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Effects of Individuals, Leader Relationships, and Groups on Innovative Work Behaviors

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Abstract

Purpose - The intent of this research is to discover the factors that enhance innovative work behaviors of group members in order to strengthen the competitiveness of small enterprises. In addition, we verify that employee job characteristic factors have an influence between antecedent variables and dependent variables in the work situations at small companies.

Research design, data, and methodology - This study is focused on identifying the factors, such as self-efficacy, leader member exchange (LMX), and collective efficacy, which promote innovative work behaviors. A total of 305 valid questionnaires were collected.

Results - The results of a path analysis showed that LMX did not have significant effects on task significance, and autonomy did not have significant effects on innovative work behavior.

Conclusions - These findings of the study imply that even though leaders supported the groups in accordance with official procedures by placing group members within or outside certain groups, task identity perceived by group members was not impacted. In addition, autonomy given to those with relatively less capability might be a burden rather than a positive outcome.

Keywords: Job Stress, Self-Esteem, Job Satisfaction, Turnover Intention, Turnover Experience.

JEL Classifications: L10, L29, M10, M12, M31.

1. Introduction

The paradigm of the domestic enterprise environment is rapidly changing due to the recent global economic crisis with the exchange fluctuation and the fall of the actual economic

sentiment. Especially, it is remarkable that social and economic demands for roles of small enterprises are increasing, compared to roles of major enterprises which have played the role of locomotive in the economic growth of Korea for the past 40 years. It can be said that national economy is based on the characteristics of the majority as creators of the growth engine. Also, enterprise management can deal with the changes of the business environment sensitively and facilitates flexible production of products and efficient and flexible management, from a positive point of view.

According to the report of the Small and Medium Business Administration(2009), but the productivity of small businesses is just one third of major businesses and especially, small businesses with less than 50 employees have an extremely weak level of productivity at 24.9% (Park & Park, 2011). From a resource-based perspective, the competitive power of small businesses (e.g. Yang, 2014; Yang & Cho, 2015; Yang et al., 2014) can be expected to be acquired by acquiring and developing new resources and capabilities constantly (Argyris and Schön, 1996). But in modern society, new items and technologies are pouring into the world market each day, tastes of consumers change from moment to moment (Seo & Son, 2015) and it is very hard to obtain competitiveness due to information sharing through diverse media. Nevertheless, one of aggressive strategies for survival and competitiveness of enterprises is innovation (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Innovation brings another form of competitive advantage to small enterprises in the market by destroying the existing market order and creating a new competition system (Becheikh et al., 2006; Kuhn & Marisck, 2010) and enables enterprises to survive, grow and develop continuously (Becheikh et al., 2006).

Therefore, this study is focused on discovering the factors to promote innovative work behaviors. To put it concretely, this study defines employee's belief in self as self-efficacy, the factor related to the relationship with leaders as a leader-member exchange (LMX) and a belief in a group as collective efficacy and analyzes these effects on innovative work behaviors. Moreover, this study aims to see the influences of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback which were presented in the Job Characteristic Model of Hackman & Oldham(1976) as characteristics to face in work situations of

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small company employees, on the relationship between antecedent variables and dependent variables.

2. Literature Review

Bandura(1977) said that self-efficacy is a dynamic form derived from the concept of social cognitive theory and is a interactive model receiving influence from behavior, awareness, and environment. According to his assertion, success and failure of past work is assessed and goal, behavior plans are made by self-efficacy. Individual motive, thought pattern, behavior is mediated by self-efficacy and individual thoughts and behavior are influence. Self-efficacy is defined as a belief in personal capabilities to mobilize motivation, resources of awareness and various behavioral actions required for dealing with particular circumstances (Wood & Bandura, 1989). Bandura(1977) explained the characteristics of self-efficacy in detail as follows. First, self-efficacy can be measured by a personal judgment of task performance capabilities. This means a judgment on how much you can use personal capabilities, not practical capabilities of individuals. Second, self-efficacy can be considered to be a dynamic concept, since a personal judgment on individual capabilities can vary depending on accumulated new information and experience. Third, even people with the same techniques can show different aspects of self-efficacy, because the evaluation of self-efficacy may depend on how many elements can be used for task performance (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Yang & Lee, 2010 requoted).

The theory on leader-member exchange relation was first proposed by Dansereau et al.(1975) in which he asserted that leaders and members have different level of exchange relation that exchange relation composes VDL (Vertical Dyad Linkage). The leader in an organization must full responsibility to create outcomes for the group, receiving restriction of resources such as time and ability is inevitable (Dnasereau, 1975) that a close and unofficial relation with an in-group among members is formed and important duties are given to them. High-level information and feedback that helps duty of in-groups is provided and it is practical that out-groups are controlled by official rights, institutions, or rules (Dansereau, 1975). Even in study results of many researchers (e.g., Howell & all_Merenda, 1999; Liden et al., 1993; Yukl, 1994), it is said that members with high quality LMX have smooth communication with leaders, develop relation, trust, respect with leaders, receive challenging tasks, gain much responsibility, and rights, and the leader actively gives help to those members.

Bandura(1997) defined collective-efficacy as the belief of group ability of organization members and colleagues in the process of solving problems that occur during work. Meanwhile, Mesch et al.(1994) defined it as perception of the degree possibility of outcome a group can reach. Shamir(1990) regarded collective efficacy as a perception of the possibility of creating collective performance through collective efforts. Also, Weldon &

Weingart(1993) defined this as individual member's judgment on how well they could perform tasks given by a group. Collective efficacy presented by Bandura(1997) is a shared belief of a group in combined capabilities of members who organize and perform a series of behaviors required for a given level of fulfillment and not only self-efficacy but also collective efficacy is important for development of the society. That's why he stressed the necessity of this research.

There is a very high possibility that responsibility, importance and feedback which are perceived by small enterprise members during job performance, improve the productivity. Therefore, this study analyzes the roles of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback that were presented in the Job Characteristic Model of Hackman & Oldham(1976) as characteristics to face in work situations of small company members, in self-efficacy, leader-member exchange(LMX) and the relationship between collective efficacy and innovative work behaviors. This study pays attention to innovativeness of small business members, while Seo & Son(2015) focused on the highly dominant roles of CEOs in innovation of small businesses and conducted a research targeting small business CEOs. Small businesses have a much higher possibility of turnover of employees than major businesses because of relatively low wages and backward welfare programs. Also, innovative work behavior is the variable that best shows personal level innovation in which it is the activity of actualizing ideas made in different methods and supported by others with purpose to improve one's work or results of one's department, organization (Janssen, 2000; Scott & Bruce, West & Farr, 1990). Therefore innovative work behavior is distinguished with innovation of organization level at the fact that individual members have leading role (Damanpour, 1991) and is different from creativity (Soctt & Bruce, 1994).

3. Research Model an Hypotheses

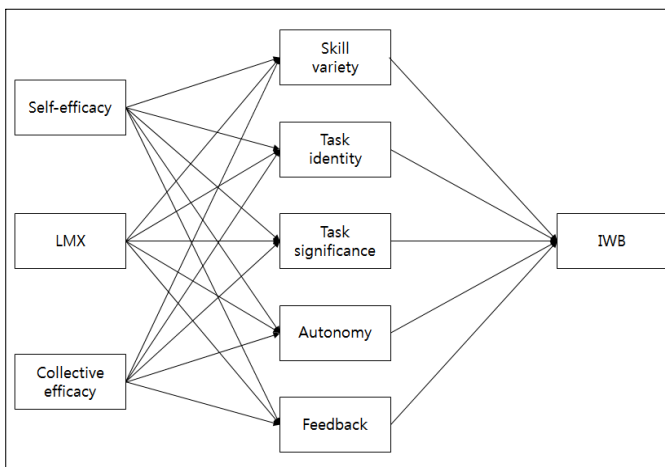
Self-efficacy provides a basis for motivation, well-being and individual performance achievement and even influences personal pattern of thinking and emotional reaction (Choi, 2014). Besides, a level of efficacy formed at the initial stage makes an important contribution to a will and an ability to perform duties independently in a collective situation for a long period of time (Pescosolido, 2003) and a high level of self-efficacy positively affects final performance through efforts to reach outcomes and goals set by individuals and to perform tasks (Han, 2005). Thus, self-efficacy may directly influence innovative work behaviors and job characteristics perceived by members. The theory on leader-member exchange relation was first proposed by Dansereau et al.(1975) in which he asserted that leaders and members have different level of exchange relation that exchange relation composes VDL (Vertical Dyad Linkage). The leader in an organization must full responsibility to create outcomes for the group, receiving restriction of resources such as time and ability is inevitable (Dnasereau, 1975) that a close and unofficial rela

tion with an in-group among members is formed and important duties are given to them. High-level information and feedback that helps duty of in-groups is provided and it is practical that out-groups are controlled by official rights, institutions, or rules (Dansereau, 1975). Even in study results of many researchers (e.g., Howell & Hall_Merenda, 1999; Liden et al., 1993; Yukl, 1994), it is said that members with high quality LMX have smooth communication with leaders, develop relation, trust, respect with leaders, receive challenging tasks, gain much responsibility, and rights, and the leader actively gives help to those members. This means there is a high possibility that the degree of leader-member exchange might influence job characteristics perceived by members, too.

Collective efficacy is a personal confidence and belief in collective abilities for job performance of group members (Lee et al., 2012). This collective belief is the result of an interaction between group members and the fruit of integrated dynamics. Also, mutual dynamics can produce integrated characteristics beyond the aggregate of individual properties. In other words, as an expression of collective characteristics, collective efficacy is the result of interactive power between group members, so the emerged collective characteristics are above the aggregate of individual characteristics (Goddard et al., 2000) and are integrated group-level properties, not merely the aggregate of personal efficacy of each group member. This implies that a personal belief in a group may influence not only innovative work behaviors but also his or her job characteristics.

Based on these preceding studies, the following path model was established, in expectation of the positive effect on each variable.

We expected that all of the path of the model shall have a positive effect between antecedent variables and dependent variables.



Note: LMX: Leader-member exchange, IWB: Innovative work behavior

<Figure 1> Research Model

4. Methodology

4.1. Methods and Data Collection

In this study we investigated 9 variables. Specifically, we measured 24 items of self-efficacy based on Bandura(1977) using Likert 5-point scales, and 7 items of leader-member exchange(LMX) based on Graen & Uhl-Bein(1995). And we measured 7 items of collective-efficacy based on Riggs & Knight(1994) using Likert 7-point scales, each 5 items of job characteristics such as skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback based on Hackman & Oldham(1976) using Likert 5-point scales. And innovative work behavior was measured 4 items, likert 5-point scale based on Soctt & Bruse(1994), Janssen(2003) and Klysen & Street(2001). All variables were converted into z-score to make correction of difference of the scales.

To conduct this study, a survey was carried out SEM members of the Seoul and Metropolitan Area.¹⁾ A total of 305 valid questionnaires were collected and utilized for analysis. Frequency analysis, descriptive statistic analysis, correlation analysis, and structured equation modeling(SEM) for path analysis were conducted using SPSS 19.0 and AMOS 19.0. The demographic characteristics of the participants are presented in <Table 1>.

<Table 1> Demographic characteristics

Variables	Sub-variables	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	233	76.4
	Female	72	23.6
Age	less than 30	57	18.7
	30-39	114	37.4
	40-49	98	32.1
	more than 50	36	11.8
Continuous service year	less than 3 years	99	32.4
	4-10	132	43.3
	more than 10 years	74	24.3

4.2. Reliability and Validity of Measurement Scale

To find out if measurement items are internally consistent, reliability was verified using Cronbach α . Nunnally(1978) argued that if Cronbach α is over 0.7, it is considered reliable. In this respect, the reliability of variables in this study was found to be 0.807~0.939. As a result of confirmatory factor analysis to verify feasibility of variables, LMX, collective-efficacy, skill variety, autonomy, feedback and innovative work behavior except self-effi-

1) We have conducted a joint study with Park(2014).

cacy, task identity, and task significance was less than 0.5 to confirm validity by comparing between coefficient of determination of R-square and AVE, respectively.

<Table 2> Reliability and Validity

Variables	first item	final item	Cronbach's α	Construct Reliability	AVE
Self-efficacy	24	20	0.866	0.944	0.460
Leader-member exchange(LMX)	7	7	0.888	0.906	0.580
Collective-efficacy	7	5	0.939	0.904	0.654
Job characteristics	Skill variety	5	0.852	0.870	0.579
	Task identity	5	0.812	0.811	0.462
	Task significance	5	0.820	0.827	0.490
	Autonomy	5	0.853	0.861	0.557
	Feedback	5	0.807	0.849	0.588
Innovative work behavior(IWB)	4	4	0.881	0.909	0.716

<Table 3> Results of Correlation analysis(n=305)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Self-efficacy	(0.460)								
2. LMX	.305**	(0.580)							
3. Collective-efficacy	.460**	.442**	(0.654)						
4. Skill variety	.416**	.347**	.417**	(0.579)					
5. Task identity	.605**	.346**	.502**	.649**	(0.462)				
6. Task significance ²⁾	.540**	.315**	.511**	.688**	.752**	(0.490)			
7. Autonomy	.468**	.344**	.478**	.538**	.703**	.631**	(0.557)		
8. Feedback	.504**	.413**	.582**	.492**	.637**	.668**	.677**	(0.588)	
9. IWB	.624**	.395**	.469**	.468**	.521**	.533**	.444**	.472**	(0.716)
Mean	3.96	21.88	4.74	3.32	3.56	3.47	3.38	3.42	3.42
Standard Deviation	0.59	4.97	1.15	0.72	0.69	0.70	0.75	0.68	0.74

Note: ** p<.01, AVE marked in ().

5. Empirical Analysis

The directional nature and possible causal relationship between variables were identified through confirmatory factor analysis and the results from correlation analysis which was carried out to identify the validity of variables whose validity was not identified were presented in <Table 3>.

2) Though no validity of task significance was acquired in the comparison between the AVE value and the coefficient of determination, it was anticipated that this wouldn't highly affect path analysis and it was used for analysis.

The path analysis for the verification of the hypothesis was presented in <Figure 4> and <Table 4>. According to the verification result of the suitability of this model, the values were $\chi^2 = 716.823$, d.f = 16, p = .000, GFI = .590, AGFI = -.153, NFI = .535 and RMR = .536 etc and they did not reach each suitability index proposed.

It was known about this result that after proposing a modified model which can enhance the suitability of the study model using the Modification Index(MI) proposed by Jöreskog & Sörörm (1981), the improvement level of the modified model can be verified through the comparison with the original model or composition of additional route, input of additional variable or replacement of variables which apply theoretical ground will be needed, but they were not performed in this study.

<Table 4> Results of Path analysis

Path	Estimate	S.E	t-value (C.R.)	p	Result
Self-efficacy → Skill variety	.279	.060	5.323	.000	Adopted
Self-efficacy → Task identity	.502	.050	10.739	.000	Adopted
Self-efficacy → Task significance	.408	.053	8.387	.000	Adopted
Self-efficacy → Autonomy	.320	.060	6.307	.000	Adopted
Self-efficacy → Feedback	.308	.050	6.433	.000	Adopted
LMX → Skill variety	.179	.007	3.408	.000	Adopted

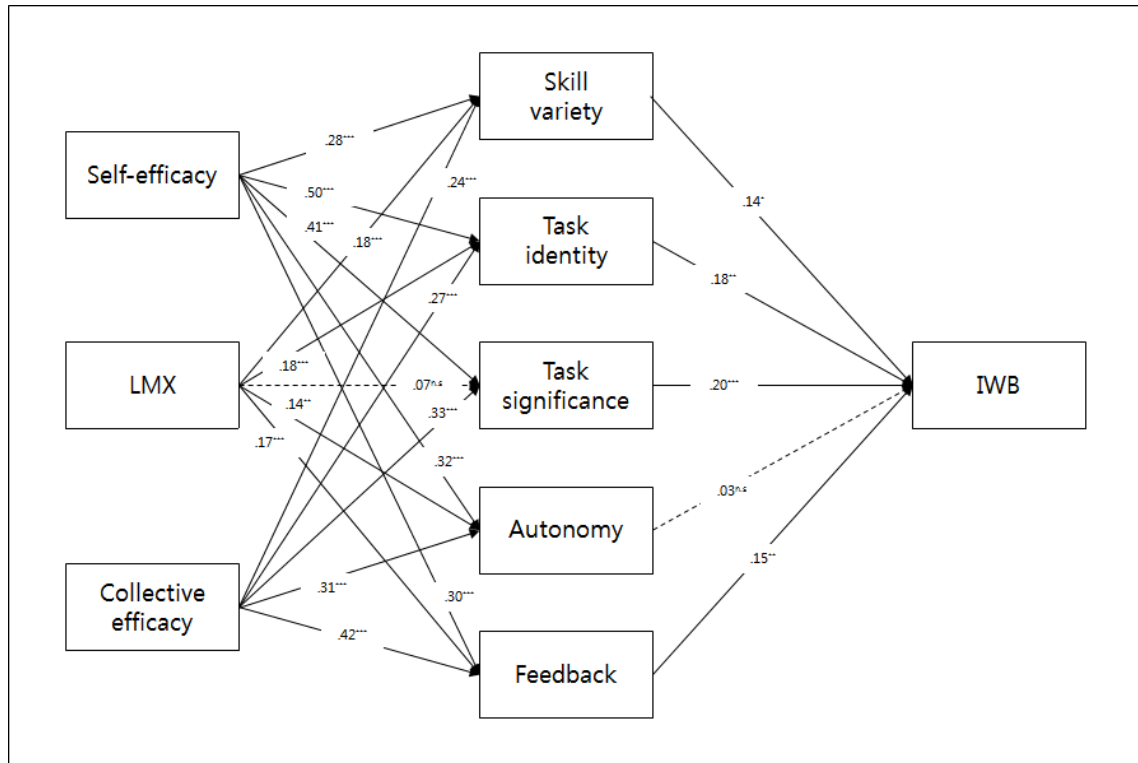
LMX → Task identity	.104	.006	2.222	.026	Adopted
LMX → Task significance	.067	.006	1.383	.167	Rejected
LMX → Autonomy	.136	.007	2.681	.007	Adopted
LMX → Feedback	.174	.006	3.647	.000	Adopted
Collective-efficacy → Skill variety	.236	.031	4.503	.000	Adopted
Collective-efficacy → Task identity	.268	.026	5.737	.000	Adopted
Collective-efficacy → Task significance	.334	.028	6.863	.000	Adopted
Collective-efficacy → Autonomy	.306	.031	6.029	.000	Adopted
Collective-efficacy → Feedback	.424	.026	8.873	.000	Adopted
Skill variety → IWB	.138	.054	2.570	.010	Adopted
Task identity → IWB	.178	.060	3.166	.002	Adopted
Task significance → IWB	.198	.058	3.543	.000	Adopted
Autonomy → IWB	.027	.053	0.495	.621	Rejected
Feedback → IWB	.145	.061	2.603	.009	Adopted

6. Discussions and Summary

This research was intended to find the factors to enhance innovative work behaviors of group members, in order to strengthen competitiveness of small enterprises. Therefore, this study is focused on discovering the factors to promote innovative work behaviors. To put it concretely, this study defines employee's belief in self as self-efficacy, the factor related to the relationship with leaders as a leader-member exchange (LMX) and a belief in a group as collective efficacy and analyzes these effects on innovative work behaviors. Moreover, this study aims to see the influences of skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback which were presented in the Job Characteristic Model of Hackman & Oldham(1976) as characteristics to face in work situations of small company employees, on the relationship between antecedent variables and dependent variables.

Some implications were extracted from the analysis findings as follows.

First, the path analysis result showed that leader-member exchange(LMX) and autonomy didn't have statistically significant effects on task significance($\gamma = .07$, n.s) and innovative work



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

<Figure 2> Results of Path Analysis

behaviors($\gamma = .03$, n.s), respectively. This finding means that even though leaders support in-groups and control out-groups in accordance with the official procedures by placing group members in in-groups and out-groups, task identity perceived by group members isn't damaged. On the other hand, it is remarkable that autonomy, given to small enterprise members didn't influence innovative work behaviors. There is a high possibility that this result is associated with capabilities of small enterprise members, after all. That is to say, autonomy, given to those with a relative lack of capabilities might be a burden rather than bringing a positive impact. This implies that small business leaders need to consider a guarantee of autonomy after setting directions of tasks and carrying out sufficient training programs for task performance.

Second, it was found that self-efficacy($\gamma = .28$, $p < .001$) had the biggest positive effect on skill variety and it was followed by collective efficacy($\gamma = .18$, $p < .001$) and LMX($\gamma = .18$, $p < .001$). This result reveals that it is very important to enhance self-efficacy and collective efficacy for reinforcing task capabilities of small enterprise members. Small enterprise leaders should support group members to improve task capabilities through policy and strategical approach to this field, since self-efficacy and collective efficacy can be enhanced through achievement experience, vicarious learning, linguistic persuasion and emotional excitement (Prussia & Kinicki, 1996).

Third, task significance($\gamma = .20$, $p < .001$) had the biggest positive effect on the improvement in innovative work behaviors and it was followed by task identity($\gamma = .18$, $p < .01$), feedback($\gamma = .15$, $p < .01$) and skill variety($\gamma = .14$, $p < .05$). This demonstrates that small enterprise leaders have to help in recognizing significance of their tasks and establishing task identity and construct a task structure for offering aggressive feedback on tasks and experiencing various tasks.

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