on customer orientation was significant as the path coefficient of .319 (p<.001). Therefore, hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were all supported.

Table 3: Result of SEM Analysis

Path	Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	β
H 1 Self-Leadership → Job Satisfaction	.601	.044	13.574	***	.613
H 2 Self-Leadership → Customer Orientation	.326	.061	5.391	***	.340
H 3 Job Satisfaction → Customer Orientation	.319	.063	5.100	***	.325
H 4 Self-Leadership → Job Satisfaction → Customer Orientation	.192			**	
Goodness of Fit Index		X ² =476.768, df=80, P=000, X ² /df= 5,960, GFI=.908, AGFI=.862, CFI=.946, NFI=.936, IFI=.946, TLI=.929, RMR=.019, RMSEA=.091			

Note: n=602, Bootstrap sample=2,000, ** p<.01, *** p<.001

In order to analyze the mediating effect of job satisfaction, this study used a phantom variable model. Indirect effects can be estimated all at once by using a phantom variable in AMOS.

As shown in Table 3, the mediating effect of job satisfaction was significant in the relationship between self-leadership and customer orientation, and hypothesis 4 was supported.

The results of analyzing the moderating effect of the perceived supervisor support are shown in Table 4. As shown in Table 4, the interaction variable has a significant effect on job satisfaction (path coefficient = .135, $p < .05$). Therefore, hypothesis 5 was supported that the perceived supervisor support would positively moderate the relationship between self-leadership and job satisfaction.

Table 4: Result of Moderation Analysis

Path		Estimate	S.E	C.R	P	β
H 5	SL(Self-Leadership) → Job Satisfaction	.601	.044	13.574	***	.613
	PSS(Perceived Supervisor Support) → Job Satisfaction	.311	.036	8.708	***	.321
	SL x PSS → Job Satisfaction	.135	.063	2.163	**	.076
Goodness of Fit Index		X ² =476.768, df=80, P=000, X ² /df= 5,960, GFI=.908, AGFI=.862, CFI=.946, NFI=.936, IFI=.946, TLI=.929, RMR=.019, RMSEA=.091				

Note: n=602, Bootstrap sample=2,000, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

5. Discussion

5.1. Results Summary

This study provides implications for effective human resource management and development at the organizational level by empirically analyzing how self-leadership affects employees' job satisfaction and customer orientation in the beauty service industry.

First, it was found that self-leadership had a positive effect on job satisfaction and customer orientation. Employees with high self-leaderships lead their thoughts and actions in a desirable direction in order to perform their jobs successfully, motivate themselves to think positively, recognize themselves as creative, and perform work innovatively and creatively (DiLiello & Houghton, 2006). Such creative activities will increase the organization's performance by exercising professional abilities with accurate judgment, passion to help customers, and consideration for others.

Second, job satisfaction was found to have a positive effect on customer orientation. These research results are in line with those of Donovan, Brown, & Mowen (2004), and employees who are satisfied with their jobs have a higher level of customer orientation. Customer orientation allows employees to predict customer needs and provide high-quality services, leading to greater satisfaction and gaining a competitive advantage. Therefore, by spreading a customer-oriented atmosphere within the organization and striving to improve customer satisfaction for employees, positive relationships with customers can be maintained, which can affect corporate profit growth (Hoffman & Ingram, 1992).

Third, it was found that the mediating effect of job satisfaction was significant in the relationship between self-leadership and customer orientation. Self-leadership affects employee attitudes and behavior. Therefore, they set their own goals and set their own rewards for achieving the goals and motivate them, which in turn affects job satisfaction. These research results are in line with the research results of Baek and Kim (2010), and self-leadership has a high correlation with job satisfaction, and the higher self-leadership, the higher the job satisfaction, so it has a positive effect on customer orientation.

Fourth, the effect of self-leadership on job satisfaction is moderated by the supervisor support perception. Self-leadership guides employees' own actions and attitudes in a desirable direction. Therefore, employees with high self-directed tendencies are more motivated if they perceive their supervisor support. These findings are in line with the research of Cho (2017), and the fact that the recognition of supervisor support is high means that employees are receiving

ng a lot of attention from their supervisors in the process of performing their duties, so they can apply if necessary (Greenhaus et al., 1990).

5.2. Implications

The theoretical implications of this study are as follows. First, this study explored individual characteristics that influence customer orientation. In a number of previous studies, job satisfaction was suggested as an antecedent for customer orientation (Kim, 2014). However, this study is meaningful in that the antecedents affecting customer orientation in the service industry were added by demonstrating the role of self-leadership, which has recently attracted attention among individual characteristics.

Second, it contributes to the accumulation of related theories by exploring contingency variables that affect the relationship between self-leadership, job satisfaction, and customer orientation. In this study, we explored the moderating effect of the perceived supervisor support.

In order to develop the theory of a concept, it is necessary to sufficiently explore the concept definition, antecedent factors, outcome effects, and mediators and moderators. From this point of view, this study further explored the antecedents that influence the customer orientation of service industry workers and explored moderators. In addition, it is differentiated from previous studies in that it demonstrated mediators and moderators in one research model.

In addition, this study provides practical implications as follows. First, in order to strengthen the competitiveness of the beauty service industry, it is necessary to establish a system that enables employees to demonstrate self-leadership well on their own. Hiring employees with high self-leadership is another method, but providing a training program that can improve the self-leadership of existing members could be an alternative.

Second, considering that employees who experience high job satisfaction have a high level of customer orientation, it is necessary to find a variety of ways to improve organizational performance by increasing job satisfaction of employees in the beauty service industry. Employees' job satisfaction factors can be different. Therefore, it would be possible for a beauty service company with a small number of employees to understand and approach the preferences of individual employees. As the result of this study, self-leadership can have a positive effect on job satisfaction, so it would be good to provide training or coaching to increase self-leadership. In addition, efforts to form good coworker relationships are well known as a way to increase employee job satisfaction, so it is necessary to consider using them.

Third, When the level of supervisor support awareness is high, the level of satisfaction of the employee's emotional and social needs from the supervisor increases. When employees receive sufficient compensation for their efforts from supervisor, they will recognize that they are receiving the help they need to perform their job. Therefore, it is necessary to provide emotional support with individual interest so that employees can perceive that they are receiving sufficient support from their supervisors, and help solve problems in job performance. Therefore, it is necessary to support organizational leaders to be interested in employee emotional management or to develop supportive leadership that can provide necessary support.

Although this study was aimed at the beauty industry, the results of the study could be applied to human resource management in other service industries.

5.3. Limitations and Future Research Directions

Despite the above implications, this study has the following limitations in the research methodology. First, there is a possibility that common method variance occurred by collecting independent and dependent variables through the same questionnaire. In future studies, it will be needed to separate the source of the response. Second, it is necessary to increase the possibility of generalization of research results by researching not only the beauty service industry but also various service industries for the expansion of research. Third, since this study presents conclusions based on cross-sectional studies, there is a limit to asserting the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable as a causal relationship. Therefore, it is necessary to present strict research results through more elaborate longitudinal research design in the future. Fourth, it was confirmed that the perceived supervisor support had a significant moderating effect on the relationship between self-leadership and job satisfaction. However, further studies that demonstrate the moderated mediation or mediated moderating effect of supervisor support based on elaborate research design and theoretical basis will also be needed.

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