The Two Faces of Envy: Studying Benign and Malicious Envy in the Workplace

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As this book shows, we are starting to understand more about the nature of envy, the content of its emotional experience, and its effects in an organization. Envy is the result of an upward social comparison, one that signals to someone that he or she lacks desired abilities, traits or rewards enjoyed by another. Organizational scholars recognize that social comparison and envy should be prevalent in organizations as employees are often subject to hierarchical stratification and often compete for scarce organizational rewards, managerial attention, and social status (Vecchio, 1997). Equity theorists and organizational justice theorists have long recognized the importance of comparisons in the workplace, as employees weigh social information obtained from observing and communicating with their peers to make sense of their workplace (Adams, 1965; Greenberg, 1982; Ambrose, Harland, & Kulik, 1991; Folger & Cropanzano, 2001). However, the acknowledgment of social comparison processes is often treated more implicitly in organizational research and a direct examination of the results of social comparison processes has largely been missing in the organizational literature (Duffy, 2008). This is changing, however, as organizational scholars are realizing the important role that emotions play in motivating organizational behavior (e.g., Gino, Chapter 3, this book). A few of the more negative social emotions those resulting from unfavorable comparisons, such as shame, jealousy and envy are related to a wide variety of disruptive and destructive workplace behaviors (Poulson, 2000; Vecchio, 2005). As a result of this association, coupled with a growing interest in workplace deviance, social comparison and social emotions are receiving an increasing amount of attention in organizational scholarship.

Until recently the outcomes associated with the experience of envy in organizations were thought to be primarily negative, as envy results from an unfavorable, painful comparison to peers. However, research has demonstrated a contradictory pattern at times, showing that envy can generate destructive workplace behaviors and lead to negative organizational outcomes while other research has shown that envy can lead to more positive and productive workplace behaviors. Gaining a better understanding of how envy leads to specific consequences is important, not only as an exercise of scholarly inquiry, but especially if we are ever to recommend how this emotion can best be managed in our organizations. Should envy be suppressed, as it is a destructive emotion that will harm performance and undermine social relationships? Conversely, can envy be harnessed and used as a motivational tool to increase effort and performance? We argue that the answer to this question lies in conceptualizing and measuring envy not as a singular emotional experience but as a complex emotion, subject to appraisal, reappraisal, and reflection. The result of these processes produce an emotion with two distinct manifestations, one malicious and the other benign.

It is interesting to note that some languages actually already have two words for envy. For example, in Dutch envy translates to both *afgunst* and *benijden*. It is striking that in these languages one word seems to mainly refer to the dark, destructive, and malicious side of envy, while the other word refers to a brighter, constructive, and more benign form of envy. Even in countries where the language has only one word for envy, envy is sometimes referred to as having these two subtypes. For example, in Russia and Brazil people can refer to black and white envy, seemingly again referring to envy's destructive and more constructive nature.

The dominant and traditional view of envy in the workplace holds that envy is primarily associated with negative attitudes and behaviors (Duffy, Shaw, & Schaubroeck, 2008; Smith &

Kim, 2007). However, recent experimental studies on the social psychology of envy and several

findings in organizational psychology, as just above, suggest that there could be both positive

and negative behavioral consequences associated with envy. Indeed, the idea that envy can also

motivate people is a recurring theme in the various chapters of this book (e.g., Annoni, Bertini,

Perini, Pistone, & Zucchi, Chapter 12; Cohen-Charash & Larson, Chapter 1; Chapter 3; Duffy &

Yu, Chapter 4; Gino, Chapter 3; Hoogland, Thielke, & Smith, Chapter 2; Mancino, Chapter 27;

Vidaillet, Chapter 12; Yiwen, Tai, & Wand, Chapter 8). One explanation for this occurrence

considers the existence of two qualitatively different experiences of envy; benign envy and

malicious envy (Van de Ven, Zeelenberg & Pieters, 2009). In this chapter we describe a recently

developed measure of both benign and malicious envy and examine its validity by relating it to

important organizational outcomes.

Distinguishing between the two types of envy

Empirical studies focusing on the consequences of workplace envy suggest a primarily

destructive pattern (Duffy, Shaw, & Schaubroeck, 2008). Workplace envy has been shown to

erode the quality of workplace relationships (Duffy & Shaw, 2000), decrease positive workplace

attitudes (Vecchio, 2000), and increase antisocial behavior (Vecchio, 2007; Duffy, Scott, Shaw

& Tepper, 2012; Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007). However some recent work has focused on

the positive and adaptive outcomes associated with envy such as emulation, desire to learn, and

increased motivation to succeed (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004; Van de Ven,

Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2011a, 2011b).

Van de Ven et al. (2009) argue that these different motivations are best understood by

seeing envy as containing two subtypes: benign and malicious envy. Malicious envy is the

prototypical view of envy (sometimes also referred to as "envy proper", see Smith & Kim, 2007)

that leads to a desire to pull down the superior person. Benign envy, on the other hand, is also a painful and frustrating feeling (as it is envy) but also contains a motivation to improve oneself. The general idea is that envy has a goal to level the difference with the superior other, malicious envy achieves this by pulling down the other, while benign envy does so by moving oneself up. Crusius and Lange (2014) also find that the focus of these envy types is on different aspects of the upward social comparison: whereas the maliciously envious mainly focus on the envied person, the benignly envious mainly focus on the object that makes the other better off.

Criticism of creating subtypes of envy. There is some debate as to whether it is useful to study envy by using these subtypes (Cohen-Charash & Larson, Chapter 1, this volume; Hoogland, Thielke, & Smith, Chapter 2, this volume; Tai, Narayanan, & McAllister, 2012). One argument is that envy is a singular emotion characterized by pain of another's good fortune, and different reactions following envy occur because of the influence of relationships, organizational climate, or beliefs about the self. The distinction between benign and malicious envy is, according to these researchers, based on the motivational outcome of envy and therefore might be tautological. Let us explain why we do think that a distinction between the envy types is useful.

First, the motivational consequences are an essential part of an emotion. We feel emotions because they help us deal with the environment and reach our goals (Cosmides & Tooby, 2000; Zeelenberg, Nelissen, Breugelmans, & Pieters, 2008). According to emotion theory, the motivations an emotion triggers are an integral part of the emotional experience and central to the emotion itself (Frijda, 1988; Roseman, Wiest & Swartz, 1994). This perspective is based on the work of Arnold (1960) who even defined emotion as a *felt action tendency*. Frijda (1986) followed up on this work and argues that changes in action readiness are the

distinguishing feature of emotions. Frijda sees emotions as a response to how a situation affects the interests of a person. Emotions then trigger action tendencies that subsequently serve the person's self-interest by responding to the threat (or opportunity) related to one's interest. Specific emotions arise through specific cognitive appraisals of a situation, but also elicit specific subsequent motivations in a person. Experiencing an emotion thus provides important information, signaling when something important to an individual's self- interest is happening, and also readies them for action (Keltner & Haidt, 1999). This occurs on a very basic level, for example when anger makes the blood move away from internal organs towards the hands and arms to ready those for potential use (Levenson, Ekman, & Friesen, 1990). If emotions are considered without respect to the motivational tendency, shame and guilt might be seen as one emotion (inferior feelings after having done something bad), while the motivational tendencies (withdrawal for shame, repair behavior for guilt) is what largely distinguishes them from each other (De Hooge, Zeelenberg, & Breugelmans, 2007). This theoretical importance of action tendencies in defining emotions is the first reason why we think that making the distinction between benign and malicious envy is useful.

Second, we also think that the fact that many languages have two words for these envy subtypes, is a signal that many cultures have found it useful to differentiate these subtypes of envy. The distinction so far was validated in Dutch (Van de Ven et al., 2009) and German (Crusius & Lange, 2014). Additionally, colleagues from various countries have confirmed to us that their language also has two words for the envy subtypes (with Japanese, Polish, and Turkish as examples). Furthermore, in other languages where only one word for envy exists, people have sometimes found other ways to refer to benign and malicious envy. Colleagues from both Brazil

and Russia told us that they distinguish between *white* and *black* envy, which seems to map onto the benign and malicious envy as they have been defined.

Words and feelings do not always perfectly overlap. Regarding envy, we do not think that languages (or countries) that use one word are more correct in their definition of envy than those that use two words, or vice versa. We think both are correct, but focus on the emotion at a different level. For countries where there is one word for envy (e.g. English, Spanish) envy refers to the pain over the good fortune of others (as Aristotle, 350BC, already defined it). Countries that use two words zoom into a more detailed level of this emotion, and seem to differentiate benign and malicious envy as they have been defined by Van de Ven et al. (2009). Note that this view of envy consisting of two subtypes seems just as old as the view that envy is the pain over the good fortune of others: Cabato, in Chapter 18 of this book, quotes Hesiod (around 700BC) who distinguishes a good and bad envy. Thus, the second reason why we think that making the distinction between the envy types is useful, is that many languages already make such a distinction.

A third reason why we think that making the distinction between the subtypes of envy is useful is that it allows for novel theoretical insights and predictions. For example, some research found that envy led to schadenfreude (the joy over the misfortune of another person), while other research found that it did not (see Van Dijk, Ouwerkerk, Goslinga, Nieweg, & Gallucci, 2006). Van de Ven, Hoogland, Smith, Van Dijk, Breugelmans, & Zeelenberg (2014) found that a distinction in the envy subtypes helped to resolve this apparent discrepancy in the literature, as experiencing malicious envy led to schadenfreude, while benign envy did not. Furthermore, and importantly, a manipulation that made the superior position of the envied other undeserved (which is known to elicit malicious envy, Van de Ven, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2012) increased

schadenfreude via its effect on malicious envy. This thus shows that at times the distinction between envy subtypes helps to predict how people will feel and behave next.

This latter effect also fits well with the idea of Tai et al. (2012) that differences in the situation lead to different responses following envy. But where they see envy as a relatively undifferentiated painful reaction, we think that seeing envy as having two subtypes helps to make more precise predictions of organizational behavior without the need to account for all of the potential individual differences and aspects of organizational context that could affect an individual's appraisal of social comparison events in the workplace. Finally, by using the subtypes a researcher also has to be clear on whether one measures general envy, or one of the subtypes. In the research on the envy-schadenfreude link we discussed before (Van de Ven et al., 2014) it was noted that in the scientific debate on whether envy led to schadenfreude or not, those who found effects of envy on schadenfreude included hostility related questions, while those who did not find such an effect used more coveting-related questions as the measure of envy. Both sides of the debate claimed to measure envy, but did so with very different items, which in turn produced very different results. And so the final reason why we think that making the distinction between the envy types is because this forces researchers to clarify whether they define envy as being malicious envy, benign envy, or the combination of the two as general envy.

In this chapter, we describe the development of measures of both the experience of malicious and benign envy for use in the workplace. Employees can experience many events in the workplace that could elicit envy as they compete for scarce resources and promotions, are subject to performance comparisons, and experience different qualities of leader member exchange. For the purposes of this chapter, we have developed separate measures for benign and

malicious envy based on the work of Van de Ven et al., (2009) in order to empirically test how the different subtypes of envy relate to important aspects of organizational behavior.

The Sample

In order to validate our scale we utilized a sample consisting of employees from a large health care organization. These employees represented the main administrative unit and were responsible for several functions including human resources, marketing, billings and collections, credentialing, and customer service. All data were collected on-site using electronic surveys administered on laptop computers provided by the researchers. The participants completed the survey in small groups of eight in a large board room after a short presentation was provided reiterating the Institutional Review Board stipulations, the informed consent process, and detailing how participant confidentiality was protected. To alleviate response burden, electronic surveys were administered in 2 separate rounds. The first survey contained all sociometric questions as well as the workplace deviance scale and work effort scale. The second survey contained the remainder of the psychometric questions pertaining to workplace attitudes, perceptions and emotions. Nearly all of the participants finished the surveys within 15-20 minutes during both administrations. To encourage a high response rate, management allowed all participants to dress casually on the days they completed the surveys, and the research team held several on-site Q&A sessions with potential participants to answer any questions or concerns they might have had.

Out of a total of 142 employees 124 completed the psychometric surveys yielding a response rate of 87%. The sample was predominantly female (87%) with an average age of 45 years and an average tenure of approximately 6 years within the organization. To the best of our knowledge we do not believe that one particular gender is more or less predisposed to the

experience of envy, it is important to note however that higher levels of gender similarity may lead to greater instance of explicit social comparison resulting in a greater experience of envy (Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004). Similarity to an envied person is equally important for both benign and malicious envy, and so we do not expect that this will affect one of the envy subscales more than the other (Van de Ven et al., 2009).

Preliminary interviews with top managers revealed the culture of the organization to be predominantly collaborative, with little to no institutionalized competition built in to the structure of the organization; pay was not competitive and promotions were given infrequently enough that they were not something that employees would strive for and compete over. Despite the lack of organizational pressures that increase the likelihood of experiencing workplace envy, social comparisons (and thus envy) play an important role in people's lives (e.g., Clanton, 2010; Smith, 2008; Suls & Wheeler, 2000). Even if not formalized, organizations by their very nature exhibit a social hierarchy which encourages social comparison (e.g., Gino, Chapter 3, this book). Employees will compare themselves to each other in a variety of domains including: abilities, popularity, quality of leader member exchange- just to name a few.

The Scale

Based on earlier research on benign and malicious envy, we created items to measure the separate envy types. These items were developed considering the affective, cognitive, and motivational content of each envy subtype (benign and malicious) and were specifically designed to capture the experience of envy in an organizational context. Envy in general can best be described as the pain at the good fortune of others. The experience of benign and malicious envy differ in that benign envy involves more of a focus on the quality, achievement, or object that the self lacks and on action tendencies of self-improvement or the acquisition of what one lacks.

Malicious envy focuses one's attention more on the person that is better off, and activates action

tendencies to pull down and degrade the other. Drawing on prior empirical research on the

experiential content of both envy subtypes we developed items (using a 7-point scale ranging

from "Never" to "Always") to consider the affective, cognitive, and motivational content of

benign and malicious envy (Van de Ven, et al., 2009). Items created for measuring benign envy

included feelings of inspiration for the other, wanting to improve one's own position, and hoping

the other would continue their success. The items used for measuring malicious envy included

feelings of intense frustration, negative thoughts about the other, wanting to degrade the other,

and hoping the other would fail. Participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they had

experienced these various feeling, thoughts, and motivations in the past 3 months (See Table 1

for all the items). For the measure of benign envy five items were developed. An example scale

item is "I am motivated to try harder to achieve my own goals when comparing myself with

others at this company that are doing well." Four items were used for the malicious envy

subscale. An example item for the malicious envy scale is "At times I may wish that successful

people that I compare myself to will experience some kind of setback."

An exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the items in both envy subscales to

identify the underlying factor structure. Principal components analysis was used with an Oblimin

rotation; the resulting scree plot and eigenvalues demonstrate a clear two factor structure (see

Table 1). The first factor had an eigenvalue of 3.95 accounting for 43% of the variance. The

second factor had an eigenvalue of 1.19 accounting for an additional 13% of the variance. No

other factors had an eigenvalue above 1 and together the two factors accounted for 57% of the

variance. The factor loadings of each question on the factor can be found in Table 1. Both scales

demonstrated sufficient reliability (Malicious Envy: α = .82, Benign envy: α = .73). The

correlation between the two scales was (r = -.535, p < .001).

We also tested for the possibility of common method variance. Because all data were

self-reported and collected using the same survey instrument it is possible that the benign and

malicious envy scales are capturing underlying latent factors. Because many different emotion

items were collected using this survey instrument it is possible that the variance captured by the

benign and malicious envy scale is due largely to differences in positive or negative affectivity.

If common method variance is an issue, the underlying factor structure of all emotion measures

would reveal only one or two factors. In order to test for this we used Harman's single-factor

test (Podsakoff & Organ, 1986 and combined all emotion measures into one scale including

benign envy, malicious envy, hope, pride, shame, employee jealousy, and employee envy. The

result of the factor analysis revealed 11 separate factors with an eigenvalue greater than 1 and the

first factor accounted for only 30% of the total variance. The results of this test suggests that the

benign and malicious envy scales are not simply capturing an individual's general positive or

negative affectivity.

A second possibility is that the benign and malicious envy scale is capturing an

employee's positive or negative attitude of the organization as a whole. In order to test for this

we ran a separate Harman's single-factor test combining the scale items from the benign and

malicious envy scales with measures of employee perceptions about their workplace including

job satisfaction, social rewards satisfaction, and perceptions of procedural justice. It is possible

that if an employee holds a negative view of their workplace this dissatisfaction could account

for the differences associated with benign and malicious envy. The results of Harman's single-

factor test revealed 5 separate factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 and the first factor

accounted for only 35% of total variance. These results suggest that the differences in the benign and malicious envy scale cannot be solely attributed to positive or negative attitudes of the workplace.

Scale Validity

Scale validity was tested by examining the convergent and discriminant validity of the benign and malicious envy scales. The first step was to analyze the correlation of the envy subscales with several other social comparison related emotions- those that can result from the performance of others in a domain relevant to the comparer (Tesser, 1991). Social comparison related emotions have been associated with both positive and negative outcomes. Feelings of hope and pride have primarily been associated with positive organizational outcomes and feelings of shame and jealousy have primarily been associated with negative organizational outcomes (Andrews, Qian & Valentinel, 2002; Youssef & Luthans, 2007; Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000; Vecchio, 2000; Tracy & Robbins, 2007; Grandey, Tam & Brauburger, 2002. Thus we would expect benign envy to be positively correlated with hope and pride and malicious envy to be positively correlated with shame and jealousy. In order for the envy subscales to discriminate from these social comparison related emotion measures the association should be low to moderate in strength.

Table 2 shows the relationships between the various measures. As expected the Malicious Envy Scale demonstrated low to moderate positive correlations with the Experience of Shame Scale (Andrews, et al., 2002) (r = .43, p < .001), the Employee Jealousy Scale (Vecchio, 2000) (r = .56, p < .001) and demonstrated low to moderate negative correlations with the Experience of Pride Scale (Tracy & Robins, 2007) (r = -.298, p = .001), and the State Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1996) (r = -.428, p < .001).

The Benign Envy scale showed an opposite pattern of results (see Table 2) demonstrating low to moderate negative correlations with the Experience of Shame Scale (r = -.21, p = .021), the Employee Jealousy Scale (r = -.32, p < .001) and demonstrating low to moderate positive correlations with the Experience of Pride Scale (r = -.27, p = .002), and the State Hope Scale (r = .37, p < .001). Overall the pattern of results suggests that the envy subscales are related to other validated measures of social-comparison related emotions but the strength of these correlations is not high enough to suggest that they are redundant.

Next the association between the envy subscales and previously used measures of envy were investigated. Traditionally used measures of envy (c.f. Smith, Parrott, Hoyle & Kim, 1999; Vecchio, 2000) tend to emphasize the destructive and hostile component of envy, thus emphasizing malicious envy (Smith & Kim, 2007). For this reason we expected these measures to be positively correlated with the malicious envy subscale. We expected that these measures would be more strongly correlated with the malicious envy subscale than the other social comparison based emotion measures. Correlations can be found in Table 2. The malicious envy scale was moderately correlated with the Employee Envy scale (r = .446, p < .001) and was also moderately correlated with the Dispositional Envy Scale (r = .585, p < .001). The benign envy scale demonstrated a low to moderate negative correlation with the Employee Envy Scale (r = -.361, p < .001) and the Dispositional Envy Scale (r= -.262, p = .003). As expected, malicious envy is more strongly related to traditional measures of envy than other social comparison related emotions. The one exception to this is the correlation between malicious envy and the Employee Jealousy Scale. The reason for the strong positive correlation between the Malicious Envy Scale and the Employee Jealousy scale is likely due to the close association between the concepts of jealousy and envy and the often interchangeability of the two terms in the English

language. The traditional measures of envy are also more strongly correlated to the Malicious

Envy Scale than to the Benign Envy Scale, this is expected as the Benign Envy Scale focuses on

a separate component of envy. This is perhaps also one reason why envy has so often been linked

to negative behavior in the workplace, as the measures have only tapped into malicious envy.

Predictive Validity

In order to test the predictive validity of the envy subscales in an organizational setting

we ran several OLS regression analyses to test the relationship between benign and malicious

envy with organizational outcomes. As noted earlier, malicious envy has most often been

associated with a focus on the envied other and a desire to even the score by pulling that person

down. Benign envy, on the other hand, has most often been associated with a focus on one's

goals and self-improvement. Based on these empirical findings we generally expected that

benign envy would be positively related to work effort and organizational citizenship behavior

and malicious envy would be positively related to workplace deviance and turnover intentions.

Control variables. In the subsequent analyses we controlled for gender to account for

potential gender differences in the dependent variables as scholars have shown that women are

less likely to engage in deviant behavior toward their peers (Pearson & Porath, 2004). We also

controlled for rank as higher status members of the organization are more likely to engage in

incivility toward their lower status members (Pearson & Porath, 2004). We also controlled for

organizational tenure (measured as months in the organization) as scholars have found that those

who behave uncivilly toward others tend to have spent two or more years longer in the

organization than their targets have (Pearson & Porath, 2004).

To make sure our scales for benign envy and malicious envy have predictive value, we

also controlled for two other important organizational factors, procedural justice and job

satisfaction. Procedural Justice was measured using the procedural justice dimension of the Organizational Justice Scale (Colquitt, 2001). Procedural justice was included in the model to capture employees' sense of fairness in the policies and procedures used to distribute organizational rewards. As such this measure was used as a proxy for an employee's perception of attainability, their idea of whether or not the organization is an even playing field. If employees perceive high levels of procedural justice, they should be more likely to believe that high levels of performance and greater organizational rewards are attainable. Procedural justice was measured using self-reports on a 7 item, 7 point Likert scale, with responses ranging from "Completely Disagree" to "Completely Agree." Sample items include: "My work procedures are free from bias," "I have been able to express my views and feelings regarding work procedures." This scale demonstrated a high level of reliability (α = .82).

Finally we controlled for an employee's satisfaction with their job and their coworkers. Job satisfaction was measured using the 3 item overall job satisfaction index of the Michigan Organizational Assessment Scale (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins & Klesh, 1979). Items include: "In general, I like working here," "In general, I don't like my job (reverse coded), "All in all, I am satisfied with my job." This scale demonstrated high reliability (α = .84). Satisfaction with coworkers was measured using the 3 item social rewards scale (Seashore, Lawler, Mirvis & Cammann, 1982). Items include: "I am satisfied with the respect I receive from the people I work with," "I am satisfied with the way I am treated by the people I work with," "I am satisfied with the friendliness of the people I work with." This scale demonstrated high reliability (α = .89). Job satisfaction has been shown to relate strongly to workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 2003; Judge, Scott & Ilies, 2006). Correlations between all variables used for testing the predictive validity of the envy subtypes are shown in Table 3.

Benign envy and positive work behavior. Some empirical results from lab studies show that benign envy is associated with motivational gain and a desire for self-improvement (Van de Ven et al, 2011a,b). However benign envy differs from other positive social comparison based emotions such as admiration. Admiration makes people internalize the ideals of the admired person (Schindler, Zink, Windrich, & Menninghaus, 2013), but does not necessarily motivate direct self-improvement (Van de Ven et al., 2011b). Benign envy seems to result in an increased focus on the desired object or trait the envied person has, as opposed to a focus on the other that occurs with malicious envy (Crusius & Lange, 2014).

Based on these findings, our benign envy scale should also be related to positive motivations in the work setting. Because of the upward motivation and desire for self-improvement that benign envy produces we expected employees to engage in positive voluntary workplace behavior. Although we did not explicitly measure the domain of envy in the organization we assume that experienced envy results from a social comparison alerting the employee to their relative standing within the organization. Several scholars have shown that work performance is a critical focus for comparison in organizations and that information concerning performance is often available and relevant, whether it be through the posting of objective performance milestones or third party gossip (Barr & Conlon, 1994; Molleman, Nauta & Buunk, 2007; Lam et al. 2011). We believe that individuals can improve their relative standing by increasing both in-role and extra role performance, measured with work effort and organizational citizenship behavior respectively. An employee can "close the gap" by working harder or becoming a more helpful corporate citizen.

To measure work effort, we used the Work Effort Scale (Wright, Kacmar, McMahan, & DeLeeuw, 1995; Kacmar, Zivnuska & White, 2007). The original scale included 8 items, and we

used a sub-scale of 4 items that dealt only with "self-initiated effort." Participants were asked to indicate on a 7 point Likert Scale ranging from "completely disagree" to "completely agree" the extent to which they engaged in the following behaviors in the last few months: "Try to do things better at work than I have in the past," "Tried to do more than was asked of me," "Tried to work harder," and "Tried to get more things done on time." This scale demonstrated very high reliability ($\alpha = .94$). Table 4 contains the regression analyses testing the relationship between especially the Benign Envy scale and work effort. The full model with all controls as predictors of work effort was not significant, $F(6,118) = 1.19$, $p = .318$ and explained 5.7% of the variance. Adding the Benign and Malicious Envy scales explained another 6.6% of the variance, and the model was significant, $F(8,116 = 2.02$, $p = .050$. The Benign Envy scale significantly predicted work effort, ($\beta = .274$, $p = .015$) when controlling for other relevant controls.

To measure organizational citizenship we used a 9-item scale based on the work of Turnley, Bolino, Lester & Bloodgood (2003). Example items include "I adhere to informal organizational rules devised to maintain order," and "I generally help others who have been absent." ($\alpha = .68$). For organizational citizenship behavior, we did not find an effect of the envy scales as we had predicted (see Table 4). The original model was significant, $F(6,118) = 2.33$, $p = .037$, and explained 10.7% of the variance. Adding the scales for benign and malicious envy did allow improvement of the model by another 3.7%, $F(8,116) = 2.42$, $p = .019$, but benign envy did not significantly predict organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = .139$, $p = .208$).

Malicious envy and negative work behavior. Malicious envy differs from benign envy by producing a pulling-down motivation rather than a moving up motivation (Van de Ven, et al., 2009). Malicious envy most closely resembles envy proper, the subject of traditional envy studies, and is thus associated with feelings of hostility and ill-will (Smith & Kim, 2007).

Malicious envy is a much more frustrating and negative experience than benign envy although the desire to close the gap between self and envied target is still present. While benign envy is associated with an increased focus on the self, malicious envy tends to sharpen the focus on the envied other. This other- focus has been demonstrated in a series of experiments that show that envious individuals tended to more accurately recall information about their envied peers than a control group (Hill, DelPriore & Vaughan, 2011). These studies also showed that this redirection of attention to the envied other can deplete self-regulatory resources making it harder for individuals to control their subsequent behavior. In addition to possible self-regulatory depletion the experience of malicious envy is associated with feelings of dislike toward the envied target, increased perceptions of injustice and unfairness, and a desire to take away from the envied individual (Van de Ven, et al., 2009). These feelings of dislike and sense of injustice coupled with a decrease in self-regulatory resources enables individuals experiencing malicious envy to morally disengage, increasing the probability that these individuals can engage in harmful actions such as social undermining (Duffy et al., 2012). Employees experiencing malicious envy will thus be motivated to "even the score" through undermining, hindering, or embarrassing envied others. A few studies have shown that envy can result in behavior specifically targeted at the envied other such as interpersonal harming and social undermining (Lam et al., 2011; Duffy, et al., 2012). Malicious envy not only results in feelings of dislike and increased attention on the envied other but also results in thoughts of injustice and undeservedness. Thus the organization may also be a target of malicious envy's retribution. Employees typically expect a fair workplace, one that is free of bias when it comes to handing out organizational rewards, and this constitutes a major dimension in an employee's psychological contract (Coyle-Shapiro, 2002). However when an employee perceives

organizational unfairness, as is the case with malicious envy, employees may also be motivated

to punish the organization for psychological contract violation. Therefore the scale developed

for malicious envy should be related to workplace deviance, a measure of deviant behavior that

includes both interpersonal and organizationally directed deviance (Robinson & Bennett, 2000).

Workplace Deviance was measured using the Workplace Deviance Scale (Robinson &

Bennett, 2000). Adopting the approach used in previous research (Lee & Allen, 2002), we used

27 items from the original workplace deviance scale. Items were self-reported using a 7-point

Likert scale ranging from "Never" to "Always." Similar to Lee & Allen, we dropped items that

had too little variance, with more than 90% responding "never" to the item (the following items

were dropped from the analysis: "Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you

spent on business expenses," "Use an illegal drug or consume alcohol on the job," "Drag out

work in order to get overtime," "Played a mean prank on someone at work," and "Publicly

embarrassed someone at work.") This approach resulted in a 22-item scale with high reliability

($\alpha = .90$). Sample items include: "Made fun of someone at work," "Said something hurtful at

work," and "Acted rudely to someone at work."

Table 4 contains the regression analyses testing the relationship between our envy scales

and workplace deviance. The model with all controls as predictors of workplace deviance was

significant, $F(6,118) = 3.091$, $p = .008$ and explained 13.7% of the variance. Adding the scales

for benign and malicious envy explained another 9.4% of the variance, $F(8,116) = 4.31$, $p < .001$.

The Malicious Envy scale indeed predicted workplace deviance ($\beta = .365$, $p < .001$), when

controlling for other relevant factors such as job satisfaction, perceptions of justice and

satisfaction with one's coworkers.

While an employee who experiences malicious envy may be motivated to engage in workplace deviance they may be unable to do so. Organizational researchers have demonstrated that employees need both motivation and discretion to engage in behavior that deviates from norms (Scott, Colquitt & Paddock, 2009). Individuals who engage in workplace deviance may be subject to sanctions or punishment from their peers and the organization, and thus may not be able to act upon their motivations. These individuals are still subject to the experience of malicious envy which is both unpleasant and threatening to an individual's identity and sense of self-worth. Thus faced with ego threatening upward comparisons individuals may choose to withdraw physically or psychologically from the workplace in order to limit the amount of upward comparisons they are subject too. Vecchio (2000) found that individuals experiencing envy in the workplace had higher propensities to quit. Therefore, we predicted that our scale for malicious envy should be related to turnover intentions, measured using the Turnover Intentions Scale from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh, 1979; $\alpha = .94$).

Table 4 contains the regression analyses testing the relationship between malicious envy and turnover intentions. The model with all controls as predictors of turnover intentions was significant, $F(6,118) = 14.9$, $p < .001$ and explained 43% of the variance. Adding the scales for benign and malicious envy explained another 1.9% of the variance, $F(8,116) = 11.85$, $p < .001$. Malicious Envy did indeed predict turnover intentions ($\beta = .165$, $p = .052$), when controlling for other relevant controls.

General Discussion

In order to understand the complex sometimes contradictory effects of workplace envy we argue that a useful way to conceptualize and measure envy is to differentiate between benign

and malicious envy. The existence of these two qualitatively different envy subtypes is supported both by empirical studies (Crucius & Lange, 2014; Van de Ven et al., 2011) and common language usage, as many languages have distinct terms to identify these envy subtypes (Van de Ven et al., 2009). In this study we tested and validated a set of scales that we believe can be usefully and practically employed to further understand and evaluate workplace envy. Our envy subscales exhibited good reliability, and the factor structure and item loadings displayed two underlying factors as expected. Both benign and malicious envy scales were significantly correlated with other social comparison related emotions, but the strength of this correlation was low to moderate, showing expected similarity but also establishing discriminant validity. Also as expected, malicious envy was more strongly related to traditional measures of envy including dispositional envy (Smith, 1999) and employee envy (Vecchio, 2000) which was also expected given the emphasis on the destructive component of envy in these measures. However, these correlations were moderate in strength suggesting that the malicious envy scale is not redundant or interchangeable with the other two.

Benign and malicious envy had a negative, moderate correlation with one another. We ran several tests to explore whether or not benign envy was simply the absence or inverse of feeling envy. The fact that when the items for these two scales are combined they nonetheless display a distinct two-factor structure and the fact that the correlation between the two factors is moderate in strength provides evidence that these two envy subtypes are not simply the inverse of one another. Additionally, the results for turnover intentions revealed an interesting pattern. Malicious envy had a significant and positive relationship with turnover intentions. Benign envy also had a positive, but not significant, relationship with turnover intentions. Although these results were not significant and should be interpreted with caution, it appears that both benign

and malicious envy are positively related to turnover intentions. This likely follows because both benign and malicious envy are unpleasant emotional experiences and one potential way for alleviating this pain is to withdraw from the workplace.

Predictive validity was established using OLS regressions to test the association between benign and malicious envy with several voluntary workplace behavior measures. These models controlled for an individual's job satisfaction, satisfaction with coworkers, and perceptions of organizational fairness. Generally speaking, malicious envy was more strongly related to counterproductive behaviors, including increased workplace deviance and greater turnover intentions. Benign envy was significantly related with higher levels of work related effort but did not demonstrate a significant relationship with organizational citizenship behavior. Although we did expect that employees may try to even the gap by engaging in extra-role behavior, this did not appear to be the case in this sample. Empirical studies have shown that the experience of benign envy is associated with an increased focus on the self and especially one's own goals (Van de Ven et al, 2009; Crusius and Lange, 2014). It may be that increasing one's effort is believed to be the most direct route to improving one's performance in an organization. In sum, we conclude that our measures of benign and malicious envy demonstrate adequate reliability and validity and can be used to help understand the causes and consequences of workplace envy.

Limitations

One potential criticism of the scales and their validation procedures is that they were based on employee self-reports. Employees rated their own experience of benign and malicious envy, workplace attitudes and several other emotion items. We did take several steps to ameliorate the problem of relying on self-report measures. First, we tested for common method using Harman's one-factor test. The results showed several underlying factors which makes it

unlikely that the differences in our envy subscales can be attributed to negative attitudes about the workplace or negative affectivity.

Our approach for exploring workplace envy by differentiating and measuring the benign and malicious components of envy might be criticized for being tautological because our conceptualization and measurement of the envy subtypes also include a motivational component (Cohen-Charash & Larson, Chapter 1, this book). It has been suggested that a better approach is to focus on measuring the initial pain and feelings of inadequacy that accompany initial envious reactions. The different outcomes associated with envy according to this approach can then later be attributed to individual differences and the situational context in which the social comparison is being made.

We have two points to make on this criticism. The first deals with a question of measurement. In order to appropriately measure envy this way (i.e. focusing on each individual's unique experience) it would be necessary to use event sampling methodology. While this technique can yield many useful and nuanced findings, it is unfortunately seen as invasive, cumbersome, and is very difficult to employ in a workplace setting (McWilliams & Siegel, 1997). The purpose of our scales is to create a tool that is a reliable and valid tool that usefully approximates the experience of workplace envy and allows researchers to explore how envy effects workplace behavior. We argue that a measure that captures only the affective experience of an emotion will not have predictive value in itself. Appraisal theorists have argued that it would be very difficult to separate the affective component of an emotion with the motivation it produces (Stein & Hernandez, 2007). Specific situations give rise to a combination of specific feelings and specific motivations, and an emotion is actually the combination of these feelings and motivational tendencies. Appraisal theorists argue that emotions are more like feedback

systems that include arousal and an individual's appraisal of the situation, as well as past and future actions (Baumeister, Vohs, Dewall & Zhang, 2007). Similarly Stein, Hernandez & Trabasso (2010) argued that "Emotional responses include affective responses, but they occur because of the appraisal of personally meaningful goals. They also encode a plan of action" (p. 584).

An additional argument related to the possible tautological nature of our measures, is that envy is a specific painful experience and the different outcomes it produces actually come from individual and situational differences. While we wholeheartedly agree that the context of social comparisons in the workplace is likely to have profound effects on emotional experience and organization behavior, we argue that this approach creates a relatively undifferentiated notion of envy, making it possibly more difficult to separate and study the antecedents and consequences of envy in the workplace. In our validation studies we included situational measures of the justice and collaborative climate of the organization and still found significant effects for both benign and malicious envy on important workplace behaviors. We argue that our envy scales can be used to understand both the antecedents and consequences of workplace envy and serve as an important diagnostic tool concerning emotional experience in the workplace. In preliminary work on the antecedents of benign and malicious envy, organizational justice was an important predictor differentiating between and individual's experience of benign and malicious envy. When the workplace was perceived as fair and just, individuals were more likely to experience benign envy with the inverse being true for the experience of malicious envy (Sterling, 2013).

Future Directions and Managerial Implications

We very much agree with the other scholars in this book that the context of social comparison should be given more attention. We believe that the two subtype approach is a useful way for observing both the antecedents and consequences of workplace envy. The question remains of how the emotional experience of envy is best handled or managed in the workplace. The answer probably does not lie in the elimination of envy. Scholars have recognized that two fundamental aspects of organizational life contribute to the pervasiveness of envy, hierarchy and competition (Vecchio, 2007). Additionally, the more people think "*it could have been me*" when they see someone who is better off than them, the stronger their envy is (Van de Ven & Zeelenberg, in press). But an organization would not want to eliminate this feeling, as that can likely only be done by preventing people from feeling they could obtain that better position, which would either hurt people's perception of self-efficacy or organizational fairness. Organizations can vary by their hierarchical divisions and the amount of internal competition it is unlikely that envy can be completely removed from organizational life. Perhaps a better approach to managing envy in organizations is to ensure the experience of envy is benign rather than malicious. Future research should focus on those factors that differentiate the experience of benign envy from the experience of malicious envy.

Both benign and malicious envy result from social comparison. Employees come to make sense of their identity and their place within an organization by comparing their abilities, rewards, and performance to that of their peers. Whether or not this comparison results in benign or malicious envy depends in part by how the individual appraises the situation: are the results obtainable and do the referent others deserve their success? These appraisals are in part, driven by the context in which these comparisons are made-Who specifically do individuals compare themselves to? How similar is the individual with the referent other? What is the relationship

between the individual and referent other? A recent study has demonstrated that context plays an important role in the social comparison process, when comparisons were made within the context of a competitive workgroup, upward comparisons typically resulted in harming behavior but when comparisons were made within the context of a more collaborative workgroup, these negative effects were muted (Lam, Van der Vegt, Waller, & Huang, 2011). Similarly research in social psychology has demonstrated that characteristics of the relationship between comparer and referent such as the amount of relative deprivation, perceptions of similarity, and psychological closeness to the social referent all have a significant impact on the emotional outcomes of the social comparison process (Lockwood & Kunda, 1997; Mussweiler et al., 2004). Studies examining the consequences of both benign and malicious envy have typically focused on a single episodic occurrence of envy either through guided recall or scenario based questionnaires. While this approach has been vital to understanding the affective, cognitive, and motivational processes associated with benign and malicious envy these approaches often neglect the organizational context in which these social comparisons are made. Individuals in organizations often have more than one referent other and these referent relationships are relatively stable over time (Kulik & Ambrose, 1992). Considering comparison events in isolation may give us an incomplete picture on what drives behavior in the workplace. In order to better understand how the experience of benign and malicious envy relates to broader patterns of individual behavior in organizations, an approach that is able to incorporate multiple referent others may help us better understand the antecedents to experiencing benign or malicious envy.

Recent studies in both social psychology and management have recognized the importance of identifying referent others. Lawrence (2006) and Shah (1998) have both recognized that employees have specific individuals with whom they compare themselves, an

organizational reference group that is used to make sense of their standing in the workplace. Zell and Alicke (2010) demonstrated that individuals are disproportionately affected by the social comparison outcomes of a relatively small group of individuals that are proximate and assessable to the comparer. Therefore, we expect that in addition to individual differences, and organizational context, the comparison context will also impact the experience of benign and malicious envy and subsequent behavioral outcomes. A previous study adopting a social network perspective demonstrated that the number of referent others and the relationships between these referent others had a significant impact on whether or not an employee experienced benign or malicious envy and these envy subtypes mediated several behavioral outcomes (Sterling, 2013).

We thus believe that our benign and malicious envy subscales are a reliable and valid method for studying the antecedents and consequences of envy in the workplace and further research using these instruments can better help us understand how workplace envy can be managed. It is unlikely that we can completely eradicate envy in the workplace as other scholars have remarked. Instead, perhaps managerial interventions should focus on creating an environment that supports employee perceptions that high levels of performance are obtainable and the procedures with which employees are rewarded and promoted are transparent, fair and just. Because of the importance of these two appraisal aspects we argue that further research should focus on the relationship between envy and managerial actions to improve LMX, training, and organizational justice. Preliminary evidence also points to the fact that whom we compare ourselves to matters, and more research is needed to better understand how referent selection occurs in the workplace. If we can reliably distinguish between the experience of benign and malicious envy for employees in a workplace and better understand the influence that context has

on the comparison process we should be better able to determine what organizational actions

lead to feelings of benign envy while minimizing feelings of malicious envy. This focus should

help inform managerial decisions on processes such as team assignments, mentorship programs,

employee recognition programs, and feedback and appraisal systems. It is our assertion that

future research directed in this way can help minimize the destructive influence of envy in our

organizations while preserving the motivational potential.

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Table 1: Factor Loadings

Item	Item Wording	Factor Loadings	
		Benign Envy	Malicious Envy
1	When I compare myself to successful people at this company it is hard for me to feel resentful.	.591	.063
2	I am motivated to try harder to achieve my own goals when comparing myself with others at this company that are doing well.	.904	.108
3	Even when I am comparing myself to someone at this company that is successful, I hope they continue their success.	.783	-.044
4	When I compare myself with someone successful at this company I feel inspired to do more to get ahead.	.596	-.131
5	Even when I am envious of people I compare myself to, I cannot say I dislike them.	.551	-.160
6	Sometimes people feel envious because they lack the advantages, superior accomplishment and talents enjoyed by others, and secretly wish the other person would lose this advantage, I've felt this way in the past few months.	-.029	.791
7	I feel very frustrated by the success of others at this company when I compare myself to them.	.036	.708
8	At times I may wish that successful people that I compare myself to will experience some kind of setback.	.002	.858
9	I may wish I could do something to take down a notch those successful people I compare mysef to at this company, even if I would never actually do that	-.066	.805
	Eigen Value	3.950	1.185
	%Variance Explained (unrotated factors)	44	13.17

Table 2: Correlations of Benign Envy and Malicious Envy scales with similar scales

Comparison Measure	Observed Correlations	
	Benign Envy	Malicious Envy
Experience of Shame Scale (Andrews et al., 2002)	-.207*	.434**
Employee Jealousy (Vecchio, 2000)	-.318**	.556**
Experience of Pride Scale (Tracy & Robins, 2007)	.270*	-.298**
State Hope Scale (Snyder et al., 1996)	.367**	-.428**
Employee Envy Scale (Vecchio, 2000)	-.361**	446**
Dispositional Envy Scale (Smith et al., 1999)	-.262**	.585**

Note. N=124 *

* p < .05. ** p < .01.

Table 3: Bivariate Correlations

	N	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Malicious Envy	124	2.25	1.02	–					
2 Benign Envy	124	5.14	0.85	-.517**	–				
3 Gender	124	0.87	0.34	-.007	-.019	–			
4 Tenure	124	77.65	76.97	-.090	-.074	.036	–		
5 Rank	124	0.11	0.32	-.150	.085	-.243**	-.049	–	
6 Job Satisfaction	124	5.33	1.11	-.222*	.371**	-.112	-.127	.080	–
7 Procedural Justice	124	4.77	1.09	-.263**	.267**	-.148	-.034	.129	.653**
8 Social Rewards Satisfaction	124	5.07	1.20	-.293**	.426**	-.111	.046	.099	.681**
9 Effort	124	5.87	1.05	-.192*	.318**	-.007	.043	.105	.227*
10 Organizational Citizenship Behavior	124	5.41	0.76	-.245**	.244**	.040	.047	.234**	.088
11 Deviant Behavior	124	1.72	0.47	.372**	-.190*	-.057	-.070	-.104	-.357**
12 Turnover Intentions	124	3.39	1.26	.217*	-.204*	.024	-.067	.025	-.700**

	7	8	9	10	11	12
1 Malicious Envy						
2 Benign Envy						
3 Gender						
4 Tenure						
5 Rank						
6 Job Satisfaction						
7 Procedural Justice	–					
8 Social Rewards Satisfaction	.563**	–				
9 Effort	.175	.200*	–			
10 Organizational Citizenship Behavior	.164	.180*	.284**	–		
11 Deviant Behavior	-.256**	-.299**	-.279**	-.282**	–	
12 Turnover Intentions	-.288**	-.549**	-.081	-.082	.342**	–

* Correlation significant at .05 level (2-tailed)

** Correlation significant at .01 level (2-tailed)

Table 4: Regression Results

Variable	Effort		OCB		Deviant Behavior		Turnover Intentions	
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2	Model 1	Model 2
Gender	.043	.029	.123	.108	-.124	-.102	-.020	-.013
Tenure	.051	.075	.035	.039	-.088	-.048	-.107	-.084
Rank	.092	.077	.241	.221	-.101	-.057	.062	.079
Job Satisfaction	.063	.071	-.124	-.114	-.174	-.040	-.528*	-.537**
Procedural Justice	.055	.042	.156	.148	-.041	-.195	.315*	-.423**
Social Rewards Satisfaction	.128	.005	.150	.057	-.179	-.103	-.433*	.313**
Malicious Envy		-.024		-.106		.365*		.165*
Benign Envy		.274*		.139		.110		.105
R-Square	.057	.123	.107	.144	.137	.231	.433	.452
ΔR-Square	.057	.066*	.107	.037	.137*	.094*	.433**	.019
Adjusted R-Square	.009	.062	.061	0.084†	.093	.177	.404	.414

Note. Standardized coefficients are reported. ΔR-Square report changes from the previous model.

* p < .05. ** p <.01 † p < .1