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Leader–Member Exchange and Job Performance: The Dual Mediating Role of Benign and Malicious Envy

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Abstract
The study was carried out in the educational sector with the major cities of Punjab in Pakistan being the target markets. The main aim was to consider the mediating role of malicious envy (ME) and benign envy (BE) in the association between the leader-member exchange (LMX) and job performance (JP). This paper is based on LMX theory and draws attention to the role of the nature of the relations between subordinates and their leaders on employee attitudes and final performance results. The survey was conducted using a structured survey to gather data among middle-tier staff and faculty members. In the total amount of 400 distributed questionnaires, 243 questionnaires were found valid and utilized in the analysis. To analyze the data, SMART-PLS was used, which allowed assessing direct and mediated effects. The results showed that there is a positive correlation between LMX and job performance. In addition, malicious envy and benign envy were both found to mediate this relation meaning that envy is a two-force process in the organization. It was found that malicious envy was detrimental to performance, and benign envy may act as a motivational factor leading to the improvement of performance. On the basis of these results, the research suggests that the top management in universities and other organisations with similar environments should take steps to ensure that the negative impact of malicious envy is reduced and the potential of benign envy is exploited. The process of enhancing the quality of leader-member exchanges can also be an important tactic to facilitate good organizational behavior and overall performance.

Keywords:
Leader-Member-Exchange, Malicious Envy, Benign Envy, Job Performance

Introduction:

Emotions are natural in the organizational life and may be positive as benign in nature or negative as malicious envy. According to the previous literature, the perception of workplace politics, distributive justice, and job performance is strongly interconnected with loyalty and fairness consideration beliefs by the employees (Cropanzano and Kacmar, 1995; Rosen et al. 2009). Since rewards, assignment and promotion depend more on supervisors, the employees are likely to consider them as initial gatekeepers of career consequences (Janssen and Van Yperen 2004). Good-quality leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships thus offer a better level of support, resources and benefits to the employees (Harris et al., 2005) and the vice versa, which leads to the effect of diminished motivation and performance and, consequently, service quality (Young and Corsun, 2009).

The fact that envy often ensues after the social comparison processes can be detrimental to the organization (Cohen-Charash and Mueller, 2007). These are usually born out of unequal treatment by their bosses because as leaders tend to build the quality of relationship with their subordinates differently (Graen and Uhl-Bien 1995). Employees with constructive perceptions of fairness feel benign envy which contributes to an increase in their performance (Susskind et al., 2007), and those perceiving unfair treatment feel malicious envy, fewer opportunities, and dissatisfaction (Cohen-Charash and Mueller, 2007). These negative reactions can be enhanced by a preconceived sense of favouritism or injustice (Bedeian, 1995; Smith, 1991).

Job performance is always linked to LMX quality, which can be achieved partly on motivational and cognitive processes like psychological empowerment (Liden et al., 2000; Zhou et al., 2012). A psychological empowerment means the competence and meaning of people to work (Spreitzer, 2007; Thomas and Velthouse, 1990) which can increase the proactive behavior and performance. Employees of high-quality LMX relationship and positive emotional state have a higher possibility to show initiative and better performance (Dulebohn et al., 2012; Wang et al., 2012; Fuller et al., 2012; Bindl and Parker, 2011; Grant et al., 2009; Grant and Ashford, 2008). These outcomes are even reinforced by empowerment, and active personality (Fuller et al., 2012; Grant et al., 2009; Morrison and Phelps, 1999; Moon et al., 2008).

Nonetheless, the results of the previous research into the relationship between LMX and performance are inconsistent (Dulebohn et al., 2012), possibly indicating the necessity to investigate the possible mediation of the relationship by such a factor as envy. Such relationships can as well be influenced by tenure and contextual factors (Wang et al., 2012). Researchers have stressed that, proactive or empowered behaviors are not necessarily accompanied with positive results unless they are enabled by adequate leadership and social contexts (Fuller et al., 2012; Grant et al., 2009; Bindl and Parker, 2011). Therefore, a more detailed analysis of benign and malicious envy as mediators will provide a more detailed insight into the role of LMX in performance.

Employees in the academic field, especially in the public and private universities in Pakistan tend to compare the rewards and opportunities associated with the supervisory relationships which could give rise to jealousy and influence the performance. Previous studies have indicated that further research should be conducted on LMX in the presence of more mediators, including work behaviours, emotions, and performance outcomes (Aggarwal et al., 2020; Kim et al., 2009; Yoon and Suh, 2003; Kim et al., 2015). Prior methodology has also postulated that job performance can be influenced by market ratings of leaders as well as the group membership process (Podsakoff et al., 2003), and that job performance can be hindered by negative affectivity among the front line workers (Pugh, 2001). Researchers thus suggest addressing both the functional (benign) and pathological (malicious) envy in LMX models as a way to explain job performance (Kim et al., 2015).

In the history, LMX theory was developed based on Vertical Dyad Linkage (VDL) theory, which viewed leadership in divisional relationships between the leader and subordinates (Dansereau et al., 1975; Graen and Cashman, 1975). Subsequent developments added stages of leadership-making with the focus on the development of relationships with the emphasis on the individualized level (Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1991, 1995; Graen et al., 1982b). Modern theorists therefore acknowledge that leadership achievement is not enforced by a similar treatment but the value of dyadic interactions.

Research Questions

Question 1: Does benign envy have any impact on leader-member exchange and performance relation?

Question No. 2: Does malicious envy have any impact in leader member exchange and performance relation?

Question No. 3: did performance at job influenced because of leader member exchange?

Research Objectives:

1. To examine the effects of the leader-member-exchange relationship and job performance due to the mediating effect of benign envy.
2. To ascertain the mediating effect of malicious envy on the relation that existed between leader and member exchange and job performance.
3. To establish how the leader-member exchange is interrelated with job performance.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development:

Leader-Member Exchange and Job Performance.

The leader member exchange (LMX) theory clarifies the impact that the level of relationship between leaders and their subordinates has on the work results. LMX is based on mutual transactions between the leaders and subordinates (Schriesheim et al., 1999; Liden and Maslyn, 1998). When employees have good relationships with supervisors, they have more access to information, chance to make decisions, promotion, as well as monetary payment than those who have poor relationships (Varma and Stroh, 2001). Initially, there is an empirical finding that employees in high quality LMX relationships do better than those in low quality relationships (Li et al., 2012; Varma and Stroh, 2001; Dulebohn et al., 2012). The results show that there is a positive relationship between LMX and job performance and this is direct.

LMX and Malicious Envy

In the event of employees having negative results, employees seek reasons behind these results which are capable of influencing such emotive reactions as envy (van den Bos et al., 1999; Rutte and Messick, 1995; Miceli and Castelfranchi, 2007). Malicious envy may be heightened when an individual evaluates himself or herself negatively in comparison to someone with greater privileges (Tesser, 1988; Miceli and Castelfranchi, 2007), especially when procedural or distributive justice is viewed as a failure (Schaubroeck and Lam, 2004; De Cremer, 2002; Barclay et al., 2005). Green eyes among people can cause dissatisfaction, and destructive behaviors usually ensuing envy due to the perceived favouritism or unequal treatment (Smith and Kim, 2007). Studies have indicated that employees who have poor quality LMX relationship have more likely to be envious of the other employees who have a high quality LMX relationship (Kim et al., 2010). This jealousy will lessen collaborative efforts and can promote secrecy of information or antagonism towards other individuals (Duffy and Shaw, 2000).

LMX and Benign Envy

Not all envy is harmful. Self-improvement can be encouraged by seeing superiors, colleagues of higher rank or relationship (Cramer et al., 2016; Lockwood and Kunda, 1997). Benign envy helps in constructive motivation and improvement of performance (Duffy et al., 2008; Van de Ven, 2016). People can also be motivated to enhance their competence and performance by high-LMX role models (Van de Ven et al.,

2009, 2011; Lange and Crusius, 2015). Accordingly, the benign envy is related positively to the self-development and goal-oriented endeavor.

Security and Butt-hole Envy and Job Performance.

Hostility, frustration, and destructive intentions are the symptoms of malicious envy (van de Ven et al., 2009, 2011). Frustration-aggression theory proposes that these emotions would trigger aggression and other self-inhibitive action (Berkowitz, 1989; Fox and Spector, 1999; Spector, 1975, 1978). These responses could be sabotage, complaint, hostility, and withdrawal which will eventually lower performance (Spector, 1975, 1978). Bad envy thus translates to negative organizational performance and performance of employees.

Job Performance and Benign Envy.

Conversely, the healthy envy fosters healthy coping and self-enhancement (Van de Ven et al., 2009). Positive motivation boosts values and focus at work (Schaufeli and Bakker, 2004) that increases productivity and performance performances (Harter et al., 2002). Positive envy stimulates people to close the performance differences by making effort and developing skills (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Duffy et al., 2008). It also can reinforce discipline, commitment, and good behaviours at the workplace (Buunk et al., 2001). The fact remains that there is some evidence of envy also correlating with performance positively with high levels of commitment (Schaubroeck and Lam, 2004). Equity theory also provides agendas that the perceived inequality provokes employees to work harder to facilitate equity (Adams, 1965).

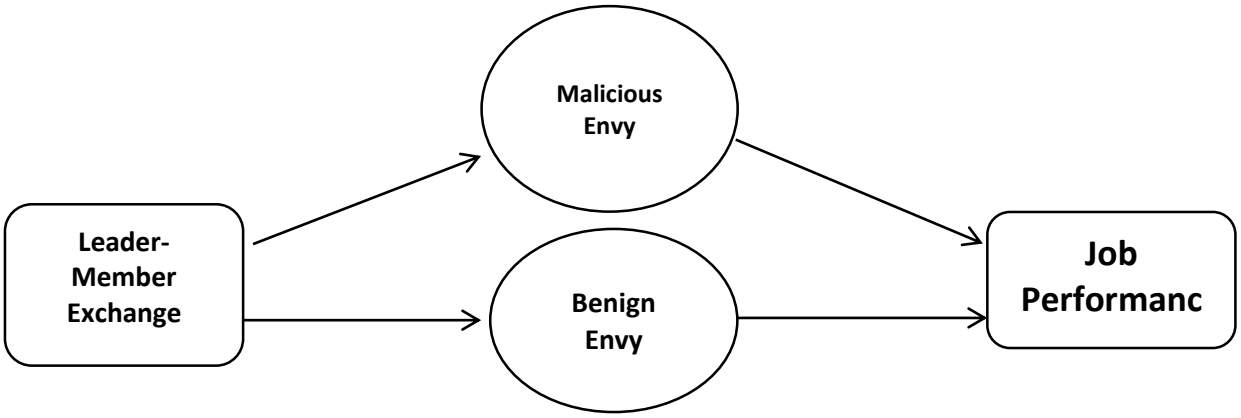
Mediating Envy in the LMX Performance Relationship.

Envy among workers in the work place differs among employees and this leadership behaviour is affected (Schaubroeck, 2004, Lam, 2004; Vecchio, 2005, 2000). The status, power, and authority of leaders may cause jealousy in subordinates (Stein, 1997), which makes LMX one of the major antecedents of emotional responses (Smith and Kim, 2007). Other scholars make a distinction between destructive (malicious) and constructive (benign) envy, which have varying behavior effects (van de Ven et al., 2009). The LMX theory also suggests that time and resource limits enable the leader to form differentiated relationships with the subordinates (Liden et al., 2006; Erdogan and Bauer, 2010; Liao et al., 2010). There is an increased trust, information, and opportunities given to high-LMX employees, and the deprived low-LMX employees are left without chances (Liden et al., 2000). It might cause social comparison and envy among colleagues due to this disparity in treatment (Yukl, 2009; Erdogan and Bauer, 2010; Li and Liao, 2014; Liden et al., 2004). Rewards or promotions accorded to another employee can make the others feel very jealous (Cohen-Charash, 2009) which tends to influence the personality, behaviour and performance (Kim et al., 2009).

Hypotheses:

H1: Leader–member exchange positively affects job performance.
H2: Leader–member exchange is negatively related to malicious envy.
H3: Leader–member exchange is positively related to benign envy.
H4: Malicious envy is negatively related to job performance.
H5: Benign envy is positively related to job performance.
H6: Malicious envy mediates the relationship between leader–member exchange and job performance.
H7: Benign envy mediates the relationship between leader–member exchange and job performance.

Theoretical Framework of the study:



Methodology:

The research presented is a causal study that seeks to study the impact of quality of leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships in predicting job performance of the organizational employees and the moderating variables are malicious envy and benign envy. The study is a quantitative one and both primary and secondary data was used. Interviews were used in cases where necessary with the main tool being the questionnaire which was used as the primary tool in the collection of data. These questionnaires were mostly distributed to the majority of the participants through email, some were given out in hard copy during direct contact.

The purpose of the adoption of a field survey approach was to be more efficient. This worked well to achieve the responses of a sample with time constraint; online surveys were therefore developed, giving a chance to send questionnaires links to the respondents. Even though the extra effort is necessary in carding data, the researchers managed to contact participants within a coherent time. Through this, the data gathered was cross-sectional in nature with the minimum or no interference by the researchers.

The sample used in this research was of mostly middle level administrative and instructional personnel in well-known universities in big cities of Punjab, Pakistan. The questionnaire used was a closed-ended to collect data by using a convenience sampling technique to save time. A total of 300 questionnaires were given out to the respondents. Both types incorporated cover letter containing the idea that the study conducted was scholarly research with the purpose to test how LMX affects job performance, and that the variables were malicious and benign envy in their mediating roles. The study had guaranteed them confidentiality as well as anonymity where they would have been free to provide answers without preconceptions or fear. Thus, the unit of analysis will include middle-level workers and faculty employees employed in the established universities in Punjab, in Pakistan.

Measures:

Scale of LMX is developed based on a seven-point likert scale applied by Scandura and Graen (1984). Participant of the research filled a questionnaire on the questions whose range spanned between- Do you typically significantly know how pleased your supervisor is with your work? Where they were to grade it on a 5 point likert-scale, deducted 1 = Very Agree. , 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree. Quality LMX was high in high response scores.

This study used Job Performance (JP) as its Dependent variable. The scale was put up by Williams and Anderson and it has five questions aimed at measuring the overall individual performance such as completion of tasks and competence (1991). A questionnaire, containing the statements, like I sufficiently do my assignments, I am capable to meet my duties, and I do what is required of me, was used to complete the questionnaire by the respondents. They have been requested to rate the given statements on a 5-point likert scale, according to which 1 = Strongly Agree, 2 = Agree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Disagree and 5 = Strongly Disagree. A score of 3.4 and above by the respondents suggests an increase in the level of job performance.

The mediating variable is an intermediate between the independent and dependent variables thus it acts as a bridge between them, it is also referred to as bridging variable. The mediating variables in this research are (i) benign envy and (ii) malicious envy, which are assessed with the help of the scale designed by Lange and Crusius (2015). The scale is 5 item Likert scale, with 1 as Strongly Agree to 5 Strongly Discourage. The things related with benign envy are concerned with positive sentiments where I say I have warm feelings towards top performers. The ones associated with malicious envy, in turn, stress aggression, such as the ones where one says that when other people are possessing something that he or she wants to herself, he or she wishes to deprive them of it. A one-way ANOVA was used to control the demographic effects of the dependent variable by taking the variation into consideration.

The analysis was done on the revised edition of Smart PLS of version 3.0. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a research method that relies on the variability that is likely to be utilized when investigating the connections among the variables. According to Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2011), Smart PLS approach covers majority of the aspects of the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method. The main objective of the research was to find the levels of correlation between all hypotheses that were formulated in the theoretical framework. Reinartz, Haenlein, and Henseler (2009) claim that Smart PLS provides highly accurate predictions of variables than other similar mathematical models. Moreover, according to its name, PLS does not have as many strict requirements in terms of sample size (Chin, 1998, as cited in Ngah, Zainuddin, and Thurasamy, 2015). According to Anderson and Gerbing (1988), there is a two-phase systematic method of data analysis proposed. The measurement model was used to evaluate the subcomponents of discriminant and convergent validity in the first phase. The next step of the analysis was after the validation that these metrics were significant, the next step was bootstrapping to test the significance of the path coefficient (the value of 80), the weight value of variables and t-values (Chin, 1988)..

Data Analyses and Results:

The mean male population of 243 individuals out of 243 respondents was 120 which is 49.4 and the female population was 123 50.6. The ages of the respondents fell into the following categories of ages: 156 participants (64.2) fell within the age bracket of 20-30 years, 81 participants (33.3) fell within the age bracket of 31-40 years and 6 participants (2.5), fell within the age bracket of 41-50 years. Moreover, we processed the data in terms of work experience with co-workers. Most of them, 240 (98.8) respondents, were employed over the period of 5 to 10 years and only 3 respondents (1.2) were having no less than 10 to 20 years working experience. The data was further divided based on education level: 18 employees (7.4) had a maximum of intermediate education and 39 employees (16.0) had graduated in a university, 84 employees (34.6) had graduated in a master and 102 employees (42.0) had graduated in a university above.Among the 243 respondents, 153 employees (63) were employed in government organizations with the remaining 90 (37) employees having a bachelors degree.

Descriptive Statistics:

The research measures the performance of employees by the amount of envious behavior by the employees. It investigates arousing conditions of envy in organizations and provides descriptive statistics of the sample population and variables. It provides data in the form of the sample size, averages, minimum and maximum values and the standard deviations presented in a table format. The tabular form presents the variables, classifications, serial numbers, means, median, minimums, maximum and standard deviations of the study variables.

Table 1: **Descriptive Statistics of the Study**

		No.	Mean	Median	Min	Max	S.D
Demographic	Sex	1	1.265	1	1	2	0.441
	Age	2	1.861	2	1	3	0.711
	Exp	3	2.571	3	1	5	1.335
	Edu	4	4.307	4	2	6	0.927
Malicious Envy	ME1	5	2.689	3	1	4	1.051
	ME2	6	3.466	4	1	5	1.454
	ME3	7	3.697	4	1	5	1.313
	ME4	8	3.483	4	1	5	1.407
	ME5	9	3.899	4	1	5	1.263
Benign Envy	BE1	10	3.937	4	1	5	1.237
	BE2	11	3.819	4	1	5	1.201
	BE3	12	3.836	4	1	5	1.203
	BE4	13	3.84	4	1	5	1.219
	BE5	14	3.874	4	1	5	1.181
Leader Member Exchange	LMX1	15	3.895	4	1	5	1.182
	LMX2	16	3.903	4	1	5	1.161
	LMX3	17	3.937	4	1	5	1.202
	LMX4	18	3.853	4	1	5	1.223
	LMX5	19	3.504	4	1	5	1.399
	LMX6	20	3.878	4	1	5	1.14
	LMX7	21	3.937	4	1	5	1.178
Job Performance	JP1	22	3.908	4	1	5	1.177
	JP2	23	3.929	4	1	5	1.188

JP3	24	3.861	4	1	5	1.171
JP4	25	3.903	4	1	5	1.175
JP5	26	3.866	4	1	5	1.173
JP6	27	3.908	4	1	5	1.159
JP7	28	3.95	4	1	5	1.144
JP8	29	3.983	4	1	5	1.111
JP9	30	3.92	4	1	5	1.125
JP10	31	3.861	4	1	5	1.175
JP11	32	4.361	4	2	5	0.658
JP12	33	3.773	4	1	5	1.276
JP13	34	3.903	4	1	5	1.165
JP14	35	3.786	4	1	5	1.357
JP15	36	3.895	4	1	5	1.231
JP16	37	3.815	4	1	5	1.328
JP17	38	3.702	4	1	5	1.25
JP18	39	3.727	4	1	5	1.298
JP19	40	3.832	4	1	5	0.737
JP20	41	3.824	4	3	5	0.724

The table of descriptive statistics shows that the total number of study variables was 239 and these variables were also used as the sample size of all the variables used in the study. The measurement of all the variables used in the study was based on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 except the demographic variables, which were measured based on the most appropriate measures. As an example, the age was measured in a 1-5 scale, gender in a 1-2 scale, education at a 1-5 scale, and experience on a 1-5 Scale and a 1-2 scale. The sex category in the demographic variables had a mean of 1.265 and a standard deviation (S.D.) of 0.441 whereas the age category had a mean of 1.861 and a standard deviation of 0.711. The mean of experience was 2.571 and S.D. of 1.335 and that of education was 4.307 and a S.D. of 0.927. Sex has the lowest percentage of the demographic variables and the mean of 1.265 and S.D. of 0.441 is the lowest. The malicious envy (ME) mean value that is a mediating variable in the research had a mean that oxidized between 2.689 and 3.899. In particular, ME1 was the smallest in the mean value of 2.689, and ME5 was the largest in the mean value of 3.899 with the standard deviations, 1.051 between 1.454. Here, the S.D. of ME2 was the greatest at 1.454 whereas the ME1 had the least S.D. at 1.051. The other mediating variable of the study is benign envy (BE) with mean of 3.819 to 3.937. In this case BE2 was found to have the measure of 3.819 as compared to BE1 who had the measure of 3.937. Standard deviations values of benign envy were 1.181 to 1.237, BE5 displayed minimum of 1.181, and BE1 was maximum with a standard deviation value of 1.237. The independent variable of the study, which is Leader-Member Exchange (LMX), carried the mean values of 3.504 to 3.937 with a standard deviation value of 1.14 to

1.399. Here the mean of LMX3 was the highest at 3.937, and that of LMX5 was the lowest at 3.504. Also, the S.D. of LMX5 was highest (1.399) and the S.D. of LMX6 was the lowest (1.14). The mean of job performance (JP) which will be the dependent variable of this study has a range of 3.702 to 4.361 and a standard deviation of 0.658 to 1.357. The S.D. of JP14 was largest (1.357) whereas the S.D. of JP11 was the smallest (0.658). JP11 on the other hand had a mean value that was the highest of 4.361, and JP17 the lowest of 3.702.

Evaluation of model by use of PLS-SEM:

When measurement of the model is carried out using PLS-SEM assistance, model measurement test and model performance have been also done (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2011; Kock, 2014) in two step procedure with the aid of PLS-SEM. In the process of analyzing the findings of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) analysis was followed with the assistance of Smart PLS to test the constructive validity and reliability of our research measures and convergent and discriminatory validity was not only performed subsequently, as they are sub components of construct validity. Partial minimum squares (PLS) relates a model to two labeling factors comprising of external model (external model) and internal model (internal model). The latter demonstrates a relationship between the properties under investigation and their references and subsequently defines the interactions between the properties under investigation per se (Hair et al., 2011; Hair, Sarstedt, Ringle and Mena, 2012). Subsequently, the loading value and method coefficient were identified using the implementation method which was applied by Hair, Hult, Ringle and Sarstedt (2014).

Measurement Model Analysis (outer Model):

To determine the validity and reliability of the data, measurement model of the framework through items of the variables that were predetermined have to be evaluated. The value of Cronbach alpha and composite reliability were calculated the reliability of construct on the proposed base value i.e. 0.7 because the value will increase and indicate the high value of reliability in the study. (Hair, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2011).

Construct Validity:

Table 2: Construct Validity: Loading and Cross Loading

Note: *above mentioned bold values are for their respective items which are >.5*

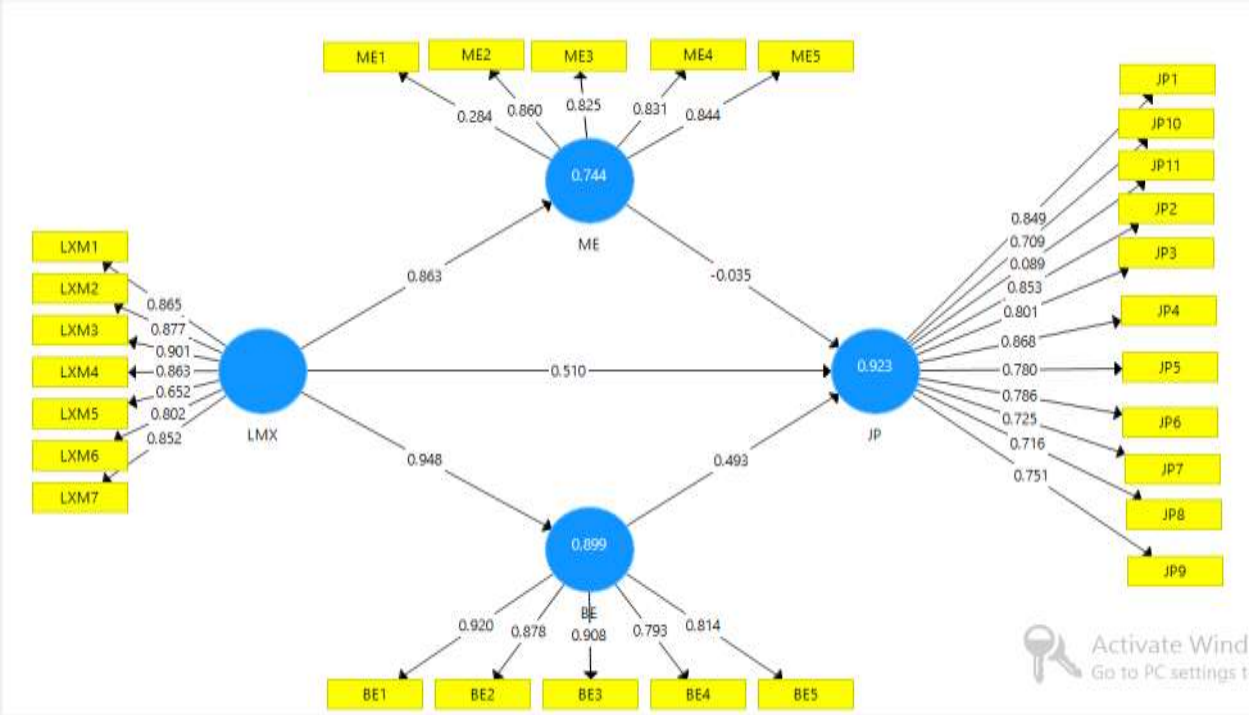
Items	Benign Envy	Job Performance	Leader Member Exchange	Malicious Envy
BE1	**0.92**	0.877	0.895	0.734
BE2	**0.878**	0.863	0.856	0.775
BE3	**0.908**	0.859	0.864	0.704
BE4	**0.793**	0.767	0.738	0.67
BE5	**0.814**	0.719	0.728	0.612
JP1	0.811	**0.849**	0.828	0.751
JP10	0.624	**0.709**	0.66	0.599
JP2	0.843	**0.853**	0.832	0.665
JP3	0.747	**0.801**	0.764	0.723
JP4	0.85	**0.868**	0.836	0.66
JP5	0.719	**0.78**	0.711	0.64
JP6	0.771	**0.786**	0.736	0.591
JP7	0.653	**0.725**	0.665	0.592
JP8	0.674	**0.716**	0.644	0.544
JP9	0.728	**0.751**	0.733	0.542
LXM1	0.844	0.874	**0.865**	0.741
LXM2	0.859	0.852	**0.877**	0.684
LXM3	0.874	0.849	**0.901**	0.702
LXM4	0.819	0.849	**0.863**	0.778
LXM5	0.575	0.535	**0.652**	0.785
LXM6	0.728	0.743	**0.802**	0.706
LXM7	0.798	0.783	**0.852**	0.663
ME2	0.64	0.61	0.703	**0.86**
ME3	0.527	0.53	0.593	**0.825**
ME4	0.56	0.551	0.591	**0.831**
ME5	0.884	0.899	0.909	**0.844**

Construct validity is used to verify the relevancy of the findings realised after measurement work are to the concepts underlying the research work undertaken (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). This type of validity is measurable via testing and contrasting loads and loadings are also found to detect problems with a particular object. Research conducted by Hair, Black, Babin, and Anderson (2010) indicates that the value above 0.5 is said to be significant, and below 0.5 is said to be non-significant. When any of the recorded items record a loading above 0.5 on two factors or above, then this is an indication of possible big backward loading. A construct is normally validated by Table III to make sure that all the items about a particular construct have high loadings in a construct and low loading on the others.

Convergent Validity:

The construct validity has a sub part or rather, convergent validity and is characterized as the analysis of measurements of the same construct which can perform in the same manner and which are closely related. To load a variable authentication feature, it is taken into account composite reliability i.e. combined reliability (CR) and non-calculated intermediate variables. The figure of the load is 0.5 and the prescribed CR is higher than 0.7. Then the cut-off value AVE recommended is 0.5 (Hair et al., 2010).

Fig 1: Measurement Model



The smart PLS loading results as indicated in Table II above show that all the items are within the range of 0.652 to 0.92. All the items presented in the table surpass the advised level of 0.5, except ME1 and JP11 to JP17, which failed to satisfy the level of significance. After the factor loading test, the items that had a score that was below the level of significance (0.5) were eliminated before analysis. Once these non-significant items have been left out, the following values were obtained: BE values are between 0.793 and 0.92, lowest value being BE4 at 0.793 and the highest value being BE1 at 0.92. The values of Job Performance (JP) lie in the range of 0.709 to 0.868, with the lowest level being JP10, 0.709 and the maximum level, JP4, 0.868. The values of Leader Member Exchange (LMX) range between 0.652 and 0.901, LMX5 has a lower value of 0.652 and LMX3 has a higher value of 0.901. Finally, the Malicious Envy (ME) has a range of 0.825-0.86 with the lower level of 0.825 being ME3 and the upper level of 0.86 being ME2.

Table-3: Convergent Validity Model Results:

Model Construct	Measurement Items	Loadings	CR	AVE
Benign Envy	BE1	0.92	0.936	0.747
	BE2	0.878		
	BE3	0.908		
	BE4	0.793		
	BE5	0.814		
Job Performance	JP1	0.849	0.929	0.562
	JP10	0.709		
	JP2	0.853		
	JP3	0.801		
	JP4	0.868		
	JP5	0.78		
	JP6	0.786		
	JP7	0.725		
	JP8	0.716		
	JP9	0.751		
Leader Member Exchange	LXM1	0.865	0.941	0.695
	LXM2	0.877		
	LXM3	0.901		
	LXM4	0.863		
	LXM5	0.652		
	LXM6	0.802		
	LXM7	0.852		
Malicious Envy	ME2	0.86	0.864	0.581
	ME3	0.825		
	ME4	0.831		
	ME5	0.844		

Notes': CR¼ (Σ factor loading) ²/ {(Σ factor loading) ²) +Σ (variance of error)} AVE¼Σ (factor loading) ²/ (Σ (factor loading) ²+Σ (variance of error)}

The combined reliability values presented in the table possible suggests how well the construction index is a latent construct in this research study, with values of between 0.936 and 0.864. Particularly, the

composite reliability of benign envy is higher at 0.936 as compared to 0.864 on malicious envy. These are important values, as they fall above the recommended value of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2013). The final column on the table indicates the values of the typical variance carried on (AVE) that measures the relative quantity of variability surmounted by the construct versus the measurement error. The construct AVE that follows is, therefore, expected to have a value of over 0.5 (Barclay, Higgins, and Thompson, 1995). The values as in the last column of Table IV are between 0.562 and 0.747 with job performance (JP) having the lowest AVE value of 0.562 and benign envy the greatest value of 0.747. We can conclude that the measurement model has a satisfactory fit after having ensured all loading values are satisfied because the external model metrics are above the prescribed values of the composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE).

Discriminant Validity:

Considering other events, we still make an evaluation on the legitimacy of apartheid. The analyzed steps are not of that magnitude that implies the existence of other variables and demonstrates that anxiety levels are not closely correlated with the magnitude of other structures. Hair et al. (2017) state that the discriminatory scale of the PLS method model is to provide a higher level of visual acuity and visual cues than other structures. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), the legitimacy of discrimination can be proved through the square footage comparison of different buildings and in case of unexplained construction disparities. In addition, an overcrowding test as suggested by another research led by Hair et al. (2013) might be done through comparing the external loads with other concepts, thereby offering a more conclusive measure of their influence on other concepts.

Table-4: Construct Discriminant Validity

	Construct	1	2	3	4
1	Benign Envy	**0.864**			
2	Job Performance	0.949	**0.75**		
3	Leader Member Exchange	0.948	0.948	**0.834**	
4	Malicious Envy	0.811	0.805	0.863	**0.762**

Note: *values at the diagonals of the table are the square root of the AVE and highlighted as bold, rest of the entries are the degree of correlations between variables*

It has been recorded as indicated in the table above that square root of the consecutive constructive relationships is less than the rate of the variance that is recovered by the indicators under consideration that are being tested and validated under the discriminatory validation. The values in bold were the square roots of the constructs and they were the least among the variables. Based on Table, it is apparent that all the constructs measured are fully loaded along their individual frameworks and re-loaded in the other constructs hence their discriminatory validity. Therefore, regarding this evidence, it is possible to conclude that the rating model justifies only the criteria of discriminatory validity and dynamic validation.

PLS Procedure Results of Analysis of structural Model (inner Model):

The Structure Model evaluates the acceptance and rejection of a hypothesis using numerous indicators of various analytical tools. The hypothesis is tested using the coefficient of the standard method (8) and t -value (it-value) in the Bootstrapping method. At the same time, the PLS Algorithm approach will be used to identify the coefficient of determination (R^2), when independent variables affect the dependent variables, and the effect size (f^2), which shows the influence of external variables (Hair et al., 2016). Finally, the predictive power of the model, which is Q^2, is proved by the blindfold process.

One of the interpretations of a level of R^2 of an near value of 1 is that the variance is strongly correlated; thus, when it is far, we understand that there are weaker relationships among the variables (Hair et al., 2016). Two-tailed tests should have a critical t-value of more than 1.96 and p-value below 0.05 is considered significant. An R^2 of 0.20 is a bit large whereas 0.25 to 0.50 is considered right. Cohen (1988) suggested the parameters of a small, medium, and a large effect 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 respectively in order to evaluate the magnitude of f^2. Moreover, the values of Q^2 more than 0 are the indication that the model has a predictive relationship with some non-fixed structures (Hair et al., 2014).

Fig 2: Structural Model (Q^2)

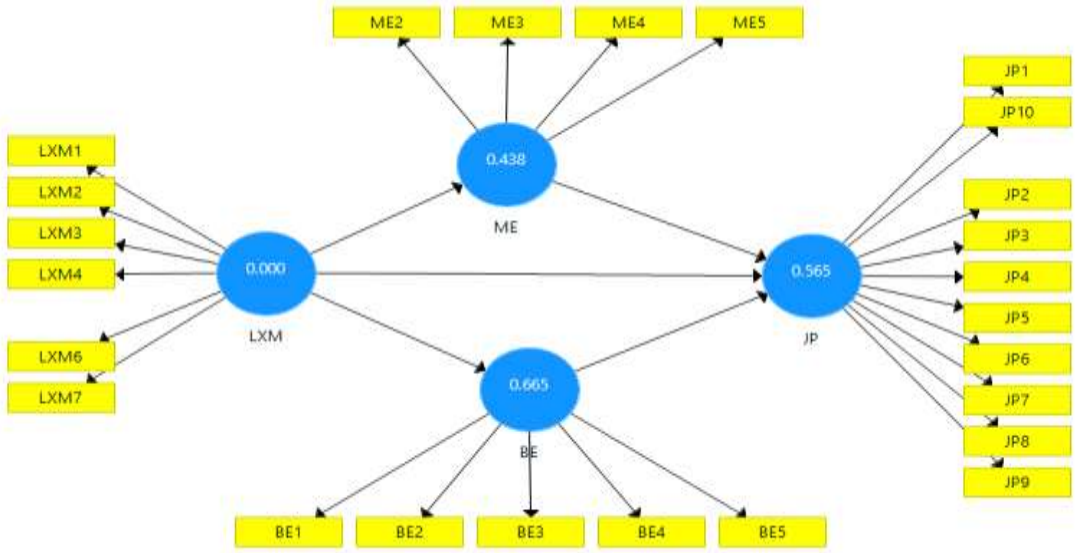
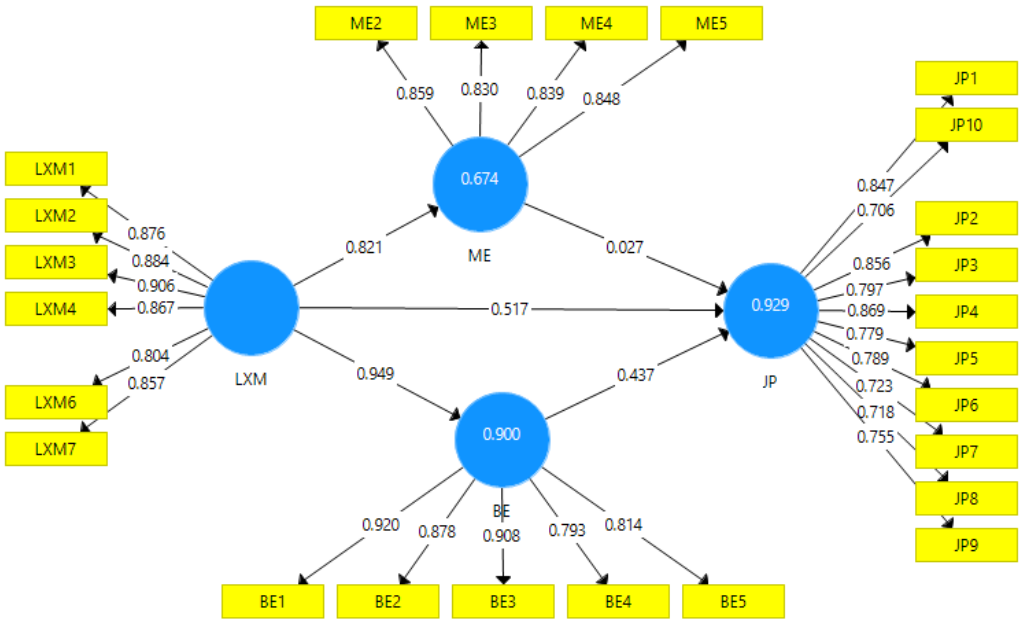


Fig 3: R^2



Hypothesis Testing:

We supported the said values in above diagram to concur and elaborate more on the constructed relationship of our hypothesis, values have been compared with cutoff values. Retaining the consideration of the outcome as below in Figure 2 we may state that, the level of R^2 0.928, representing that 92.8 percent of the variance in the extent of job performance have been intensified by the relation of the leader member exchange under the mediation effect of benign envy and malicious envy. Additionally, we can note that there was an impact of variable job performance that was operated by leader-member exchange relationship and its value of R is 0.928. It is intended that leader-member exchange relation can explain a change in job performance as 92.8. In their study research, Falk and Miller (1992) have argued that the value of R^2 must exceed the 0.10 in case the rated value of the R^2 exceeds the 0.10, then the endogenous construct would be sufficient. The latent value of the endogenous variables according to Cohen (1988) has also proposed the degree that the latent value is considered substantial (0.26), moderate (0.13), and weak (0.02) and less than, or equal to, 0.26. According to Chen (1998), the recommendation of the latent endogenous variables value of R^2 should be based on up to and above 0.67 as substantial and less than 0.33 as moderately ranked and less than 0.19 weakly based. The value of R^2 of the study will be significant with R^2 values of 0.75 and large, 0.50 and moderate, and 0.25 weak, respectively (which is taken as a crude approximation to the rules of thumb applicable to endogenous latent variables) in studies, the proposed value is not different (Hair et al. 2011) (Hair et al. 2013). A structural model y a variable is also affected and influenced by different number of variables. When an exogenous variable eliminate that will influence the dependent variable. The difference between the change of R-Square when the external variance is not included in the model is the F-Square. This is because according to (Cohen, 1988) that he appreciated of the f-square, in the case that f^2 is small (value of f^2 less than 0.02), when f^2 is medium (value of f^2 between 0.15 and 0.35), and finally when f^2 is large (value of f^2 above 0.35). As table XI shows, the value of f^2 of LMX is 0.514, a fact indicating that when LMX is removed out of model it will tend to have higher impact on the model and f^2value of ME is -.042, which means that removing LMX will have a medium impact of model. The predictive relevance of the measures value of Q-square calculated has determined the predictive relevance that our research model is predictively relevant or not (> 0 positive). Q^2 value is not negative which means that our values are well-formed and our model corresponds to prediction., mathematically we can say that Q^2>0=predictive relevance. The procedure of blindfolding has proceeded to determine the Q^2 in SMART-PLS.

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Coefficient β	T Values	P Values	Conclusion	Mediation
H1	LMX -> JP	0.079	6.274	0.000	Supported	
H2	ME-> LMX	0.013	64.092	0.000	Supported	
H3	BE ->LMX	0.007	141.388	0.000	Supported	
H4	ME -> JP	0.044	0.366	0.715	Not Supported	
H5	BE -> JP	0.06	8.168	0.000	Supported	
H6	LMX -> ME -> JP	0.048	5.365	0.000	Supported	Partial Mediation
H7	LMX -> BE -> JP	0.057	8.094	0.000	Supported	Partial Mediation

According to the obtained results in the table above, benign envy affects job performance and the correlation is positive as shown by β = 0.06, t = 8.168, and p = 0.001. In that way, H5 is confirmed, indicating that when the level of benign envy gets higher, the employees satisfaction will be stronger, which will subsequently cause a better job performance. In addition, leader-member exchange has a positive impact on benign envy, using the values of β= 0.007, t= 141.388 and p = 0.001. This confirms hypothesis H3, which implies that a better and more coherent association between managers and workers improves benign envy, which subsequently increases job performance. Leader-member exchange has positive influence on the job performance of employees as indicated by β= 0.079, t = 6.274, and p = 0.001 hence supporting hypothesis H1. This observation underscores the role of a good relationship between the managers and the employees at the work place; as the employees feel that their managers are helping them, their productivity goes up. In addition, leader-member exchange also has a strong influence on malicious envy with β = 0.013, t = 64.092 and p = -0.000. Despite the importance of the leadership-member exchange relationship in this study, it indicates that individuals with malicious intentions can be inclined to impress their managers and at the same time compromise the work of other individuals as hypothesis H2 indicates.

But the findings of hypothesis H4 show that malicious envy does not favor job performance as shown in Table IX with β= 0.044, T = 0.366 and P = 0.715, which is bigger than p = 0.001. This shows that hypothesis H4 is not endorsed.

In a nutshell, this study indicates that benign envy has been the strongest predictor of job performance. The increased amount of benign envy is linked to the increased level of job performance whereas the reduced amount of enviousness is linked with the reduced performance.

Mediation Analyses:

Moreover, the mediating role has been explored on the basis of bootstrapping method of SMART-PLS, where the level of confidence established stands at 95 percent. The authors suggest the method as an appropriate one when conducting a mediation test (Hayes, 2009; Zhao, Lynch Jr and Chen, 2010). The value that was tested of the direct effect between Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) and job performance consisted of β=0.079 and the results obtained showed t=.6274, p=0.000. It is important to note that as p = 0.000 is lower than the standard mean of 0.001, we may say that this value is statistically significant. The presence of the malicious envy causes us to observe a partial mediation between the leader-member exchange relationship and job performance with the presence of the same representing the values of β = 0.048, t = 5.365, p = 0.000. This is to show that there is partial mediation. Also, leader-member communication to job performance is also significant with value of β=0.057, t = 8.094, and p = 0.000. This implies that it is significant that the interrelationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables exist. It means that it has some mediation between the independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 2016). The results exemplify the idea of partial mediation because Baron and Kenny (1986) assumed that mediation can be more intense and may indicate complete mediation in the case where the influence of direct path is small though there is a strong effect in both direct and indirect paths. As reported by Hair et al. (2016), when the variance that will be considered accounted for (VAF) is between 20-80 percent, it can be said that partial mediation occurs, whereas when it is 80-100 percent, it can be said that full mediation has taken place. When the VAF is less than 20, then there is no mediation.

With these considerations, we can state that in the case of Hypothesis H6, we have an observation of partial mediation and in the case of Hypothesis H7, we have a presence of the same (Hair, Hult, Ringle, and Sarstedt, 2014).

The Effect Size *(f^2)* and predictive relevance *(Q^2):*

Table 6: The Effect Size

Variables	R^2	f^2-JP	Q^2 (=1-SSE/SSO)	Decision
LMX		0.514		Large
ME		-0.042		Small
BE		0.496		Large
JP	0.928		0.565	

When we assess the impacts depicted above, we can assert that R^2 value of 0.928 has shown that the leader-member exchange (LMX) relationship has 92.8 percent impact on the variance of job performance with mediation impacts of benign and malicious envy. This means that job performance at the workplace is greatly influenced by the leader-member exchange relationship because the value of R^2=0.928 implies that performance variance can be explained by 92.8 percentage. Falk and Miller (1992) have hypothesized that a higher endogenous construct is represented by a large R^2 (more than 0.10). $R^2$of 0.26 or above was deemed as a large value, 0.13 is a medium effect, and a weak effect was a reading of less than or equal to 0.02 (Cohen 1988). The interpretation of R^2 values of the endogenous variables, which was suggested by Chin (1998) can be summarized as follows: within the range of 0.67 or more, a value of 0.33 or less and less than that of 0.19 or less a value is said to be large, medium, and weak respectively. The positing grounded by Hair et al. (2011 and 2013) was that the R^2 values of 0.75 and above are good, 0.50 are moderate and the values of 0.25 are poor which give an approximate R^2 judgment on the endogenous variability. Flexibility can change and be changed by the structural model flexibility. Elimination of an exogenous variable may affect the dependency of the model. F-square is used to indicate change in R- square when an exogenous variable is dropped in the model. Cohen (1988) states that the effect size (this is F^2) is recorded in the F-square Linked, when $F^2 \geq 0.02$ the effect is insignificant, when $F^2 \geq 0.15$ the effect is medium, and when $F^2 \geq 0.35$ the effect is big. As it is indicated in the above Table, the F2 value of LMX is 0.514, which means that including LMX in the model would have a great influence. F^2 malicious envy (ME) = -0.042, which indicates that getting rid of it would have a moderate impact on the model. Comparatively, F2 of benign envy (BE) is 0.496, which means that the removal of this variable would also make a considerable impression on the model.

Discussion and Conclusion:

Discussion:

The study findings have shown that Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) relationships have a positive influence on job performance, especially in Universities based in public and private sector, at Punjab, Pakistan. Close relationships between leaders and subordinates minimize the number of conflicts and promote the level of employee satisfaction. It has been found that the employees who have better relationships with their supervisors are exposed to more information and are more consulted when decision making and hence where there are promotion and salary increment occurring faster. The quality of LMX has a great influence on the performance at work because its relationship with the psychological empowerment whereby workers are interested in establishing an atmosphere of meaningful working conditions. The quality of LMX leads to effective practices in the workplace and this adds up to more

efficiency. Workers who have good LMX relationships are also able to display constructive behaviors that lead to good performance. Thus, it is imperative to establish good rapport with the managers in a bid to enhance organizational productivity and job satisfaction. In our research, we underline the importance of inspired employees, who have a positive interaction with their leaders and prefer to excel in their planning and performance because of their increased satisfaction.

The findings show that malicious envy has a negative impact on the leader-member exchange (LMX) relationships which support our hypothesis. When employees depreciate themselves because of the feelings of inequity in reward, they might wonder why their fellow employees are rated in higher positions thus hurting themselves through subjugation and negative emotions. In cases of the absence of procedural justice, the duties amongst the employees can also change. Malicious envy is a negative emotion that comes in place when employees observe the staff members being supported and rewarded with something that they believe they have earned. These prejudiced comparisons may interfere with the work process and lower the levels of cooperations among the people in the team. It has been found out that employees who do not have good LMX by nature tend to be jealous of those who have good LMX which reduces collaboration in turn. Supervisors do not treat the employees equally in most organizations and these actions breed complaints of unfairness and malicious envy among mistreated employees. Such discriminative treatment may have a detrimental effect on the productivity and job performance, which substantiates the hypothesis that as malicious envy increases, LMX responds negatively.

Our above mentioned results were the result of assuming that there is a good relationship in the benign envy, and the leader member exchange relation. According to our result in results there has been significant positive relation in benign envy and leader member exchange relation. Therefore it may be said that our hypothesis is completely justified by the results. Self-improvement as a result of observing high-performing colleagues in an organization, especially when his or her Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) relationship is high, is essential. Benign envy encourages people to pursue more competencies and better job performance as they are inspired by elite employees. Duffy et al. (2008) argue that this form of envy leads to self-improvement as employees will observe others enjoy the benefits of a good management. Van de Ven et al. (2009) also indicate that benign envy may make people dream about a better position depending on the succeeding of their colleagues. Self-improvement goals are basically outputs of benign envy and motivate the individuals to duplicate the success that they observed on the high-level LMX relationships. Moreover, optimism such as benign envy gives people the ability to address challenges and do anything to improve accustomed to self and mitigate side effects (Brockner et al., 2003). This results shows that LMX and benign envy share a positive relationship that is strong thus confirming the hypothesis of interrelation between the two concepts.

Malicious and benign envy is negative and destructive to organizations respectively and constructive. Bad jealousy may result in frustration, back spying and even violent acts especially among the type of employees who are being rewarded by their bosses. Conversely, benign envious individuals envy and seek to be like them, and with this, they create an environment where they support each other. It has been demonstrated that envy that is based on acceptance and hatred varies (van de Ven et al., 2009, 2011), and malicious envy has the potential to impair relationships between leaders and their followers as well as the overall functioning of an organization (Fox and Spector, 1999). Such frustrations may disrupt the attainment of goals, which may cause unfavorable responses (aggression, sabotage, hostility etc, Spector, 1975). These are all emotional reactions that are triggered by frustration thus affecting work performance in a way that brings about physiological arousal. The hypothesis newly established by

Berkowitz (1989) provides the connection between negative emotions and aggression where frustration causes negative emotions which can subsequently result in the display of aggressive behavior.

Our findings support the hypothesis that benign envy has a positive effect on job performance because it indicates that there is a strong relationship between the two. The understanding of benign envy will make people come to terms with things as a chance to get better (Van-de-Ven et al., 2009). Motivated employees portray increased energy, enthusiasm, and concentration towards their work. Studies show that retrenchment has effects on job outcomes, which include performance and productivity (Harter et al., 2002). The benign envoyers aim at self improvement to improve their image and performance in their work. This is the envy that is associated with high-achieving counterparts and might result in better behaviour, which leads to discipline and commitment at the place of work (Buunk et al., 2001; Schaubroeck and Lam, 2004). On the whole, benign envy may have a positive impact on the performance and involvements of employees.

Malicious envy mediates between leader-member exchange (LMX) and job performance, which has a negative effect on the overall work performance. The indirect effect of malicious envy on job performance is rather insignificant (b = 0.044, t = 0.366, p = 0.715) whereas the indirect effect is mediation (b = 0.048, t = 5.365, p = 0.000). This implies that malice envy is especially present in lower levels of employees and affected by leadership style, including making damaging comparisons amongst employees (Vecchio, 2000). Stein (1997) observed that the elements of leadership are capable of creating malicious envy, which implies that effective LMX should be used to overcome this challenge. Our study highlights the need to learn to draw the line between negative and constructive envy at the work place. Better performance is linked with high-quality LMX and malicious enviousness may reduce the productivity of employees who are envious. Direct linkage between malicious envy and job performance is not quite clear but full mediations involved in indirect relationships support the effects of LMX in the relationship between malicious envy and job performance.

This assumption comes as the results of the study presuppose that benign envy mediates the connections between leader-member exchange (LMX) and job performance. In particular, benign envy has a positive effect on job performance, which implies that a relationship between LMX and job performance is significant in its medium. The partial mediation is verified by the analysis with the direct relationship = b = 0.06, t = 8.168, p = 0.000, and the mediation with b = 0.057, t = 8.094, p = 0.000 (Hair et al., 2016). Baron and Kenny (1986) argue that there is full mediation whereby the direct effect is not important and where there is partial mediation where the direct and indirect effects are significant. The Leader-member exchange theory proposes that the leader has one way of being related to the subordinates resulting in differences in relationships depending on the quality of LMX among leaders and their subordinates (Liden et al., 2006). The constraints prohibit a leader to achieve high-quality relationship with all employees, giving a certain group of people an access to resources and opportunities (Li and Liao, 2014). Workers having low LMX get fewer perks, which can create discord at the workplace and envy among the workforce (Li and Liao, 2014).Workers tend to compare themselves to the worker within a close circle, especially in terms of promotions as Cohen-Charash (2009) says. Significant variations in treatment can lead to benign envy, which is being workers to determine their behavior and attitude towards work, with quality employees in the LMX group being rewarded in diverse ways (Kim et al., 2009).

Conclusion:

The present research study was carried out in the location of a higher learning institution, with particular cases being the universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi in Pakistan. The main interest of the research was to determine the mediating effect of malicious envy and benign envy in the relationship between leader-member exchange (LMX) and job performance among employees. The surveys were sent to the

employees who work in local universities in order to collect relevant data and conduct a thorough analysis of the information collected. The result suggested that a better LMX is positively related to the job performance; employees with better and closer relationships with their managers were more productive. On the other hand, other employees that had lower LMX relationship tended to experience difficulties in communicating with supervisors and this affected their performance at work. The mediating effects of two forms of envy, malicious and benign were brought into the limelight of the study. Analysis performed with SMART-PLS rendered the similar results, demonstrating that malicious envy had a complete mediating role on the linkage between LMX and job performance, whereas benign envy exhibited a partial mediating effect. This implies that employee feelings of envy can also play an important role in determining the degree to which their relationship with their leaders can impact their work performance.

Implications and Recommendations:

The results of the present research imply that managers, especially the ones based on a higher level, are to communicate with their subordinates regularly. This is one of the practices that will help avoid the occurrence of envy amongst employees. All workers must be treated equally and this will create a feeling of benign envy. This strategy can be used to improve performance of the organization as pertains to productivity and quality of services. The displays of emotions should be very evident to every employee to enhance loyalty in the organization. Constructive envy or benign envy may arise among the employees when they perceive that they are supported and valued. This positive envy may culminate in better job performance since the employees will not be backbiting or having negative personality towards one another; instead, they would be supportive to each other and save time. Rewards and incentives should also be evenly distributed so that there are set criteria. Managers should be careful not to be biased on particular employees but instead promote good interpersonal relationship amongst employees. The employees will also have a clearer understanding of the amount of effort they should put in their work. Considering such dynamics, the researcher achieved a lot in comprehending employee opinions, identification of process outcomes, and justification of existing laws that stand relevant in the equal distribution of rewards (Cropanzano and Kacmar, 1995; Colquitt, 2001). Although the volume of scientific literature analyzing the connection between organizational views and work ethics continues to increase, they should be investigated further (Colquitt et al., 2001; Chang et al., 2009). Additionally, several researches have demonstrated that the meaning of fairness is important to work performance, indicating that failure to address this issue can create a covetous malicious problem and conflict among staff of an organization, especially those who have poor Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) with their employers (Maslyn and Fedor, 1998; Karriker and Williams, 2009; Olkkonen and Lipponen, 2006; Miller, Rutherford and Kolodinsky, 2008). Should employees feel that they are being segregated in the treatment of their work relationship, it will lead to spawning of jealousy and put pressure on the employees who perform well. The aspect of close relationship between managers and their subordinates is intertwined with the employee performance. Through proper communication tools like charts and graphs to communicate authentic feeling at the workplace, employee pride and morale will be enhanced during working hours. The employees must be sensitised that bad behaviours, oppression, and dishonesty can cost them in terms of feeling drained. Rather, organizations ought to support values that breed confidence in the working environment and deal with job burnout. The employees need to be sensitized on emotional functioning and the implications on job performance. The supervisors need also to be empowered in order to manage complicated employee problems. Finally, encouraging pride in the employees will result in better work experience.

Limitations:

The constraints and limitations that we experienced during this current research study are rather than making all possible efforts to attend to the research study. The major limitation was in the selection of universities in Punjab. The researchers can be advised to incorporate other major city universities like those in Lahore, Quetta, Peshawar and Karachi in the future to have a wider view. Secondly, there was a problem of sample collection. Our sample was mainly gathered among administrative employees and members of the faculty as these were limited. As a prospective researcher, researchers need to take into consideration a larger sample of participants, including lecturers and professors. We also used only the convenience sampling technique, because of problems accessing the selected population which can cause bias in the results. Other sampling procedures, e.g., stratified or random sampling, ought to be investigated by future researchers to enhance the validity and reliability of their data. Increasing the range of study sectors to other fields other than education would also strengthen the applicability of the research. Some of the potential sectors that can be considered are pharmaceutical industries, textile industries, banking sector, hospitality sector and the public services. Diversifying the focus of the research allows one to learn something important in another context. In an effort to be as scientific as possible in our research initiatives, we created a hard copy questionnaire that will contain a set of close-ended questions. We have however developed an online version of the questionnaire so as to reach a wider audience. In an effort to send survey questionnaires to the administrative staff at universities within Punjab, we were faced with a constraint because most employees especially within the government sector universities did not have email addresses. The researchers in the future must use questionnaires both in hard copies and online to ensure the maximum number of participants. Alternatives will help in acquiring a better range of data, thereby aiding in minimizing bias. In conclusion, it can be said that improving on these weaknesses and recommendations can help future researchers produce research studies that can come up with more solid and more inclusive findings.

Future Research Directions:

The researchers should consider utilizing the identified limitations in future research since this study poses a myriad of possible directions to be taken. This study mainly investigated the mediation effect that applied one independent variable and one dependent variable. This model can be improved in future research by adding moderators or one or two extra latent independent variables so that they can add richness to the analysis. In addition, this research was based on a cross-sectional data only. The researcher suggests that future researchers should adopt time-lag or longitudinal research designs to perform a much stronger cause and effect study that can yield more knowledge on the relationship under study. This research had the unit of analysis as people associated with the public sector universities in Punjab. The future researchers could also look at expanding their research to include groups or various units of the organization to enhance their accuracy and comprehensiveness of the data. Further, the information was gathered mostly through the administrative personnel and some of the faculty members of Higher Education Commission (HEC) accredited universities in Punjab. It is also given to future researchers to expand their sample to cover a broader set of staff and faculty members or even turn their attention to other areas beyond the field of education which may result in new and useful results.

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