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Impression Management, Attributions and Behavioral Outcomes: A Co-worker Perspective

by

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Dedicated to my parents,
Tahira Azim and Azim Mahmood

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This is to certify that the research work presented in the thesis, entitled "**Impression Management, Attributions and Behavioral Outcomes: A Co-worker Perspective**" was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Lakhi Muhammad**. No part of this thesis has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This thesis is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences.** The open defence of the thesis was conducted on **November 09, 2021**.

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List of Publications

It is certified that following publication(s) have been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this thesis:-

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate impression management from a coworker's perspective. In doing so, this study proposes a model of impression management, attributions, and the envier's behavioral responses. Data were collected at T1, T2 and T3, from white-collar employees in the services industry using convenience sampling. Data from 331 respondents was analyzed using Smart PLS 3.

The results showed that the envious observer attributed coworker supervisory, self and job focused impression management in self-serving ways to their incompetence and the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness, which led to responses such as imitation of supervisory focused impression management, reduced performance, and targeted counterproductive behavior. However, the data did not support the hypotheses that attributional style would moderate the relationship between coworker impression management and the observer's attributions and responses.

The study has implications for scholars to study impression management from a third-party perspective. Additionally, it suggests that scholars approach various domains of organizational behavior in an integrated manner, for greater meaning. Furthermore, this study suggests that supervisors should be cognizant of their behaviors that reward impression managing attempts by employees. Limitations and future research directions are also discussed.

Key words: Impression Management, Attribution, Attribution Theory, Counterproductive Work Behavior, Job Performance, Competence, Social Perceptiveness.

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Abbreviations

AS	Attributional Style
COW ATT	Coworker Attributions of Lack of Competence
CWB	Counterproductive Work Behavior
JFIM	Job Focused Impression Management
JP	Job Performance
SFIM	Self Focused Impression Management
SPFIM R	Supervisor Focused Impression Management (Respondent)
SPFIM	Supervisor Focused Impression Management
SUP ATT	Supervisor Attributions of Lack of Social Perceptiveness

Chapter 1

Introduction

Attribution theory suggests that the average performer is motivated to seek causal reasoning for superior performer's behavior at work. This implies the use of attributional processes to interpret the latter's behavior and involves processing of social information. Given that attribution theory makes no explicit statement regarding the relative status of the actor vs perceiver in the work context, we draw on envy literature to make this connection. Most envy literature, based on social comparison theory, implies that upward comparisons (comparisons with those better off in a given context) elicit envy, a painful, negative emotion that the envier seeks to allay. Based on this premise, and the premise of negative biases inherent in the nature of envy, we contend that the the envier engages in attributional processes to make sense of the coworker's behavior. These attributional processes, according to the attribution theory, determine on-work performance and behaviors.

1.1 Background

Goffman (1978), was among the first to discuss the human tendency to behave in particular ways in efforts to draw desired attributions. The behavior, according to them, is directed towards impression management (IM). In his seminal work The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, he likens social interaction to a theater where the actor presents some aspects of the self and conceals others just like an actor. Goffman's work is believed to be based on the earlier work by Herbert

Mead in the 1920s. Mead had presented the idea of Symbolic Interactionism. It is a view that individuals make sense of their social world by communicating their own and understanding others' gestures and symbols. The work of both, particularly Goffman, led to the development of the concept of IM.

Social interaction among humans involves a considerable degree of self-presentation, primarily because it is a judgmental process whereby people form opinions about others (Goffman, 1978). Self-presentation enables the actor to manipulate observer's perception in the desired manner. This self-presentation is motivated by purposes such as the yearning to identify with a desired social group, seeking feedback and appearing similar and likable to secure means to desirable ends (Lee, Han, Cheong, Kim, & Yun, 2017; Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008). Individual differences in self-presentation have also been suggested (Hart, Adams, Burton, & Tortoriello, 2017). Impression management is self-presentation, described as the creation, control and manipulation of the impression one leaves on significant others (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 2013; Schneider, 1981). Scholars have expanded the area of study from routine social interaction to self-presentation via technology where companies use IM on social networking websites (Lillqvist & Louhiala-Salminen, 2014), while other researchers report on the human desire to present oneself as possessing the desired or ideal' personal characteristics online (Ellison, Heino, & Gibbs, 2006).

The work by Ellison et al. (2006) further emphasizes the importance for humans of self-presentation to reflect the ideal or future self. Organizations also use influence attempts (McDonnell & King, 2013) and lately, IM research has advanced to investigating IM attempts among ex-criminals during hiring interviews (Ali, Lyons, & Ryan, 2017), in resumes and cover letters for employment (Waung, McAuslan, DiMambro, & Miegoc, 2017).

IM has also become the focus of scholarly attention in the field of organizational behavior. While positive outcomes of IM have been reported (Peck & Levashina, 2017), IM implications for co-workers have predominantly remained overlooked. Some have implied adverse effects, such as the pressure to engage in similar tactics that reflect oneself in a positive light among co-workers (Turnley, Klotz, &

Bolino, 2013). Although empirical support is rare, these studies nonetheless suggest co-worker displeasure at another's influence tactics. The study views IM from an envious co-worker's perspective. The study elaborates that, because observing co-workers find a co-worker's IM unpleasing, they react to it. The study adopts an attributional perspective and suggests that the observing co-worker's attributions explain these reactions. The study adopts the 'envy as pain' model which suggests that in order to restore equity and reduce the pain of envy, the envier's behavior at work involves reduced performance, increased counterproductive behavior and prosocial behavior in order to appear likable (Tai, Narayanan, & McAllister, 2012). The study suggests that the envier attempts to reduce inequity in reaction to a coworker's IM in a similar manner.

Stemming from the idea of self-presentation, literature has come to recognize a variety of such behaviors termed collectively as IM (Bolino, Long, & Turnley, 2016; Jones & Pittman, 1982). It refers to any behavior by the individual in an attempt to control or manipulate others' attributions and impressions of themselves. IM tactics are used in a variety of work contexts including the job interview (Chen & Lin, 2014; Chen, Yang, & Lin, 2010; Swider, Barrick, Harris, & Stoverink, 2011). These tactics include defensive IM tactics used in response to poor performance, and assertive IM tactics used to establish a positive image of oneself (Tsai, Huang, Wu, & Lo, 2010). IM behaviors also include image protection, slight and extensive image creation in job interviews to give impressions of competence (Roulin, Bangerter, & Levashina, 2014). Among the most commonly used frameworks of IM, the most widely accepted include Jones and Pitman taxonomy (1982), and the framework proposed by Wayne and Ferris (1990). Of the positive IM behaviors proposed by Jones and Pitman (1982), ingratiation refers to the use of flattery and other-centered behavior incorporating praise and compliments; Self-promotion refers to self-praise regarding one's abilities and dedication towards work; Exemplification refers to the display of conscientious behavior such as punctuality and dedication towards work. Wayne and Ferris (1990), categorized IM behaviors to reflect the target and actor's intention as job-focused, supervisor focused, and self-focused IM tactics.

Supervisory focused IM refers to the use of favor doing and ingratiatory tactics directed towards the supervisor. Such behavior is intended to appeal to the supervisor's opinions of oneself through praise, conformity with the supervisor's opinion, and offering compliments. Favor doing is another set of behaviors associated with supervisor focused IM behavior. **Self-focused IM** refers to the use of behaviors intended to reflect oneself as polite, hardworking, and kind. Such behaviors include efforts at appearing friendly. Working hard particularly when being observed and posing as the 'ideal' worker in front of the supervisor form core behaviors associated with self-focused IM. **Job-focused IM** refers to creating an impression of competence and superior job performance. This group of behaviors include, exaggerated statements of personal achievements, playing up one's credentials, trying to make positive events for which one is responsible seem more important, and trying to make negative events for which one is responsible, seem trivial. Self-focused tactics encapsulate behaviors otherwise identified as exemplification, while job-focused tactics are similar to self-promotion (Bolino, Varela, Bande, & Turnley, 2006). The target-focused tactics framework is the most studied in IM literature (Bolino, Varela, Bande, & Turnley, 2006), and will be used for the study.

Literature identifies the person who engages in impression management as the 'actor', whereas the person who observes the actor's behavior, is described as 'observer' (e.g. Bolino et al., 2016; Steinmetz, Sezer, & Sedikides, 2017). This actor-observer distinction is important when elaborating cognitive mechanisms that go behind social perception (Malle, 2006; Malle, Knobe, & Nelson, 2007). Observers are particularly concerned with intentional behavior of actors as opposed to unintentional behavior (Malle & Knobe, 1997). Given the intentionality inherent in the use of IM tactics (e.g. Long, Baer, Colquitt, Outlaw, & Dhensa-Kahlon, 2015), the use of these tactics by another individual holds implications for the observer's attributions, and behavioral outcomes. Intentionality in the use of these influence tactics is implied by literature that highlights individuals who use IM tactics are 'good actors' (Bolino, 1999). Concerned with the co-worker's IM behavior (Chawla et al., 2021; Turnley, Klotz & Bolino, 2013), the envier is motivated to seek causal reasoning behind, it that explains their reactions to it.

1.1.1 The Nature of Envy

Envy is an emotion that follows comparison with another's achievements and/or possession of what one desires (Vecchio, 2000). It refers to discomfort at another's good fortune (Smith & Kim, 2007), and is reduced with increased meaningfulness experienced in one's own work (Demirtas et al., 2017). Lower quality of exchange relationship with one's supervisor, harmful behavior towards the coworker, and rationalization for the behavior follow envy (Duffy, Shaw, & Schaubroeck, 2008). Literature has also begun to focus on the envied person's perspective, and attributions of the envier's behavior (Puranik, Koopman, Vough, & Gamache, 2019). Proponents of the benign and malicious classification of envy emphasize the performance-enhancing effects of the former, and opposite effects of the latter (e.g. Khan, Bell, & Quratulain, 2017). Others, however, stress this classification is unnecessary (Tai et al., 2012). Cohen-Charash and Larson (2017), also suggest the nature of envy may be well encapsulated without reference to its malicious or benign classification. Indeed, although some stressors may enhance performance, not all stressors are motivating, and performance-enhancing (Lepine, Podsakoff, & Lepine, 2005; Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014).

Defined as an emotion resulting from cognition of one's own fortune as inferior to another's (Parrott & Smith, 1993), envy refers to the feeling of ill will following comparison with a person who succeeded at achieving one's desired goal (He & Cui, 2016) . It encompasses feelings of inadequacy, and yearning for the desired state, in addition to a desire that the coworker loses the advantage (Sterling & Labianca, 2015). Characteristic emotions of envy are a sense of inferiority, resentment of the envied person, the desire that they lose that advantage, and a sense of hopelessness (Smith & Kim, 2007). Crusius & Lange (2014), showed that the malicious envier is more attentive to the coworker than the object of desire. Researchers identify malicious envy results from discrepant high self-esteem (Smallets, Streamer, Kondrak, & Seery, 2016). Targets of envy are invariably superior and self-relevant individuals. Self-relevance may be in any domain of comparison-eliciting factors such as age, gender, social class and status within a group etc. (Festinger, 1954). For a competitive environment such as the workplace, the self-relevance would

be in the domains of rewards, promotions, supervisory approval, and quality of exchange relationship with the supervisor etc.

Fairly recently, studies have begun emphasizing the envier's perspective in work domains (Sterling, Shah, & Labianca, 2016; Baumel & Berant, 2015). The common theme reported among these studies is that enviers see non-deserving rewards of the comparison person unfavorably (Belk, 2011; van de Ven, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2012). The primary motive behind such emotions is inflicting harm on the coworker to bring them down, whereas benign envy is free of the ill intentions to harm. It focuses on moving towards self-improvement (Belk, 2011; van de Ven, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2009). Others have advanced envy research to propose personal tendencies such as dispositional benign and dispositional malicious envy (Lange & Crusius, 2015). Others still investigate envy from an episodic perspective, where episodic envy is described as feelings of discomfort at another's fortune evoked by a specific event or episode (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Khan, Quratulain & Bell, 2014).

The feeling of discomfort at another's good fortune, when comparing on a self-relevant domain, can produce feelings of envy without regards to its types (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007). Most studies on envy almost invariably report adverse outcomes (Veiga, Baldridge, & Markóczy, 2014), indicating envy holds implications for the workplace environment, and the envier's behavior and performance. Envy explains hostile tendencies resulting from low self-esteem (Rentzsch, Schröder-Abé, & Schütz, 2015), and theft, resulting from distributive justice concerns (Wilkin & Connelly, 2015). It is among the seven vices of anti-social behavior (Veselka, Giammarco, & Vernon, 2014), and reduces job satisfaction, citizenship behavior, and performance (Thompson, Glasø, & Martinsen, 2015). Literature shows, being envied is not always a pleasurable experience and may instead, arouse distress (Exline & Zell, 2012). The current study will not delve into malicious and benign types of envy following arguments in recent literature that emphasize the monistic view of envy, suggesting envy itself is all-encapsulating, and arouses both action-oriented and threat-oriented reactions (Tai, Narayanan, & McAllister, 2012).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

IM at work has been investigated predominantly in terms of its outcomes for the actor (e.g. Ali et al., 2017; Bande, Fernández-Ferrín, Otero-Neira, & Varela, 2017). However, how a co-worker's behavior intended to gain greater organizational rewards, impacts the envier has not been investigated. Owing to the characteristic nature of envy and its detrimental outcomes (Leheta, Dimotakis, & Schatten, 2017; Van de Ven, 2017), it is likely to shape the envier's responses to another's IM behavior. Given that these behaviors are deliberate attempts at securing desired outcomes, they are unfavorable for co-workers in the contemporary competitive work environment, where one's gain results in at least incrementally reduced outcomes for others (Turnley, Klotz & Bolino, 2013). The study proposes that IM by the coworker has unfavorable consequences for the envier's behavior, and performance, and generally for the overall work environment, as it may sabotage the organization's performance, and that of its members (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2015; Menon & Thompson, 2010).

Coworker IM is stress-inducing (Turnley et al., 2014), and stress- related factors cost $100 billion to the US economy alone (Serven, 2019). Additionally, political behaviors such as IM cost the UK economy £7.8billion annually, as a result of low morale, productivity, customer service, and effective teamwork (Turner, 2015). Given the magnitude of these losses to various economies from stressful, political behaviors, it is highly likely that similar behaviors cause considerable losses to the Pakistani economy. Furthermore, although ample literature is available on the financial aspects of the country's services sector, the psychosocial factors that govern employee performance and behaviors in this sector remains less studied. Given that the services sector is the largest contributor to the country's GDP (61%) , the underutilization of an attributional perspective in studying employee behaviors and performance (Harvey, Madison, Martinko, Crook & Crook, 2014), in an already understudied domain of coworker IM (Turnley, Bolino & Klotz, 2013), implies a sizable productivity loss in the sector projected to witness the largest growth in the near future. This implies that the lack of scholarly attention towards theoretical approaches that may help address currently overlooked

psychosocial causes of non-productive employee behaviors and performance from an attributional perspective accounts for underutilization of the sector's optimal capacity and potential. Therefore, this study addresses this problem by studying impression management in the services sector of Pakistan.

1.3 Research Gap

1.3.1 Research Gap 1: Behavioral and Performance Responses to Coworker IM

The social dynamic of IM is pervasive in organizations, and predominantly produces positive workplace outcomes where it results in greater organizational rewards (Chen & Lin, 2014; Lee et al., 2017; Zhao & Liden, 2011). The positive outcomes of managing impressions are so well established that individuals are known to actively seek supervisory approval and other benefits through various IM strategies, both manipulatively and non-manipulatively (e.g. Long et al., 2015), and as a strategy to further their career goals (Sibunruang, Garcia, & Tolentino, 2016). Given the benefits the behavior entails, a renewed perspective in IM literature is the co-worker's perspective of another's IM efforts, although empirical reports of this perspective is relatively scarce. For example, a book chapter was found specifically dedicated to explaining the potentially negative implications of IM for co-workers (Turnley et al., 2013). Another study investigated the co-worker's accuracy at perceiving another's use of IM (Bourdage, Wiltshire, & Lee, 2015). Others either hint at the displeasing character of seeking supervisory approval, and organizational outcomes from the co-worker's perspective as an after-thought, or as an implied meaning of their original studies without explaining potential reactions co-worker IM may elicit (e.g. Foulk & Long, 2016).

Given the competitiveness of modern day work environments where compensation and rewards are often a zero-sum situation, a co-worker's IM becomes all the more serious point of concern. Turnley et al. (2013), presented a compelling argument that a co-worker's IM comes at the expense of one's own relative standing within

the organization, because in modern day competitive work settings, an increase in one's rewards and compensation results in at least an incremental reduction in the rewards and compensation of fellow co-workers. They argued that when an individual engages in IM, this poses a threat to fellow co-workers who stand to lose as a result of the competitiveness inherent in the workplace environment. Although this is a compelling argument, limited literature has hinted at investigating IM from a co-worker's perspective (Bourdage at al., 2015; Foulk & Long, 2016).

The study fills this void in literature by investigating IM from a co-worker's perspective. In doing so, the author advances the argument and proposes that from a practical viewpoint, it is the envier whose reactions are likely to be of concern to the organization, rather than that of a neutral co-worker. After all, literature suggests that the envier is more attentive to the coworker and recalls information more accurately about them than do neutral observers (Hill, DelPriore, & Vaughan, 2011; Zhong, Liu, Zhang, Luo, & Chen, 2013). Furthermore, envy results in behavioral outcomes that are of greater concern to organizations. For example, it has been reported that spiteful behavior following envy produces a welfare loss of one-sixth (Wobker, 2015). Others have shown that it is cumulatively taxing for organizations through its expansive effect on workgroups, organizational behavior and organizational performance (Menon & Thompson, 2010; Veiga, Baldridge, & Markóczy, 2014). From an envier's perspective, envy produces threat-oriented and action-oriented tendencies that seek to redress the pain of envy (Tai et al., 2012). This redress comes as undesirable behavior, that should be of concern to organizations.

Previous literature has viewed IM and envy in isolation. In a competitive environment such as the contemporary workplace, this approach towards organizational behavior that addresses the workplace phenomena from an isolated perspective serves little function. Envy entails comparison and concern with another's progress (Neufeld & Johnson, 2016; van de Ven, 2017), whereas IM of a co-worker is seen unfavorably in a competitive setting, because it is seen as a threat to one's own relative outcomes and position (Turnley et al., 2013).

Therefore, viewing IM attempts from the perspective of an envious co-worker is likely to serve organizations and researchers greater value from a theoretical and

practical standpoint. This argument is based on literature that has repeatedly suggested envy shapes workplace behavior in many ways (Khan, Bell, & Quratulain, 2017; Khan, Quratulain, & Bell, 2014; Leheta, Dimotakis, & Schatten, 2017; Thompson, Glasø, & Martinsen, 2016; Yu, Duffy, & Tepper, 2017). Given that dynamics of envy at the workplace involve a sense of competition (Tai et al., 2012), it is comprehensible that individuals do not react to envy per se, but to personally relevant behaviors of the coworker (for example, IM behaviors), that threaten a further increase in the status differential.

Furthering research on a promising domain for future IM studies (Turnley et al., 2013), the current study investigates outcomes of a coworker's IM based on outcomes of envy posited by (Tai et al., 2012). They suggested that the envier may respond in three ways to a coworker, all motivated by the threat and action-oriented tendencies of envy. The responses they suggested were i) undermining of the coworker ii) prosocial behavior or an attempt to look good by being helpful/-courteous etc. and iii) reduced job performance.

Of behavioral outcomes for the envier, research predominantly focuses on counterproductive behavior towards the coworker (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Khan, Quratulain, & Bell, 2014). This behavior is targeted towards harming the coworker or towards reducing their status within the organization. Doing so, the envier seeks to alleviate the pain of envy through diminishing the coworker's relative status, or through harming them, because they make the envier look less significant (Mishra, 2009). Attempts at managing impressions increase the pain of envy further by threatening greater potential success of the actor relative to oneself because it is seen as being detrimental to one's position within the organization (Turnley et al., 2013). To further elaborate, given the emotionality and prevailing sense of injustice accompanying envy, counterproductive behavior is likely to be evoked (Matta, Erol-Korkmaz, Johnson, & Bicaksiz, 2014), following the co-worker's IM.

Tai et al. (2012), suggest that the envier engages in prosocial behavior towards the coworker based on the challenge oriented approach of envy. The study, therefore, proposes that when IM is involved, this challenge oriented approach is directed towards the supervisor who possesses control of important organizational

resources, and individual outcomes. The envier feels that IM tactics are likely to win the impression managing coworker greater organizational rewards through influencing the supervisor's liking for them, and leveraging the exchange relationship between them (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 2013; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). One way of meeting this challenge is by imitating supervisory focused influence attempts of the coworker. The envier, motivated by the desire to achieve similar status and outcomes as them ,is motivated to direct behavior towards attaining similar status/position (Tai et al., 2012). Extant literature suggests that organizations are likely to suffer if individuals are preoccupied with self-presentation efforts as these require time and energy that would have otherwise been available for important organizational tasks (Baumeister, 1989).

In addition to targeting the coworker, extant literature suggests that the envier is motivated to reduce the pain of envy by containing their own performance in order to restore equity (Tai et al., 2012). The study proposes reduction in performance as an outcome of IM in an envy context, in line with the threat-oriented nature of envy (Tai et al. 2012). Restoration of equity is one way to do away with the pain of envy, and employees may do so by reducing their job performance. Performance may also be restricted non-deliberately as a result of the envier's increased attention to managing impressions.

Thus, because IM is instrumental in gaining the actor desired organizational outcomes, the observer's concern for coworker's potential outcomes from IM should help develop a greater understanding of workplace behavior. ***The study investigates if coworker's efforts at managing impressions result in behavioral (Counterproductive workplace behavior and supervisor focused IM), and performance (job performance) outcomes for the envier.***

1.3.2 Research Gap 2: Attribution of Coworker IM

The study will address the lack of attention on the mechanism behind responses to a coworker's IM. Envy literature has thus far concentrated on direct outcomes such as performance and counterproductive behavior (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Khan et al., 2014). However, the mediating mechanism that may explain

the envier's reactions has been relatively overlooked. We know co-worker's IM behavior is unfavorable (Turnley et al., 2013), but we know little about why these behaviors lead to unfavorable reactions of the observer. From a psychological perspective that offers to serve scholars and practitioners better, it is important to explore the envier's cognitions that drive their reactions to coworker's IM.

In explaining the underlying mechanism, the study draws from attribution theory (Kelley, 1973), that holds that attributions best explain individual reactions to personally relevant situations, and personally meaningful behavior of others. In attempting to explain the underlying mechanism based on the envier's attributions, the study answers calls for a renewed emphasis on attribution theory in explaining previously unexplored areas of organizational behavior (Harvey et al., 2014; Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011). The study investigates two attributions most relevant to the envy situation based on the dynamics of envy and co-worker IM.

Firstly, in line with literature that shows people often fail to make desirable impressions and may instead mismanage their impressions without realizing it, drawing negative evaluations (Steinmetz et al., 2017), the study investigates if IM draws attributions of incompetence by the envier. Because IM behaviors are tactics directed towards influencing observer attributions of competence, likability and similarity (Fletcher, 2013; Lewis & Ryan, 2014; Long et al., 2015), it is highly likely that for the coworker, IM behaviors may backfire and instead draw adverse attributions of incompetence. Competence attributions are among the primary attributions people make in social situations (Cuddy, Glick, & Beninger, 2011).

Literature that shows that envy entails viewing one's disadvantage or the high performing coworker's advantage as unfair and undeserved (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2007; van de Ven et al., 2012), also implies that the envier sees the coworker as no more competent than themselves. Sezer, Gino and Norton (2018), showed IM efforts draw attributions of incompetence if the behavior is perceived to be insincere. Literature that shows IM in general and supervisor focused IM in particular, draws labels of the actor as an 'apple polisher' and a 'brown nose'(DuBrin, 2010), also signal that the individual is seen as lacking the competence to progress without resorting to these tactics. Furthermore, because individuals with low perceived

competence engage in more IM (Abbas et al., 2018), attentional biases in envy (Crusius & Lange, 2014), are likely to alert the envier of this behavior, thereby leading them to attribute IM tactics to the coworker's incompetence. Thus, although it has been theoretically implied that IM draws co-worker attributions of incompetence, these suppositions are yet to be empirically validated. The study addresses this gap in literature by explicitly testing for the envier's attributions of the impression managing coworker as lacking competence.

Secondly, according to the social information processing perspective (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), IM by a successful co-worker provides information about the factor(s) that facilitate it. Existing literature has overlooked the role of the supervisor as the decision maker behind decisions the envier finds unjust, although Fiske (2010) argued that "indeed, when people's outcomes depend directly on another, they effectively engage in mindreading, attempting to understand what makes the other person tick" (Fiske, 2010, p. 703).

Accordingly, in seeking causal attributions for the coworker's behavior, the envier is likely to perceive an aspect of the supervisor as facilitating it. This aspect, the author proposes, is the supervisor's social perceptiveness. Literature shows that individuals' exercise of influence tactics shapes supervisor perceptions in favor of the impression managing individual such that they are rewarded promotions, better performance evaluations, and salary increments (Harris, Kacmar, Zivnuska, & Shaw, 2007; Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003).

IM literature invariably suggests these behaviors mask the supervisor's perception in ways that they are rewarded in terms of both task and relation-oriented outcomes (e.g. Lee et al., 2017). Moreover, IM tactics are so effective at shaping supervisor perceptions, that they are strategically employed as an adapting strategy for career management (Sibunruang et al., 2016). The study investigates this aspect of the envier's attributions, i.e. the supervisor's social perceptiveness because the supervisor is the decision maker behind decisions the envier perceives are unjust. Given that positive/negative supervisory attributions are made based on the quality of relationship with the supervisor (Campbell, Ward, Sonnenfeld, & Agle, 2008), the envier is likely to make negative attributions about the supervisor's social perceptiveness given that envy results from low quality exchange

relationship with the supervisor (Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017a).

The self-serving attributions considered in the study are worth investigating because self-serving attributions are particularly pertinent for a competitive situation such as one involving envy. Literature shows that in achievement-related situations such as goal pursuit, self-serving attributions allow us "to feel pride and worthiness in our accomplishments, while at the same time buffering against the negative consequences associated with failure (e.g., feelings of shame, disappointment) (Levine, Werner, Capaldi, & Milyavskaya, 2017, p.58). Therefore, assigning the co-worker attributions of incompetence and the supervisor attributions of lacking social perceptiveness enables the envier to protect their self-image as a competent person, deserving of their desired outcomes.

Thus, in explaining the envier's reactions to another's IM behavior, the study adopts an attributional perspective. The researcher investigates if the envier makes self-serving attributions regarding the supervisor, and the coworker. More specifically, it investigates if these attributions involve the coworker's incompetence attributions, and attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness.

1.3.3 Research Gap 3: the Moderating Role of Attributional Style

Attribution literature suggests that attributions do not simply result from experienced situations, but also by an individual's dispositions to assign certain kinds of attributions to experienced situations (Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011). Attributional style encapsulates individual differences in trait-like tendencies to make certain types of attributions (for a review, see Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007). Attributional styles influence workplace outcomes, and are predictive of behavior (Harvey, Sikora, & Douglas, 2011a; Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011; Schinkel, van Vianen, & Ryan, 2016). Hostile, and self-serving attributional styles are commonly studied attributional styles, where the former predicts negative supervisory perceptions, and aggressive reactions (Brees, Martinko, & Harvey, 2016; Harvey, Summers, & Martinko, 2010; Lyu, Zhu, Zhong, & Hu, 2016). Both

involve assigning unfavorable situations external causality, but in addition to externalizing blame for unfavorable situations, a self-serving attributional style also involves taking credit for success (Levine et al., 2017). A self-serving attributional style is particularly pertinent for the current study because the envier's attributions the researcher proposes are self-serving in nature, i.e., they assign responsibility for the unfavorable IM behavior to the coworker and the supervisor in self-serving ways. Attributional style has also been shown to influence various employee attributions of the supervisor (Humphreys, Korotov, & Guillen Ramo, 2017; Martinko, Harvey, Sikora, & Douglas, 2011; Martinko et al., 2018), hence, providing a strong argument for its role in supervisor attributions. Furthermore, literature has also suggested that attributional style influences responses to triggering events (Brees, Mackey, & Martinko, 2013).

Therefore, in line with the literature cited above, and literature that suggests a self-serving attributional style should influence stronger self-serving attributions (Mezulis, Abramson, Hyde, & Hankin, 2004a), ***The study addresses this gap in literature by investigating the role of a self-serving attributional style in influencing stronger self-serving attributions about the coworker and supervisor, following the coworker's IM.***

1.4 Research Questions

The study seeks to answer the following questions:

- Does IM by a coworker have implications for the envier's behavior and performance?
- Does coworker IM trigger envier attributions about coworker competence, and supervisor's social perceptual ability (social perceptiveness)?
- Do the envier's attributions explain their responses to coworker IM?
- Do individual differences in attribution style influence the envier's supervisory and coworker attributions?

1.5 Research Objectives

The study aims to answer these research questions by investigating if a coworker's IM at work elicits behavioral responses by the envier. Whether it also has implications for their job performance will also be explored. Additionally, whether their attribution of the coworker's IM explains their responses will be explored. Specifically, objectives of the current study may be summarized as:

- To investigate if coworker's supervisor, self, and job-focused IM tactics have implications for the envier's supervisor- and coworker-directed behavior and their job performance.
- To examine if the envier's attributions of coworker incompetence explain their behavioral and performance responses to their IM.
- To assess if attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness explains responses to the coworker's IM.
- To determine if the envier's attributional style influences their attributions of the coworker and the supervisor.

1.6 Significance of the Study

The study is significant in that it goes beyond the traditional domain of workplace envy and IM in investigating reactions to the behaviors of a coworker. This approach is highly significant from a theoretical and practical point of view. Literature on organizational behavior and industrial psychology typically studies envy in reference to the envier's appraisals of their own envy perceptions. Despite the amount of literature on envy and IM, to date, studies investigating if behaviors of a coworker elicit responses among the envious are limited. The mechanism by which behaviors of a coworker spill over to oneself, warrants attention for a multitude of reasons. Extant literature reports IM outcomes for the person engaging in these behaviors (Lee et al., 2017). Studies have overlooked the role of attributions in shaping reactions to a coworker's IM. Bolino et al. (2016), indicated that when

managing impressions, doing so in indistinct ways is important. The study goes beyond by investigating consequences of detected IM tactics.

1.6.1 Theoretical Significance

The current study is theoretically significant in that it explains the mechanism of social cognition involved in reacting to a coworker's IM. It proposes that the attribution theory provides a sound description for the envier's response. More specifically, it proposes that the envier attributes the coworker's use of IM tactics in self-serving ways, i.e., to the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness, and to the coworker's incompetence. By proposing the envier's attributions involve their perceptions of both the coworker and the supervisor, the study places the self-supervisor-coworker triad at the centre-stage of envy attributions. The coworker's perspective (envier's perspective) is significant, as extant literature overlooks this perspective, despite obvious implications for the field of organizational behavior. Therefore, this study adds to scholars' understanding of the psychology of envy by applying the attributional lens to evaluation of another's behavior. This coworker's or the envier's perspective can help scholars and practitioners understand workplace dynamics for potential implications for practice for the manager. The study further proposes attributions regarding the coworker's tactics and the ensuing responses are likely to vary in magnitude. In other words, the research takes into consideration individual differences in self-serving attributional style. This interactionist perspective that takes into account dispositional tendencies in addition to situational dynamics provide a more accurate understanding of behavior. Because a disconnect of the observer's dispositional tendencies, and attributions, and behavior are improbable in the practical world, some account of possible differences in attributions, and responses adds significantly to scholars' understanding of the psychology of envy.

Most literature on IM reports positive outcomes (Bande, Fernández-Ferrín, Otero-Neira, & Varela, 2017; Huang, Zhao, Niu, Ying, Ashford, Susan, & Lee, 2013) for

the impression managing individual. In seeking to examine potential adverse influence of IM for enviers, in the form of their responses, and the underlying mechanism involved therein, the study proposes potential unintended consequences in the form of their behavior, and performance.

It is the first study investigating envy and IM from the attributional perspective, underscoring the need to take into account a previously understudied aspect of workplace envy- the supervisor. It is important to understand the envier's attributions, and their behaviors because of the potential of envy to shape unfavorable behaviors (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Khan et al., 2014), and performance (Tai, Narayanan & McAllister, 2012), ultimately holding implications for the overall organization (Rentzsch et al., 2015). This is in line with the 'envy as pain model' proposed by Tai , Narayanan and McAllister (2012). The model suggests, that the pain of envy influences interpersonal behaviors (prosocial behavior, counterproductive behavior) as well as task behaviors (performance), through its threat and challenge aspects respectively.

1.6.2 Contextual Significance

The study is contextually significant in that it views co-worker reactions to another's IM in an Asian perspective, a relatively unfamiliar perspective in most envy and IM literature. Although the use of IM has begun to receive attention in the Asian, and specifically, the Pakistani perspective (Abbas et al., 2018), work on the domain in this region remains scarce. An Asian perspective is imperative because it would offer newer insights and greater understanding of individual behavior at work from the commonly studied western contexts.

Additionally, the Asian perspective is relevant because cultural differences in the pervasiveness of the self-serving attributional bias have been reported in Asian and Western contexts (Mezulis et al., 2004a), signaling the importance of viewing an attributional approach of organizational behavior in the relatively less-studied Asian perspective.

1.6.3 Practical Significance

In focusing on outcomes of IM, most IM literature ignores the key aspect that the beneficiary of the IM tactics is the individual person, not the organization. As such, most studies in this domain offer little practical significance for organizations by emphasizing positive employee gains such as favorable performance appraisals, ratings of citizenship behaviors etc. The study is practically significant in that it evaluates IM outcomes from the envier's perspective in the form of their behavioral and performance responses that have a potential to affect organizational culture and the overall work environment. Managers are to be cautious of their bias in favor of ingratiating and self-promoting employees in order to avoid other employees' reactions. Furthermore, if high achievers are rewarded for their use of IM tactics, it is likely to cause behavioral, and performance issues for the organization, specifically from envious employees. Supervisory, and co-worker attributions following another's IM are particularly of practical significance because they suggest the envier's distrust in the organization's reward systems. Caution is required in rewarding IM behaviors, specifically when they come from high performers.

1.7 Underpinning Theory

1.7.1 Attribution Theory

Heider (1958), is credited with the phenomenal work The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations. It details intricately, the psychology of drawing causal inferences for events in the interpersonal domain. According to Heider (1958), humans' depiction of the social environment functions by assigning attributions to causes of events. Causal inferences for another's behavior involve internal or external causality (Kelley, 1967). Heider's work underlies the attribution theory (De Charms, 2013, p. 288). According to the theory, people's actions differ based on their reasoning for another's behavior (Ivancevich, Matteson, & Konopaske, 1990). For example, Heider elaborated that an understanding of the actor's intention determines an observer's interpretation of it, and is likely to be attributable to personal

causality. As such, people will react differently when another's behavior is ascribed to external situations (situational attribution), or to the actor's own inability or inherent traits (internal attributions). Researchers have also identified the role of attributional styles in determining attributions, and consequent behaviors (Martinko, Harvey, & Dasborough, 2011).

Further developments of the attribution theory over time involve important contributions by Weiner (1985, 1986). Weiner (1974), focused on achievement situations, and classified attributions along three dimensions of controllability, stability, and locus of causality. The underlying commonality of Weiner's work with Heider's is the emphasis on the role of attributions in determining people's reactions in social situations, with the former's emphasis on affective reactions to causal attributions to success versus failure.

1.7.2 Envy and Attribution

Kelley and Michela (1980), discuss motivations behind attributions. Motivations include efforts of self enhancement, self presentation, and belief in effective control. Others elaborate on the social aspect of attributions, including actor-observer differences. Differing interests of actors and observers explain observer attributions in ways that discount the face value of the actor's behavior, while the actor's prime interest in engaging in IM tactics is to receive credit for positive self presentation (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Envy may result from the competition for rewards, recognition, and privileged treatment by the supervisor (Patient et al., 2003). Patient et al., (2003) elaborated that envy elicits among the envier, feelings that guide their sense-making of the situation, and further action. As such, it provokes feelings of competition because the coworker seems to secure organizational rewards with relative ease (Cohen-Charash, 2009).

Imbued among the motives of IM is influencing the attributions of significant others. Because judgments in social contexts are made predominantly regarding the other's warmth and/or competence, the impression managing person is also primarily concerned with influencing warmth and/or competence attributions of significant other(s) (Nezlek, Schütz & Sellin, 2007).

1.7.3 IM by a Coworker and Attributions

For an envier, the high performing coworker presents a strong case for frequent comparisons. The envier observes their behavior closely, and causally attributes reasons to it. IM tactics by the coworker add to the competition for fear of greater anticipated inequality in rewards. If the coworker succeeds in creating in the mind of the supervisor greater perceived similarity with themselves, future rewards will follow. The sense-making in such a situation, thus, involves negative attributions for the coworker. This premise is in line with earlier literature that suggests that observers make dispositional attributions for the actor when future competition is probable (Miller, Norman, & Wright, 1978). Because envy represents a status threat (Crusius & Lange, 2016), the envier views the coworker's IM tactics as threatening because if successful, these tactics may be influential in creating in the mind of the supervisor, bias in favor of the actor, in addition to magnifying their likability. Through creating perceived similarity and likability with the supervisor, the coworker may further attain greater rewards (Porter, Allen, & Angle, 2003). Additionally, because attributions are more consistently generated by failure situations (Weiner, 1985, b), the coworker's IM draws attributions. These attributions are expected to be made in ways that discount their abilities in order to protect the envier's self-concept.

1.8 Operational Definitions

The operational definitions of the study variables are provided in the following table 1.1

Table 1.1: Operational Definitions of Study Variables

Coworker Supervisor-focused IM	Supervisor-focused IM by a coworker refers to a set of behaviors by a coworker involving praising the supervisor, offering them help beyond one's job description, and presenting themselves as being similar to the supervisor in some aspects, with the aim to appear likable, in the services sector of Pakistan
Job-focused IM	Job-focused IM refers to the coworker's refers set of behaviors aimed at appearing competent at their job. These include sitting late in office and exaggerating achievements while downplaying mistakes in order to appear competent etc, in the service sector employees.
Self-focused IM	Self-focused IM refers to the set of behaviors aimed at creating an impression of a polite and hardworking individual, among services sector employees in Pakistan.
Attributions of supervisor social perceptiveness	Attributions of supervisor social perceptiveness refers to the respondent's perception that the supervisor's lack of ability to detect people's intentions behind their behaivors is the cause of other's IM towards them among services sector employees in Pakistan.
Attributions of coworker Incompetence	Attributions of coworker incompetence refers to the respondent's perception that the impression managing coworker's lack of competence is the cause behind their IM behaviors, among services sector employees in Pakistan.
Job performance	Job performance refers to the respondent's on-job performance, as evaluated by their supervisor, in the services sector employees in Pakistan.
Counterproductive behavior	Counterproductive work behaviors refer to a group of behaviors aimed at causing either the organization or the high performing, impression-managing coworker harm, among services sector employees in Pakistan.
Respondent Supervisor-focused Tactics	Supervisor-focused IM (respondent) refers to the respondent's group of behaivors aimed at appearing likable toward the supervisor, as an imitation of the high-performin coworker's similar supervisor-focused impression management, among services sector employees in Pakistan.
Self-serving attributional style	Self-serving attributional style refers to the observer's dispositional tendency to make self-serving attributions (internal attributions for favorable outcomes, and external attributions for unfavorable outcomes), among services sector employees in Pakistan.

1.9 Structure of the Thesis

Chapter 1 sets the hook for the rest of the study. Chapter 1 focuses on the statement of the problem, research questions and objectives, gap analysis, underpinning theory, and operational definitions. It sets the base for conducting the study, arguing for it's contribution to understanding the behavior and performance of services sector sector employees from an attributional perspective.

Chapter 2 is a review of extant literature in the domains of Impression management, attributions, coworker responses and sets the base for hypotheses testing, based on earlier studies. At the end of chapter 2 is the theoretical framework of the study.

Chapter 3 details the methodology of the study in terms of study design, sampling technique, analyses tools used, instrumentation, as well as reliability of the employed scales.

Chapter 4 describes data analyses in detail, through the use of Smart PLS for hypotheses testing. It details the two-step procedure involved in data analysis, including measurement model assessment for reliability and validity concerns, and structural model assessment for hypotheses testing.

Chapter 5 details the discussion of findings from chapter 4. It interprets the results from the previous chapter, and discusses them in answering the study's research questions from chapter 1. It also discusses the findings from a theoretical perspective alongwith discussing implications of the study for theory and practice. At the end, it discusses limitations of the study and gives suggestions for future studies.

At the end of the study are appendices which include permission letter for data collection, a cover letter for survey respondents, and the questionnaire used for data collection. It also includes images of the measurement model and structural model from the Smart PLS interface.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Impression Management (IM)

In order to manage other's impressions of themselves, people communicate their desired identity in social interactions (Goffman & Idea, 1959). Scholars have defined self-presentation as, "behaviors used to manage impressions to achieve foreseeable short-term interpersonal objectives or goals" (Lee, Quigley, Nesler, Corbett, & Tedeschi, 1999, p.702). Appearing confident, competent, and in control; mentioning achievements in boastful or humble ways; threatening consequences in case of non-compliance; hinting at connections with 'higher officials' and showering one's superiors with praise and flattery - all these are behaviors scholars investigate under the umbrella term of IM. Some have termed them influence tactics or self-presentation, while others term them as political behavior (Ferris et al., 2002; Ferris & Judge, 1991). Others have operationalized political influence behavior in their studies with IM tactics (Judge & Bretz, 1992). While differences in definitions and operationalization of the constructs appear in literature, modern day study of human tendency to act in ways that are suggestive of some desired ability, trait and/or characteristic dates back to the remarkable work of Goffman (1978). Using the imagery of the theatre, Goffman referred to socially interacting individuals as actors and audience. He believed participants of a social interaction attempt to influence other's attributions of them through their manner and appearance, while also observing theirs. Thus, the actor is also the observer of

another's IM. The book by Goffman titled 'The presentation of self in everyday life', (Goffman, 1978; Goffman & Idea, 1959), led to increased scholarly attention towards the art of self-presentation.

Originally of interest to psychologists and sociologists, organizational scholars have increasingly developed an interest in IM at work. IM at work spans, among other contexts, leadership (Gardner & Avolio, 1998) , performance appraisals (Wayne & Kacmar, 1991), and job interviews (Basch, Melchers, Kegelmann, & Lieb, 2020; Robie, Christiansen, Bourdage, Powell, & Roulin, 2020). Jones and Pitman (1982), devised a taxonomy, grouping similar behavior into groups. The taxonomy includes ingratiation, self promotion, exemplification, intimidation and supplication. In their detailed work, Jones and Pitman (1982), laid the framework that would serve as the anchoring point for future IM studies and its measurement. Exemplification refers to self sacrificing and citizenship behaviors in order to earn attributions of dedication. When used by a coworker, exemplification is likely to be attributed to less favorable reasons such as supervisor's incompetence at detecting manipulative tactics. Attributions may also be made to the actor's incompetence and efforts for its concealment (Azeem, Zafar & Khan, 2020). Self Promotion refers to highlighting personal achievements and positive personal characteristics in order to appear competent, and appearing proficient during meetings etc. Intimidation refers to the influence tactic where people hint at their power or ability to punish. The desired image is that of a dangerous person in order to exert influence, seek collaboration or compliance, appear influential etc. Perhaps warning of potential consequences in the case of non-collaboration is another tactic to influence behavior. Supplication is the display of oneself as inexperienced, and in need of help. Emphasizing one's shortcomings serves the purpose of being in need. Ingratiation is an influencing tactic whereby the actor uses flattery and gives preferential treatment to make themselves attractive to a significant other (Liden & Mitchell, 1988). Ingratiation may be described, in other words, as 'other praise' such as supervisor-focused IM. The ingratiated person is then obliged to reciprocate positive behavior and/or favors in return. In social sciences, social reciprocity and exchange adequately provides an explanation for the target rewarding ingratiatory behavior (Blau, 1968). In other words, favors and flattery

are social favors that must be reciprocated in ways meaningful to the ingratiating person. At the workplace, these rewards may take the form of outcomes such as promotion, positive performance appraisals, salary increments etc. when the ingratiated significant other is the supervisor. In an experimental investigation conducted on university students (Kipnis & Vanderveer, 1971), it was found that the ingratiating subordinate receives more rewards than deserved.

Wayne and Ferris (1990), factor analyzed the twenty four IM behaviors of the Jones and Pittman taxonomy, and concluded, that IM behavior may focus on the supervisor, one's job or the self. These groups of IM behaviors were termed supervisor-focused IM tactics, job-focused IM tactics and self-focused IM tactics (Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Supervisor-focused tactics are IM behaviors and statements directed towards the supervisor. The actor, by use of these behaviors, aims at appearing likable in the eyes of the supervisor. These tactics include supervisor flattery and praise, i.e., predominantly ingratiatory behaviors. Self-Focused tactics are behaviors intended to manipulate the impression of one as a friendly, likable person. IM behaviors falling in this category are somewhat consistent with those of exemplification, whereby the actor appears dedicated and exemplary. Job-focused IM tactics are behaviors that aim at creating favorable impressions about oneself by highlighting performance or attempting to earn credit more than deserved. These behaviors rely on self promotion, and are intended to create attributions of competence. Through these behaviors, the one seeking to influence their social impressions, seeks some degree of political influence and power over the other, implying tact and manipulation (Appelbaum & Hughes, 1998). The current study focused on this grouping of IM tactics.

The impact of IM may vary over time (Bolino, Klotz, & Daniels, 2014), and indications of deception in managing impressions have adverse implications for the supervisor-subordinate relationship (Carlson, Carlson, & Ferguson, 2011). IM has been predominantly credited with the potential to secure favorable outcomes, such as positive performance evaluations, a stronger social network, and tangible rewards (Wayne & Liden, 1995). It enables the maneuver or transformation of one's image and reputation (Bromley, 1993). Differential outcomes of various IM tactics have also been reported. Flattery and favor-doing towards the supervisor

is likely to earn the ingratiator more favorable evaluations of citizenship behavior, than other forms of IM (Bolino, Varela, Bande, & Turnley, 2006). Ingratiation is induced through an interaction of the ingratiator's personality and organizational characteristics (Ralston, 1985). In the event of organizational inducements; ingratiation, in addition to other IM tactics, may repress performance of the less Machiavellian, and more uniquely skilled or diligent people, indicating implications of IM for observers. Judge and Bretz (1994), also demonstrated differential outcomes of IM tactics, specifically, ingratiatory behavior towards the supervisor predicted career success whereas job-focused tactics did not.

2.1.1 Other IM Behaviors in Literature

In addition to Jones and Pittman's typology, other scholars have identified several behaviors/ groups of behaviors in use for managing impressions. These include advice seeking, humble bragging (the use of humility as a disguise to boast of one's achievements), self-handicapping, causal accounts, modesty, voice behavior, and feigned helplessness (Blickle, Diekmann, Schneider, Kalthöfer, & Summers, 2012; Brooks, Gino, & Schweitzer, 2015; Crant, 1996 ; Fuller, Barnett, Hester, Relyea, & Frey, 2007). Others still characterize various IM behaviors in categories such as defensive and assertive self-presentation (Lee et al., 1999). Lately, attention has also been drawn to failed attempts at managing competence and warmth judgments. These failed attempts; referred to as impression mismanagement; include behaviors such as bragging, hypocrisy, hubris, backhanded compliments, (Scopelliti, Loewenstein, & Vosgerau, 2015; , Gino, & Norton, 2018; Steinmetz, Sezer, & Sedikides, 2017).

Literature also classifies IM behaviors as direct vs. indirect IM. Indirect IM refers to communicating a connection with others in order to appear competent whereas direct IM refers to self-enhancement directly about the self. Direct self-presentation involves highlighting aspects of one's own experiences to look good, such as highlighting one's accomplishments, or a specific trait. Indirect IM entails highlighting one's importance by association with successful others (Tal-Or, 2010),

for example; "Did I mention that I grew up in the same hometown as Albert Einstein?" (Carter & Sanna, 2006, p.186). Boasting and burnishing are two indirect IM behaviors (Tal-Or, 2008). Another classification of IM tactics classifies them as soft, hard, or rational tactics (Lee, Han, Cheong, Kim, & Yun, 2017). Soft tactics involve the use of emotion and offering something in exchange, whereas hard tactics involve use of some level of threat. Rational tactics involve offering rationale and reasoning. Inspirational appeal, apprising, collaboration, and legitimating are some tactics that can be categorized along this system of classification. Another classification of IM is based on the use of verbal and non-verbal cues to manage one's impressions. These are verbal and nob-verbal IM behaviors. In addition to these classifications, several other behaviors not classified to a specific category per se, are also impression managing in character. For example, Long et al. (2015), argued individuals may engage in supportive relationships with stars and projects of the organization (high and low performers), in order to manage their impressions on the supervisor as helpful and likable.

The study will consider envier's attributions of the coworker's target-focused IM tactics. These supervisor, self, and job-focused IM behaviors are most relevant for the study because of: 1. The widespread acceptance of this classification among scholars and 2. The relevance of these IM tactics from an attributional perspective, mainly, the emphasis on specific intended objectives from target-focused IM. Supervisory, self and job-focused IM provides theoretical grounds to test attributions regarding the supervisor as well as the actor. Theoretical grounds for attributing other IM behaviors to the supervisors appear weak, at least for now, until supervisor and actor attributions under consideration in the study are established.

2.1.2 IM Contexts in Organizations

Because IM involves presenting oneself in ways suggestive of the actors' possession of desired characteristics, IM in interviews is widely investigated for potential outcomes regarding interview decisions and their predictive capacity regarding subsequent job performance. Interviewers also manage impressions about their organization to prospective employees during the interview (Wilhelmy, Kleinmann,

Melchers, & Götz, 2017). Research also shows that interviewers may not always look through applicants' IM and may, at times, be deceived to the extent that interviewer experience does not add to IM detection (Roulin, Bangerter, & Levashina, 2014). Efforts of slight image creation may result in negative interview evaluations (Roulin et al., 2014). Researchers have also begun to focus on the influence of the interviewer's cultural background in determining hireability ratings of applicants exhibiting favorable vs. their opposite unfavorable IM behaviors. Mast, Frauendorfer and Popovic (2011), concluded that interviewers from cultures that view modesty vs. self-promotion more favorably (and vice versa) rated the candidates exhibiting relevant behaviors more favorably in terms of hireability. Others have incorporated deception or outright lying in the interview context as a form of IM (Weiss & Feldman, 2006). Fletcher, (2013) also included falsification among other IM behaviors employed during the selection interview. He also identified assertiveness, information filtering and excuses, among others.

Studies discussing IM and political behavior in the context of performance appraisals show that individuals are motivated to manage impressions when performance appraisals are near, or when there is awareness that certain behaviors are likely to influence impressions and consequently, performance appraisals (Kozlowski, Chao & Morrison, 1998; Villanova & Bernardin, 1989). Wayne and Liden (1995), reported based on a longitudinal analysis, that performance ratings of impression managers are influenced through arousing supervisor liking and supervisor perceptions of similarity with the subordinate. Together, job interviews and performance evaluations are the two most widely studied contexts in IM literature (Bolino, Long, & Turnley, 2016; Swider et al., 2011).

2.1.3 IM Tactics in the Current Study

2.1.3.1 Supervisor Focused IM

Supervisor-focused IM behaviors are commonly referred to as supervisory ingratiation (Jones & Pittman, 1982; Ferris, Judge, Rowland, & Fitzgibbons, 1994). Opinion conformity, flattery, and praise-giving are some behaviors associated with

this category of IM classification. It is a group of behaviors that attempts to assert oneself as likable, similar, and as having similar opinions as the target. According to Jones and Pittman (1982), the motive behind this IM tactic is to be seen as likable, helpful, and considerate. These behaviors are overwhelmingly instrumental in drawing positive outcomes such as supervisor ratings of citizenship behaviors, likability, positive performance evaluations, career success, and interpersonal attraction (Judge & Bretz, 1994; Wayne & Ferris, 1990;Wayne & Liden, 1995). Meta-analytic findings confirm the instrumentality of supervisory focused IM in eliciting rewards (Gordon, 1996). Bolino, Varela, Bande, and Turnley (2006), found that OCB ratings mediate the relationship between supervisor-focused IM and supervisor ratings of the employee's likability. Indeed, Supervisory-focused IM has been reported as an instrumental behavior towards desired ends (Bolino & Turnley, 2016). Of the three IM tactics included in a study investigating variable effects of IM tactics over time, it was found that only ingratiation (likable to supervisor focused IM), resulted in excessively higher supervisor ratings of performance with repetitive use (Bolino, Klotz, & Daniels, 2014).

In short, literature confirms that these behaviors are rewarding, suggesting the use of these behaviors as means to securing organizational rewards and supervisory favors. As such, supervisor-focused IM is viewed unfavorably among co-workers (Vonk, 1998). It is expected, therefore, that the use of these behaviors by a coworker is especially likely to threaten the envier's standing and well-being within the organization (Turnley, Klotz, & Bolino, 2013; Veiga at al., 2014), and be seen as unfavorable; drawing self-protective attributions, influencing performance and behaviors.

2.1.3.2 Job-Focused IM

Job-focused IM are attempts at drawing attention towards oneself. Similar to self-promotion, these behaviors are designed to bring to notice aspects of oneself, and particularly, of one's ability to perform their job (Bolino et al., 2016a). Behaviors associated with this category are particularly effective during interviews, where the interviewee is called upon, or expected to highlight personal achievements

and competence (Barrick, Shaffer, & DeGrassi, 2009). Such individuals are more likely to be hired, and have higher evaluations of interview performance (Kacmar & Carlson, 1999; Barrick et al., 2009). It has even been reported that a candidate's poor impression during an initial phase of the interview can be improved during subsequent phase(s) with the use of self-promotion (Swider et al., 2011). Johnson, Griffith and Buckley (2016), discussed an emotions-centric model of IM, arguing that emotions accompanying verbal and non-verbal cues in IM, influenced by organizational and personal moderators, influence target attributions. Perhaps investigating another's IM, paired with a significant emotion such as envy, should help explain the observer's perspective as well.

Behaviors associated with job-focused IM, such as undermining the significance of an offense/error, taking excessive credit for an accomplishment or appearing more hardworking than one's factual effort are self-serving in nature (Suar, Mishra, & Mishra, 2015). Therefore, these behaviors imply some form of deception and their strategic use for achieving other ends. It is a political behavior, motivated by the desire to secure greater resources for oneself through a distortion of reality (Halbesleben & Wheeler, 2006). Negative outcomes of these behaviors have also been reported. For example, job-focused IM tactics are associated negatively with supervisor ratings of citizenship behaviors (Bolino et al., 2006). Because these behaviors accentuate positive aspects of one's performance, and because they are akin to the self-promotion category of IM, and are planned to earn attributions of competence and taking credit (Bolino et al., 2016), they are likely to be hedonistically relevant and hold negative valence for the envier. Thus, they are likely to be ill-received by the envier, who, according to the attribution theory, is likely to seek causality for the behavior, and react to it.

2.1.3.3 Self-Focused IM

Self-focused IM is concerned with efforts to appear hard-working and increase target's positive affect towards the actor. These behaviors are designed to highlight the actor as a polite person. Self-focused IM overlaps with behaviors termed as exemplification (Bolino, Long & Turnley, 2016), and involves behaviors such as

staying late at work and appearing busy. Although some argue that not all IM (including self-focused IM) is deceptive (Roulin et al., 2015), their use does imply intentionality because they include highlighting one's competence and presenting oneself in a positive light. Other forms of self-focused IM behaviors include concealing connections with unfavorable others (burying), and exaggerating the importance of one's positive actions (enhancement) (Bolino, Kacmar, Turnley, & Gilstrap, 2008). Interviewees' self-focused IM tactics are positively related to hiring recommendations through their influence on person-job fit perceptions of the recruiter (Chen & Lin, 2014). These behaviors also influence hiring recommendations through their influence on interviewer perceptions of similarity and competence (Howard & Ferris, 1996). Self-focused IM results in positive interviewer evaluation when being evaluated for a job that requires high contact with customers(Tsai, Chen & Chiu, 2005).

In so far as self-focused IM behaviors are rewarding, they pose to the envier, the threat of the coworker's potentially greater success within the organization. When a coworker benefits at one's expense, resentment of the benefiting person arises (Ferro, 2010), and the offended person takes the perceived ego threat as personally harmful (Keeves, Westphal, & McDonald, 2017). Resentment is further enhanced by envy (Ferro, 2010; Smith, 2013). Because co-worker IM reflects badly on the non-impression managing co-worker (Turnley et al., 2013), the coworker's IM behaviors present sufficient undesirability in themselves to the envier, and therefore, are likely to trigger an attributional mechanism and consequent reactions.

2.2 Envy: An Unfavorable Emotion

Parrott and Smith (1993), conducted experiments to investigate differences between envy and jealousy: the two affective states often confused among laypeople. After conceptually clarifying the distinction between the two, they concluded that though envy and jealousy frequently co-occur, unlike envy, jealousy comprises feelings of distrust, fear of loss, and rejection (Parrott, 1991). The dissimilarity between the two related, but distinct emotions, has been highlighted as 'lack' vs. 'loss'; the former implying inability to achieve the desired object, or hopelessness

regarding their achievement in the future (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2007). DelPriore, Hill, and Buss (2012), argued for a functional account of envy, proposing that envy is gender differentiated in terms of adaptive challenges faced by both genders over time.

Ill will towards the coworker- which is characteristic of envy- is also evident in feelings of elation at the their misfortune, or malicious pleasure; commonly known as Schadenfreude (Heider, 1958; Leach, Spears, Branscombe, & Doosje, 2003). In an elaborate experiment on 114 undergraduate students, (Smith et al., 1996), envy was created and manipulated by showing respondents video tapes of a highly successful, and average students who subsequently faced an adversity. Results showed that respondents who watched the tape of the average student reported significantly less pleasure at the ill fate of the student than those who watched the tape of the high achiever. Similar findings were reported in another experiment that underscored the role of the envier and envied persons' gender in predicting schadenfreude from envy (Dijk, Ouwerkerk, Goslinga, Nieweg, & Gallucci, 2006). They added that envy predicts schadenfreude only when the envied person has the same gender as oneself- adding to envy literature that emphasizes the self-relevance of in eliciting stronger ill will.

The domain of envy at work has received considerable attention among researchers, owing to its unconstructive character and unpromising implications for the work environment. Considerable amount of literature in social psychology reflects the ability of envy to shape behavior (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Khan et al., 2014; Leheta et al., 2017; Osch, Zeelenberg, & Breugelmans, 2017; Sterling et al., 2016; Thompson et al., 2015). Envy, by its very nature, implies a negative affect, adversarial feelings towards the coworker, and unhealthy competition, influencing causal attributions. Scholars in social psychology have discussed implications of affect and feelings in shaping information processing (Wyer, Clore, & Isbell, 1999). For example, describing 'feelings as information', and 'mood as information', researchers have described the role of affect in cognitive information processing in social contexts (Clore & Parrott, 1991). Affect influences people's perceptions of others (Forgas, 1991). It goes to imply envy shapes individual impressions of the coworker and their behavior in ways corresponding with the feelings aroused by

envy. Emotions associated with the experience of envy result in hostility towards the coworker (Duffy, Scott, Shaw, Tepper, & Aquino, 2012; Dunn & Schweitzer, 2015 ; Kim & Glomb, 2014 ; Thompson et al., 2015; Veiga, Baldridge, & Markóczy, 2014; Wobker, 2015). Investigating feelings of unfair treatment and inferiority in the recall of experienced envy, researches show subjective and objective sense of injustice incite hostile feelings towards the coworker (Smith, Parrott, Ozer, & Moniz, 1994). Respondents were social psychology students at universities and were asked to recall an envy-evoking experience, describing how they had felt at the time. Their responses to items of various scales indicated the extent to which that envy-evoking episode evoked feelings of injustice and hostility. Results indicated both objective and subjective feelings of injustice contributed to hostile feelings towards the coworker, and that a sense of inferiority caused depressive feelings among the envious. Smith et al. (1994), described the envied subject as a 'personification of a desired but unattainable goal'.

Studies differentiate envy into malicious and non malicious or benign types. The former refers to reprehensible feelings involving the desire that the coworker did not have the desired object (Bedeian, 1995). It is associated with behavior intended to harm the coworker or bring to halt their source of privilege. Others have emphasized this distinction into envy types is unnecessary and propose a monistic view of envy (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Khan, Quratulain, & Bell, 2014). According to them, the experience of envy simply involves unfavorable comparison with another who one perceives possesses the desired object(s), and hence, envy can be experienced regardless of the type. For the envier, comparison with the coworker evokes negative feelings and that should suffice to incite behavioral outcomes.

2.3 Imitation of the Coworker's Supervisor Focused IM

Of the warmth vs. competence attributions sought in achieving status, competence is less relevant in collectivistic cultures (Torelli, Leslie, Stoner, & Puente,

2014). Through a series of studies, Torelli et al. (2014) showed that in collectivistic cultures, high status individuals are viewed as warm whereas competence is the ascribed attribute in individualistic cultures. They also reported that individuals in collectivistic cultures sought warmth (i.e., behave in ways that involve ingratiation, praise and flattery of the target), rather than competence, in order to achieve status at work (i.e., self and job-focused IM). Participants asked to indicate the frequency of their use of behavior typically associated with developing attributions of warmth (e.g. ingratiation etc.) vs. competence (e.g. self and job-focused IM), in jobs they had held. Respondents from collectivistic cultures reported using less self and job-focused IM behaviors, and more other-centered behavior in order to achieve status. The opposite was true for individuals of individualistic cultures. Consistent with their findings, it is proposed that in the collectivistic culture this study this study is being conducted, the envier will engage in supervisory focused IM rather than self and job-focused IM in order to gain status at the workplace. Carlson et al. (2011), also implied that given a situation that poses threat to the self, or to one's standing in an organization, an organizational member is likely to use supervisor-focused IM deceitfully, or partially deceptively. Indeed, IM motives increase positive behaviors by individuals who seek to get along in a bid to achieve goals centering around organizational outcomes (Chiaburu, Stoverink, Li, & Zhang, 2015).

Social information processing theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), suggests that the context of the work situation involving supervisor-focused IM, and previous experiences of the supervisor rewarding similar behavior, shapes the observer's perceptions about acceptable behavior. The coworker's supervisory-focused IM may be seen in two ways. First, it is seen as the supervisor's approval and/or encouragement of such behavior and as an organizational norm for progressing. Secondly, considering that supervisor-focused IM behavior is tactical and involves deliberate attempts at winning favors (Bolino, Long, & Turnley, 2016), it is possibly seen as the actor's instrumental means to achieve greater organizational outcomes, supervisory rewards and approval. Regardless of the interpretation, such behavior presents an unfavorable situation for the coworker (Turnley et al., 2013), who seeks to compete with, or at least perform as equally

well as the coworker who receives desired organizational rewards (Niels van de Ven et al., 2012). Either way, such behavior signals greater potential organizational rewards for the actor. As such, it presents a threat to the coworker, whose upward comparison with the actor causes them pain (Tai et al., 2012). One way they are likely to respond to the coworker's supervisory-focused IM is by imitating the behavior to which they attribute the coworker's superior standing (Heider, 1958). Imitating behavior of the successful coworker is a way to: 1. Adhere to perceived institutional norm, or conform to supervisor's perceived encouragement of the behavior (Bandura & Walters, 1977; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), and 2. behave in ways that supposedly should get supervisor's attention and approval (Heider, 1958). Psychologically, conformity with prevailing norms may encourage imitation of supervisor-focused (Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991). According to the social information processing approach of behaviors and attitudes, the observer deconstructs the social environment for cues regarding acceptable as well as expected behaviors (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The social context helps infer meaning, through indicators of socially acceptable behavior and accepted reasons for those behaviors (e.g. engaging in supervisor ingratiation and flattery for desirable ends). The social information also helps infer behavior expectations, and anticipate consequences of such behavior. In the context of the current study, this implies that the coworker's supervisory-focused IM signals to the envier, information regarding: 1. Supervisor's acceptance and encouragement of the behavior (if this behavior was not acceptable, the better performer would not resort to it), 2. An institutionalized and implied way of 'getting ahead' within the organization (perhaps the coworker's position and rewards are an outcome of such ingratiatory behavior), and 3. Potential rewards of adopting similar behavior (if I adopt the same behavior, I might succeed in creating positive perceptions in the eyes of the supervisor), because supervisors rate ingratiating subordinates more favorably than other subordinates and ingratiating members receive more organizational rewards (Huang, Zhao, Niu, Ashford, & Lee, 2015). This argument is also in line with studies that suggest that individuals lacking unique skills (e.g. performance competencies etc.) seek alternate ways to influence those who control organizational outcomes (Ralston, 1985), through influencing supervisor liking and influencing

the exchange relationship with the supervisor (Wayne & Ferris, 1990). Others have also shown that, for performance-related settings as opposed to interview settings, other-focused behaviors are more effective than self-focused tactics at securing positive outcomes (Peck & Levashina, 2017).

Using a social information processing argument (Johnson, Griffith, & Buckley, 2016), the study proposes that the envier reasons for the coworker's success as being an outcome of ingratiatory and flattering tactics towards the supervisor. In doing so, he resorts to similar tactics towards the supervisor, in order to gain supervisor's attention and seek favorable outcomes for their career. Supervisory-focused IM increase supervisory positive perceptions of the subordinate (Wayne & Liden, 1995). The envier may respond in ways to reduce the pain by attempting to gain eminence themselves (Perrine & Timpe, 2014). The envier engages in supervisor focused IM, because he/she seeks to adjust to what appears to be the group norm to get ahead. The envier will adopt the perceived dominant norm of supervisor flattery and favor doing to gain rewards according to the social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977), and social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). In adapting to this norm, the envier imitates supervisor-focused IM behaviors, in attempts to seek supervisory approval. We contend that, consistent with these theories, the envier is motivated to belong to the group he implicitly assumes comprises the supervisor and the high-performing coworker. In addition to group membership, the envier is also motivated to be visible in the eyes of the supervisor, and resorts to IM behaviors that win them the supervisor's favorability. Social learning theory (Bandura & Walters, 1977), suggests the envier learns appropriate behavior from the social environment. In order to seek authentic information regarding accepted behaviors and norms, people rely on significant others, e.g. co-workers, as role models (Robinson & O'Leary-Kelly, 1998). The behavior of those significant co-workers becomes an example to follow in order to fit in the group. Turnley et al. (2013), made a similar argument, reasoning that observers of others' supervisory ingratiation may mimic the behavior with the intention of eliciting a similar level of liking by the supervisor. They discussed that ingratiation towards the supervisor occurs often at the expense of fellow co-workers by giving the impression managing individual them undue advantage over others, creating

a reason for others to keep up with them by imitating the behavior in hope of garnering similar relative level of supervisor liking.

In case of the envier, an additional reason for imitating the coworker's behavior, is its potential instrumentality in gaining supervisory approval. For the envier, the co-worker's supervisory ingratiation signals, that nearness to the supervisor should be instrumental in gaining his attention. The envier imitates the behavior in attempts to win the supervisor's attention and rewards. Upon repetitive observations of the coworker's supervisor-focused IM, the envier is motivated to adjust their own behavior accordingly. Similar rationale for imitation of other co-worker behaviors have also been given, e.g. absenteeism (ten Brummelhuis, Johns, Lyons, & ter Hoeven, 2016). The non-performance based behavior of supervisor-focused IM by the coworker provide to the envier, cues regarding acceptability of such behavior, and their potential reward. Furthermore, supervisor focused tactics are employed based on the interdependence theory of social interaction, which suggests that the envier attempts to influence the supervisor because he is in control of the desired organizational outcomes (Crisp & Turner, 2014; Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). The structure of the envy situation (the self, the coworker, and the supervisor in control of desired outcomes), increases the envier's reliance on supervisor focused tactics, also because supervisor focused IM is most similar to prosocial behaviors (Ferris et al., 1994). It has been suggested that envy increases the use of deceptive tactics (Moran & Schweitzer, 2008), and that human behavior is goal-driven (Huang & Bargh, 2014), implying that the envier should engage in IM following another's use of IM behavior. Additionally, Tai et al. (2012), reasoned that the challenge-oriented response of the envier is to behave prosocially. In the context of IM, this may be take the form of supervisor-focused IM.

H_1 : Supervisor focused IM by the coworker is positively associated with the envier's use of similar supervisor focused IM.

2.4 Counterproductive Workplace Behavior

Counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs), or alternately, deviant work behaviors, are intentionally unethical and harmful behaviors that target the organization, its members, and/or its stakeholders. They are a set of behaviors that have strategic implications by influencing unit level productivity, profits and turnover (Carpenter, Whitman, & Amrhein, 2021). Spector and Fox (2010) stated that "CWB is considered an umbrella term that subsumes, in part or whole, similar constructs concerning harmful behaviors at work" (p. 133). According to Bartlett II and Bartlett (2011), various behaviors such as retaliation, revenge, deviance and aggression are included within the ambit of CWB. Volition and intentionality of the behavior is essential to its description as CWB. Extant literature identifies organizational and individual-targeted CWB (Carpenter & Berry, 2014). This targeted perspective was initially proposed by Bennett and Robinson (2000) and Robinson and Bennett (1995). Robinson and Bennett (1995), proposed a typology of deviant behaviors at work, on four quadrants. Collectively, two quadrants belong each to interpersonally and organizationally directed behavior. This targeted approach has found substantial support in literature on CWB, aggression, retaliation and deviant workplace behavior. For example (Jones, 2009), tested this targeted perspective based on the agent-system model of justice, and reported people direct their CWB towards the supervisor or organization, based on perceived mistreatment in the form of interpersonal and informational injustice, and procedural injustice respectively. Recent work on deviant workplace behavior has also begun to identify new forms of behavior considered deviant, such as advancing organizational interests by violating the status quo (Blader, Patil, & Packer, 2017).

Numerous negative workplace behaviors are either described in overlapping terms, or fall under the general ambit of deviance, or counterproductive behavior. These include bullying (Salin, 2014; Samnani & Singh, 2016), aggression (Neuman, 2014), theft (Wilkin & Connelly, 2015), harassment (Neall & Tuckey, 2014), and incivility (Schilpzand, De Pater, & Erez, 2016). In the context of envy, undermining behaviors that involve gossiping about, belittling, and withholding information

from the coworker are often reported (Duffy et al., 2012; Lange & Crusius, 2015b; Wobker, 2015). All CWB and deviant behavior literature emphasizes one fundamental aspect of CWB: it occurs in response to frustration and/or a sense of being wronged. For example, Greenberg (1990), in their seminal work on workplace theft, showed that reduction in salary led to a higher rate of theft among employees of a plant who were given little or no justification for it, while theft rate remained the same throughout the experiment among employees of the plant that served as the control in their experiment. Though Greenberg concluded that these results stemmed from a sense of inequity, Spector (1997), reasoned that no justification accompanying salary reduction causes frustration. Emotions following injustice and frustration remain the most discussed reasons for CWB. For example, Barclay & Kiefer (2017), found that anger following unfair events predicts CWB. They suggested future work to include other emotions, such as envy, and the underlying psychological processes following events perceived as unfair. Ferris, Spence, Brown, and Heller (2012), showed that self-esteem threat following interpersonal injustice determines workplace deviance. Indeed, CWB occurs in an effort to avenge oneself (Restubog, Zagenczyk, Bordia, Bordia, & Chapman, 2015), or restore equity from a social exchange perspective (Cropanzano, Anthony, Daniels, & Hall, 2017).

Negative emotions arising from lack of a fit with one's job and vocation affect employee proclivity to engage in CWB (Iliescu, Ispas, Sulea, & Ilie, 2015; Liu, Luksyte, Zhou, Shi, & Wang, 2015), while self-control helps avoid CWB by high-integrity individuals (Bazzy & Woehr, 2017). Extant literature suggests that emotions/affect, associated with workplace environment and experiences, greatly predict CWB (Shockley, Ispas, Rossi, & Levine, 2012). Determinants of CWB, and associated negative behaviors, include unfair treatment and outcomes, exhaustion (Chen et al., 2020), negative emotions (Bauer & Spector, 2015) following injustice (Khan, Quratulain, & Crawshaw, 2013), work and group climate (Appelbaum, Deguire, & Lay, 2005; Priesemuth, Arnaud, & Schminke, 2013), and personal determinants, such as equity sensitivity, and a hostile attributional style (Bourdage, Goupal, Neilson, Lukacik, & Lee, 2018; DeShong, Grant, & Mullins-Sweatt, 2015).

Furthermore, work stressors such as time-related stress (De Clercq, Kundi, Sardar, & Shahid, 2021; De Clercq, Haq, & Azeem, 2019), and role stressors (Yue Zhang, Crant, & Weng, 2019), also lead to CWB. Others have also shown that cross-cultural differences exist in CWB (Miao, Humphrey, Qian, & Perdue, 2020). Scholars have argued that regardless of authenticity of the experience/perception, an individual's cognitive appraisal and attributions of an undesirable situation also predicts CWB (Neuman & Baron, 1998). Among determinants of CWB, envy, in both its dispositional and situational forms, is known to exacerbate CWB behavior towards the coworker. Considering that CWB is a coping mechanism that helps face emotional exhaustion, following injustice (Krischer, Penney, & Hunter, 2010). This implies that the motivational mechanism underlying CWB has to do with coping with frustration and stress.

2.4.1 Frustration and Stressors as Facilitators of CWB

The stressor-emotion model of CWB (Spector & Fox, 2005), emphasizes CWB as a response to attributions regarding stressors in the work environment. Based on theories of stress and the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Berkowitz, 1989; Dollard, Miller, Doob, Mowrer, & Sears, 1939, Lazarus, 2006), CWB results from negative emotions associated with stressful workplace experiences (Chen et al., 2020). The stressor-emotion model of CWB elaborates the cognitions behind those who resort to CWB in coping with workplace stressors. For example, a study on 133 dyads (co-workers) employed at a University, suggested CWB is targeted towards the source of social conflict (Bruk-Lee & Spector, 2006). Fida et al. (2015), reported similar findings in their study on Italian workers. They concluded that the experience of negative emotions from stressors disengages employees morally, leading to CWB. Indeed, much literature cites the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Dollard et al., 1939), as the basis for CWB and workplace aggression (Fox & Spector, 1999).

According to the frustration-aggression hypothesis, frustration arising from the thwarting of goal attainment always results in aggressive reactions. Spector (1997), defined a frustrator as, "an environmental event or situation that interferes with

or prevents an individual from achieving or maintaining a personal goal at work". The frustration-aggression hypothesis was modified by (Berkowitz, 1989), who reasoned that aggression results to the degree these thwartings generate negative affect. Dollard et al., (1939) had argued that the target of aggression would be the source of frustration. In organizational settings, interpersonal hostililty, strikes, theft, withdrawal behavior, and other forms of negative behavior is reported to result from frustration-inducing events (Spector, 1997). Other studies have repeatedly reiterated similar explanations for CWB that emphasize emotions, frustration, and stressors, while others elaborate that the revenge motive explains CWB responses to workplace experiences in order to restore equity (Hung, Chi, & Lu, 2009). A fairly recent meta-analysis of 33,998 individuals reported findings from 84 reports and 119 samples, reiterating that the stressor-strain relationship is evident at the workplace where organizational constraints significantly predict CWB (Pindek & Spector, 2016). Frustration, and negative emotion arising from abusive supervision, also predicts deviant behavior at work (Avey, Wu, & Holley, 2015). In other words, the stressor-emotion model of CWB, that suggests negative emotional responses to stressors at work, follow a cognitive process involving attributions, provides the underlying rationale for CWB responses to an outperforming co-worker's IM, and its relevant attributions. Envious people are socially undermining of others, particularly when other factors of the workplace are not in their favor (Eissa & Wyland, 2015). The relationship conflict arising from envy results in deviant behavior, such as social undermining of the coworker.

2.4.2 Supervisor- Focused IM by the Coworker and Counterproductive Workplace Behavior

Individuals behave in socially undermining ways towards their competitor (Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017). For the current study, given that a subordinate is not in a position to engage in open aggression towards the supervisor, and given that competition entails zero-sum reward practices/policies, deviant behavior is directed towards the co-worker. This idea is along the lines of CWB literature that emphasizes the directional character of CWB towards the organization or its members

(co-workers or supervisors) perceived to be the source of inequity (Dalal et al., 2009). Others reiterate this perspective, emphasizing the significance of assigning source-originated causes to behavior, in order to fully comprehend workplace behavior. For example, Harold, Oh, Holtz, Han, and Giacalone (2016), found support for source-directed CWB in their study. Others reiterated similar views, showing that behaviors are directed towards those from whom some form of benefit or harm are derived (Skarlicki, van Jaarsveld, Shao, Song, & Wang, 2016). CWB is employed as a coping mechanism in the face of stressors, such as injustice, and reduces emotional exhaustion (Krischer et al., 2010). In the context of competitive environments, envy explains why individuals with low self-esteem exhibit hostile tendencies (Rentzsch, Schroder-Abe, & Schutz, 2015). Supervisor focused IM adds to that competition, and is likely to evoke counterproductive behaviors.

Among literature on workplace competition, much work has been done to show deviant behavior results, when an envious person seeks to restore equity (Wilkin & Connelly, 2015). Because CWBs result from either frustration, or as an effort at restoring equity, they aim at negatively influencing others' performance, and/or harming them (Ho, 2012). The envier faces profound feelings of injustice, and seeks to compare lots and restore equity. In the face of inadequate organizational outcomes, the quality of one's perceived exchange relationship with the supervisor, influences CWB responses to perceptions of organizational distributive justice (Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2014). Anger resulting from a sense of organizational injustice also causes counterproductive workplace behavior (Khan, Quratulain, & Crawshaw, 2013). Envy literature is relevant to the current study because envy signifies competition for valued resources which another person enjoys, a focus of this study.

Cohen-Charash and Mueller (2007), reported that unfairness and higher levels of envy lead to higher CWB directed towards the higher performer, specifically among individuals with high self-esteem. Khan, Quratulain, and Bell (2014) found support for their attributional model of justice, reporting that CWB towards the higher performer results for higher levels of procedural justice. Tai et al. (2012), proposed CWB response towards the coworker based on their description of envy

as a painful experience, which the envier seeks to allay. Other literature also suggests that because the envier fails to identify with coworker and the supervisor, the esteem threat is likely to manifest itself as counterproductive behavior targeted towards the co-worker (Duffy et al., 2012). This study proposes that, because observers view supervisor-focused IM unfavorably, and because it is discomforting for co-workers (Foulk & Long, 2016), threatening their wellbeing, (Turnley et al., 2013), supervisor-focused IM by the coworker should trigger CWB towards them by the envier. Because supervisor- focused IM fosters the creation of positive exchange relationship with the supervisor (Dulebohn, Bommer, Liden, Brouer, & Ferris, 2012), the coworker's use of flattery and favor doing towards the supervisor signals to the envier the potential threat of the former's greater social appeal as a result of it, because supervisor focused IM is rewarding, resulting in CWB towards them. The aforementioned lines of reasoning provide rationale to test the following hypothesis:

H_{2a} : The co-worker's use of supervisor focused IM is positively associated with the envier's counterproductive workplace behavior towards them.

2.4.3 Self-focused IM by the Coworker and the Envier's Counterproductive Workplace Behavior

The coworker's use of self-focused IM is likely to signal to the envier greater potential outcomes for the former, making their position further enviable, and further threatening the envier's self worth within the organization. Turnley et al. (2013), argued that co-workers' self-focused IM behaviors, such as exemplification increases stress and role overload, causing burnout and cynicism. The stress and uncertainty of the envier's future standing within the organization, coupled with an outperformer's behavior that puts them in a relatively positive light at one's expense, such as self-focused IM, foretells retaliatory response borne out of frustration. Because the coworker is considered no better than oneself, but benefiting unfairly, the envier is motivated to reduce the advantaged position of the undeserving coworker (Niels van de Ven et al., 2012). Owing to the discomforting emotion

of envy (Tai et al., 2012), the envier is motivated to engage in behavior targeted towards reducing the advantage the coworker holds (Scthemmel, 2008). Such behavior is intended to diminish the coworker's superior standing and chances of success (Duffy et al., 2012; Leheta et al., 2017). Envy is known to explain hostile tendencies, even in non-work competitive situations (Rentzsch et al., 2015), providing a strong rationale for CWB towards the coworker's behavior that further increases this competition.

Investigating the effect of another form of envy increasingly gaining scholarly attention, Dineen, Duffy, Henle, and Lee (2017), found that job-search envy leads job seekers to deviant forms of job-search behaviors such as the use of fraud and deception. Although the study did not highlight deviance as directed towards the coworker, it is highly relevant for the current study in providing support for an envier's engagement in deviant behavior, in the face of the fear that the other might land themselves better prospects for a job. This characteristic is considerably relevant to the threat following another's supervisor-focused IM: that the coworker may take away much of the desired object(s) (e.g. promotions, supervisory favors, increments etc.), at the envier's expense (Turnley et al., 2013). Because CWB is predicted considerably by workplace stressors (Meier & Spector, 2013), and because relationship conflict stemming from envy explains undermining behavior towards the coworker (Eissa & Wyland 2015), to the extent that IM of an outperforming co-worker is stressful (Turnley et al., 2013), and to the extent that envy arouses negative affect towards the coworker, this study proposes that IM of the coworker should incite CWB behavior of the envier. Indeed, because these behaviors are directed towards creating an impression of oneself as dedicated and an exemplary worker (Barrick et al., 2009), they are seen as a threat by the envier who is motivated to reduce the felt pain from this threat (Tai , Narayanan & McAllister, 2012).

H_{2b} : The coworker's use of self- focused IM is positively associated with the envier's counterproductive workplace behavior towards them.

2.4.4 Job-Focused IM by the Coworker and the Envier's Counterproductive Work Behavior

The coworker's job-focused IM is likely to reflect negatively on the non-impression managing envier because it reflects negatively on their competence (Turnley et al., 2013). Turnley et al. (2013), suggested that supervisors deepen their positive stereotypes associated with members of the majority group. It is likely that job-focused IM by a supervisor's in-group members is also likely to magnify any positive biases in their favor, or negative biases against the envier, because an envier is most likely low on quality of exchange relationship with the supervisor.
Research shows varying outcomes of job-focused IM. Job-focused IM such as self-promotion is reported to yield contradictory outcomes during the interview process (Higgins & Judge, 2004; Swider, Barrick, Harris & Stoverink, 2011), while others report that self-promoters attract dislike from their supervisors (Jones & Pittman, 1982). I contend that the envier is oblivious to the supervisor's perspective of like/dislike for a person engaging in self-promotional behaviors, but is primarily concerned with the visible efforts the coworker puts into displaying an image of themselves as competent. I contend that they view these job-focused behaviors as a threat for their potentially positive rewards. Relative deprivation accompanying envy (Feather, 2015; Smith & Pettigrew, 2014), signals to the envier inadequate opportunity to excel in the self-relevant domain, where the coworker excels and 'boasts' about. Such job-focused IM is also likely to be perceived as an unfair, and as non-deserved, but manipulative effort at garnering supervisory favors.
This triggers the motive to harm the coworker as a threat oriented response (Tai et al., 2012), to their use of job-focused IM. The sense of injustice associated with envy triggers hostile feelings (Smith et al., 1994), and the coworker's additional job-focused IM, that may potentially broaden the status and outcome differential between them, should further add to these hostile tendencies towards the coworker. Undermining and sabotaging the coworker has been reported as a response to various envy situations (Neufeld & Johnson, 2016). Khan, Bell, and Quratulain (2017), also argued that in the absence of opportunities to achieve internalized goals, a pulling-down effect occurs whereby the envier seeks to deprive

the coworker of their status/outcomes. Indeed, the harmful behavior that it is, CWB at work results from frustration following unfair lack of opportunity to excel (Fox & Spector, 1999; Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001). Using counterproductive behavior towards the coworker, the envier attempts at 'getting even' with them through harming them, or hampering their access to information and resources that may prove beneficial for the coworker. In so far as the job-focused IM is likely to be rewarded (Zhao & Liden, 2011), this threat-oriented response to being outperformed and overlooked for a potential promotion (Khan, Quratulain, & Bell, 2014; Tai et al., 2012) offers to restore equity. Furthermore, people are more likely to behave counterproductively when facing frustrating situations, or following depletion of regulatory resources (Barnes, Schaubroeck, Huth, & Ghumman, 2011). Given that job-focused IM is potentially rewarding (Dulebohn et al., 2012), it is displeasing to the outperformed envier, and is likely to incite CWB towards the coworker. Furthermore, literature shows CWB as an expression of the ego's rejection of esteem-threatening information from one's environment (Whelpley & Mcdaniel, 2016). The intentional job-focused IM behavior may be seen as the coworker's attempt at overtaking others, thereby inciting counterproductive behavior towards them as social exchange (Cropanzano et al., 2017). Given that the co-worker perceives a threat from the coworker's job-focused IM behavior (Turnley et al., 2013), and given that, in competitive settings, envy resulting from low self-esteem explains hostile tendencies (Rentzsch, Schroder-Abe, & Schutz, 2015), the aforementioned lines of reasoning provide rationale to test the following hypothesis:

H_{2c} : The coworker's use of job-focused IM is positively associated with the envier's counterproductive workplace behavior towards them.

2.5 Job Performance

Enhancing or maintaining employee performance is among the prime concern for organizations because organizations as a whole, rely on the performance of its members. Job performance, or in-role performance is behavior that contributes to the organization's value (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). It is one of the two

dimensions of work performance, the other being extra-role performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Individuals tend to invest in the organization by increasing job performance, when there is trust in the organization as a result of perceptions that the organization is fair (Aryee, Walumbwa, Mondejar, & Chu, 2015). Transformational leadership, and the use of self- leadership strategies predict higher job performance ratings (Breevaart, Bakker, Demerouti, & Derks, 2016). Individuals supporting their family are better performers at the workplace, owing to the motivation it provides to perform well (Menges, Tussing, Wihler, & Grant, 2017). Menges et al. (2017), found support for their hypothesis that perceived benefit to one's family from performing well at the job (family motivation), enhances performance at the job. Job performance is also enhanced as a result of the leader's ability to manage emotions that enhances employees' perceptions of their job characteristics (Choudhary, Naqshbandi, Philip, & Kumar, 2017).

Predictors of job performance include the Big Five personality traits and its facets (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Dudley, Orvis, Lebiecki, & Cortina, 2006), emotional and cognitive intelligence (Cote & Miners, 2006; Joseph, Jin, Newman, & O' Boyle, 2015), and affect (Kaplan, Bradley, Luchman, & Haynes, 2009 ; Shockley et al., 2012). Others have shown that positive emotions and attitudes towards one's job and organization are instrumental in influencing job performance, suggesting that adverse emotions such as envy, should negatively influence it. For example, job performance is positively associated with mindfulness by focusing one's attention on the present moment in time (Dane & Brummel, 2013). This means, mindful people overcome other pressures (e.g. the past, future or others) to remain focused on the current tasks at hand, thereby enhancing performance. Managerial strategies to increase motivation and job satisfaction also increase employees' job performance (Springer, 2011). Employees satisfied with their job are more likely to be good performers (Aftab & Idrees, 2012). Organizational commitment and a caring climate within the organization enhances employee job performance. A caring climate signals to employees the organization's interest in their well-being, thereby enhancing their performance (Fu & Deshpande, 2014). Additionally, leader behaviors play a significant role in influencing employees' job performance (Breevaart et al., 2016), by influencing their mental health (Montano, Reeske, Franke, &

Hüffmeier, 2017).

Various impediments to one's work reduce performance (Özbağ, Çekmecelioğlu, & Ceyhun, 2014). Fairness influences job performance by influencing the learning environment (Walumbwa, Cropanzano, & Hartnell, 2009). Martin, Guillaume, Thomas, Lee, and Epitropaki (2016), reported that a positive exchange quality with the supervisor affects task performance. They found that this positive affect on performance is brought about by fostering trust in the leader, motivation to perform and job satisfaction. Dulebohn et al. (2012), also showed that perceptions of the quality of exchange relationship with one's supervisor influences job performance. Reviewing 493 samples in their meta-analysis, Colquitt et al. (2013), reported that justice influences task performance, following a social exchange perspective. Furthermore, because envy is associated with or follows feelings of injustice (Azeem, Haq, Farooq, & Munir, 2017), and low quality exchange relationship with the supervisor (Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017a), these studies indicate negative implications of job performance for the envier.

Others have shown that hindrance stressors, and exhaustion reduce job performance (Janssen, Lam, & Huang, 2010; Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014). Hindrance stressors are perceptions of the demands at the workplace, including politics, insecurity and red-tape, that thwart performance by unnecessarily hindering the achievement of one's goals and reducing engagement (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000; Crawford, Lepine, & Rich, 2010). Envy, like stressors, is expected to reduce performance by resulting in energy depletion and burnout (Cohen, 1980; Taris, 2006), and although extant literature reports inconsistent findings regarding stressors and job performance, co-worker's IM that affects one's psychological wellbeing and negatively reflects on oneself (Turnley et al., 2013), is likely to be received with skepticism and evaluated as a stressor. Job performance is reduced for individuals low on political skill when the organization is perceived to be unfair (Andrews, Kacmar, & Harris, 2009). The envier is highly likely to receive low performance ratings because the ability to politically manage one's impressions is necessary to receive good performance ratings (Andrews et al., 2009).

The envier's job performance should be influenced as a result of another's potentially rewarding IM behavior, because job performance is correlated with the quality of exchange relationship with one's supervisor (Dulebohn et al., 2012). Their conclusion, that followers interpret workplace behaviors in terms of their relevance to the quality of their own versus other's exchange relationship with the supervisor, has implications for this study. Indeed, the envious, low LMX employee is likely to interpret the high LMX coworker's IM in ways that influence their own contribution to the organization. Others have also shown job performance is significantly associated with the quality of exchange relationship with the supervisor (Gerstner & Day, 1997) across cultures (Rockstuhl, Dulebohn, Ang, & Shore, 2012). A relatively recent meta-analysis (Martin et al., 2016) , confirming an association between quality of exchange relationship with the supervisor and performance, provides grounds for hypothesizing reduced performance by the envier. The study argued that those with high level exchange relationships with the supervisor feel an obligation to reciprocate by working hard and performing well. For the current study, it is argued that the low quality LMX envier is under no obligation to pay back in a seemingly unjust system, thereby reducing effort. The sense of liking and affect towards the leader that motivates the follower to meet supervisory expectations (Martin et al., 2016), are absent in the envier, thereby, reducing motivation and performance. The painful emotion of envy activates behavioral goals in the direction that eliminates it. These activated goal schematas reduce the amount of information processing that can be devoted to more productive goal-directed activities (Wyer & Srull, 2014), thereby, reducing performance
Interesting work has been done in the social comparison domain relating to self-views. Because envy entails upward comparisons (Niels van de Ven et al., 2012), social comparison literature that has implications for job performance, is highly relevant to the current study. Lockwood and Kunda (1997), reported that upward comparisons are inspiring when the comparison target's success is considered attainable. However, they reported that upward comparisons threaten self-views when the success of the comparison target is deemed unattainable, or when one's position is unlikely to improve. Discouragement and negative self-views were reported for comparisons that were made to unattainable targets. Mussweiler, Rüter,

and Epstude (2004), suggest negative outcomes follow social comparisons with psychologically distant targets. Their own findings reiterate that a contrast effect occurs when comparisons are made under conditions that emphasize differences with the target, leading to negative outcomes, instead of positive inspiration. Because envy is a painful and is an undesired emotion that entails negativity towards the comparison target (Vecchio, 2000), contrast effects are likely to come into play, negatively influencing performance. (Mussweiler et al., 2004).

2.5.1 Supervisor-Focused IM and Job Performance

Supervisor-attributed motives for a subordinate's IM behavior such as feedback seeking, influences performance ratings when the attributions are positive (Lam, Huang, & Snape, 2007). Supervisor attributions of a subordinate's IM behaviors to sincere motives leads to positive performance evaluations through increased supervisor liking and improved LMX quality (Huang. Zhao, Niu, Ashford, & Lee, 2013; Lam, Huang, & Snape, 2007). Huang et. al. (2013), reported from their study on Chinese employees and their supervisors, that use of supervisor-focused IM increases supervisor ratings of the subordinate's performance when the behavior is attributed to sincere motives. Supervisory-focused IM is instrumental in securing desired ends (Bolino & Turnley, 2016), and it's repeated use results in higher performance ratings (Bolino, Klotz, & Daniels, 2014). Bolino et. al. (2014), reported variable effects of the three IM tactics over time. These and numerous findings in IM literature reiterate target-focused IM is rewarded by favorable performance evaluations, ratings of citizenship behaviors, and career success (Bolino et al., 2006; Gordon, 1996; Higgins, Judge, & Ferris, 2003; Nguyen & Hartman, 2008), following positive affect and a felt obligation to reciprocate favors (Gouldner, 1960).

In so far as these behaviors are potentially rewarding, they hold relevance for the observers who view the ingratiating co-worker as manipulative and slimy, especially if similar likable behavior is not also directed towards co-workers (Vonk, 1998). Because this behavior demonstrates liking towards the supervisor, this supervisor liking comes at a cost to fellow co-workers in modern day workplace environments

where competition is inherent in securing desired outcomes. Pandey (1986), was among the pioneers to argue that non-target observers view the target-directed IM behavior unfavorably as opposed to the target. Turnley et al. (2013), argued that a co-worker's supervisor-focused IM reflects badly on the observing employee and affects their well-being within the organization.

In the contemporary workplace, more often than not, organizational outcomes such as rewards, promotions, and salaries are exhaustive. Competition, coupled with the organizational policies shaped by a scarcity of resources, makes rewards distribution a zero-sum matter. However, workplace envy does not encapsulate material outcomes alone, but also includes supervisory affect and relative exchange quality with another co-worker, relative social status, opportunity to perform and ease of securing resources needed to perform one's job well (Veiga et al., 2014). Potentially rewarding coworker behavior reflects badly on the self, signaling lost promotions and opportunities, and relatively lower supervisor affect, to the envier. Turnley et al. (2013), argued that workplace environments such as these foster resentment towards the co-worker, who resorts to non-performance means such as supervisory ingratiation, in order to progress.

Additionally, because experienced inequity such as being passed over for promotion, and the perceived relative supervisory inclination towards a co-worker is disturbing, and affects co-worker's affect and trust (Forret & Love, 2008), supervisory ingratiation by the same coworker who is the focus of upward comparisons, is likely to result in behavioral changes in the form of reduced performance. Reduced performance may follow either conscious thinking i.e., reduced performance to restore equity (Adams, 1963), or increased stress. These lines of reasoning are consistent with literature linking reduced performance with stress, psychological disturbance, and the envier's sense of injustice (Adams, 1965, Austin & Walster, 1974; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Tai et al., 2012). Job performance is tied to the quality of exchange at the levels of the organization as well as the leader (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997). To the extent that performance is influenced by quality of exchange relationship with the supervisor (Masterson et al., 2000), the envier, who is low on quality of exchange relationship with the supervisor, should reduce performance when the coworker (perceived to be high on

the exchange quality) engages in supervisor focused IM.

Furthermore, Rosen, Kacmar, Harris, Gavin, and Hochwarter (2017), reported that extra-role behavior, coupled with in-role performance, influences supervisor ratings of performance, thereby providing substantial support to the idea that extra-role behavior such as opinion-conformity and supervisory flattery associated with supervisor-focused IM should matter to the envier. The observations of a coworker's IM in the organization are accompanied by those of the coworker's success in the organization perceived to reward employees unfairly. The envier, who has come to believe that the organization is political, as a result of seeing a coworker succeed, is likely to believe their performance rating will remain consistent no matter how well they perform. Proponents of the envy proper theory of envy, (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2007), argued that unlike admiration, envy does not lead to a motivation to improve. Although there have been conflicting arguments and findings regarding the performance-enhancing capacity of envy (Van de Ven, 2017), social comparisons with an impression managing outperformer should magnify the frustrating and stressful effects of envy, thereby reducing performance as a social exchange and stress-based response to an unfair organization/supervisor (Zhang et al., 2014). Feelings of distress and isolation following envy are known to reduce work-related success such as performance (Thompson et al., 2015).

Tai et al. (2012), argued for reduced performance as one way the envier improves their outcomes to inputs ratio relative to that of the coworker's. From a Pakistani perspective, there is evidence that perceptions of political activity in organizations reduce performance (Abbas, Raja, Darr, & Bouckenooghe, 2014). Turnley et al. (2013), argued that a co-worker's supervisor-focused IM has physical and psychological well-being implications or others. The negative valence of a coworker's supervisory focused IM (Vonk, 1998), should magnify when the observer is an envious person. The envier is already cognizant of the low relationship quality with the supervisor. By decreasing available opportunities for promotion and rewards for distribution (salaries and bonuses etc.), and affecting relative performance ratings of non-ingratiating co-workers (Turnley et al., 2013), the coworker's supervisory focused IM further threatens to widen the gap between the envier's current status and desired goals. Furthermore, resentment is likely to set in as a result of

increased felt pressure to ingratiate the supervisor in an insincere manner. Thus, whether as a deliberate attempt to restore equity (Adams, 1963), or by reducing psychological resources following increased stress, supervisory focused IM by the coworker should reduce the envier's job performance.

H_{3a} : Supervisor-focused IM by the coworker is negatively associated with the envier's job performance.

2.5.2 Self-Focused IM and Job Performance

Turnley et al. (2013), argued that self-focused IM by a co-worker, such as exemplification develops 'job creep', creating supervisor expectancies that expand all co-worker's duties, although not officially recognized by the organization. This means that co-workers experience citizenship pressure, whereby they have to go to greater lengths in order to stand out, and are pressured to engage in novel citizenship behaviors to catch the supervisor's attention and/or to demonstrate their commitment to work (Bolino, Turnley, Gilstrap, & Suazo, 2010). Perhaps, in addition to causing stress, this reduces motivation, and availability of cognitive resources to perform one's job tasks. Others have also shown co-worker behavior that goes beyond the call of duty is ill-received owing to supervisor expectancies created (Bolino, Klotz, Turnley, & Harvey, 2013). These expectancies are stressful in that co-workers are pressured into either performing equally well, or become as equally exemplary employees. Turnley et al. (2013), argued that such self-focused IM ultimately reduces co-worker ability to accomplish work by securing supervisor attention at the expense of co-workers and by increasing their stress levels and work overload.

The envier is particularly likely to reduce performance in order to restore equity (Smith et al., 1994). Tai et al. (2012), also argued for an equity-restoration approach in discussing the envier's reduced performance. They argued that the envier may contribute less on the job, reducing the outcomes to input ratio-discrepancy relative to the coworker (Pinder, 2008). The action-oriented tendency whereby the envier seeks to restore equity by improving performance rather than reducing

it (Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004; Tai et al., 2012), should not hold true for IM situations owing to the lack of a compensatory effect increased performance may have for equity restoration. This should be even more so in case of envy, which involves comparison with a person who engages in self-focused IM tactics, thereby seizing the limelight at the expense of the observer, and inducing helplessness. Indeed, the behaviors associated with self-focused IM such as exaggerating achievements, or attributing success exclusively or excessively to the self, and trivializing the implications of personal errors etc. are self-serving in nature (Suar et al., 2015), and are likely to be seen unfavorably by the envier.

The study considers supervisor-rated performance, as it is more objective than self-reports of performance. Consistent with previous literature (Ellington & Wilson, 2016), Rosen et al., (2017), found that raters combine different types of information from the their organizational context in evaluating performance. They found that politics perceptions influence the interaction between extra-role behavior and in-role performance ratings in influencing ratings of performance. Although the current study does not include politics perceptions or organizational context, their findings and review of literature on the information raters combine in making performance ratings, is relevant for this study because raters have self-serving motives to positively rate some subordinates. This motive may clash with organizational interests to reward subordinates based on pure performance.

Furthermore, the cynicism and burnout resulting from job creep caused by another's self-focused IM reduces the emotional ability to put additional effort into one's job, diminishing estimations of achievable in-job accomplishments (Halbesleben & Buckley, 2004) by raising the bar of supervisor expectations. Abbas, Raja, Darr, & Bouckenooghe (2014), argued, that as a hindrance stressor, perceptions of political behavior within the organization reduces performance in Pakistan. Furthermore, Turnley et al. (2013), reasoned that the co-worker is particularly likely to feel drained, if, despite completing job requirements, they fear evaluation relative to another's IM behaviors such as sitting late in office when their other roles demand their time and attention (e.g. a working mother's role at home). Thus, literature on equity restoration, burnout and IM by co-worker implies that

self-focused IM by the coworker is likely to reduce effort towards one's job performance.

H_{3b}: Self-focused IM by the coworker is negatively associated with the envier's job performance.

2.5.3 Job-Focused IM and Job Performance

There are reports that performance may improve as a result of benign envy, motivated by the willingness to learn, following increased admiration for the high performer (Cohen-Charash, 2009; Schaubroeck & Lam, 2004; van de Ven et al., 2009). Others contend that this improvement is a result of admiration, rather than envy (Schindler, Paech, Lowenbruck, 2015). It is highly likely that growth, and improved performance follow positive emotions such as admiration and a motivation to affiliate with the other (Schindler, Zink, Windrich, & Menninghaus, 2013; van de Ven, Zeelenberg, & Pieters, 2011) rather than envy. Envy, on the other hand, is unlikely to do so. For one, mainstream envy literature highlights its negative outcomes. Additionally, since scholars have begun to argue benign envy does not constitute envy proper (Miceli & Castelfranchi, 2007;Tai et al., 2012), and because IM literature shows negative co-worker attributions of the impression managing co-worker, job-focused IM by the coworker is likely to result in the envier's reduced performance rather than efforts to improve.

Tai et al., (2012), discussed envy as pain at another's good fortune. They argued that the meaning of envy is confounded within itself, and that the threat and challenge oriented behaviors follow envy, regardless of its type. Their basic premise was that the envier seeks to alleviate the pain of envy by restoring equity through these positive or negative behaviors. From this stand-point, equity theory (Adams, 1963) provides a useful perspective for performance following a successful other's job-focused IM. Envy results from inequity of unfavorable social comparisons (Festinger, 1954; Heider, 1958), that can be dealt with by contributing less on the job (Pinder, 2008). Equity perceptions following a comparison of one's outcome to input ratio with that of the impression managing coworker should lead to a perception that the coworker is successful because of their IM behaviors,

resulting in stronger feelings of inequity and ensuing reduction in performance, in order to restore equity. Tai et al. (2012), argued that the envier is likely to assign some degree of responsibility for inequity to the organization, hence, responding by reducing performance to restore equity (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991). Thus, although certain forms of envy may prompt more effort in order to perform as well as the outperformer, for a situation involving job-focused IM by the coworker, improved performance is less likely. Duffy and Shaw (2000), found that envy is negatively associated with the ability to perform. Envy is stressful and reduces the ability to contribute as a result of reduced self-efficacy and self-esteem (Thompson et al., 2016). They argue that the feelings of isolation and sadness involved in envy center one's focus towards feelings of unworthiness, developing a sense of failure, adversely affecting performance. Thompson et al. (2015), reported reduced performance as a result of envy at the group level.

The exaggerated display of competence, performance, and achievements inherent in job-focused IM tactics are likely to be received unfavorably by the co-worker, who experiences a sense of injustice, following unfavorable comparisons with another. Following social information processing approach, this behavior is likely to convey that the IM behavior, rather than actual competence and performance are the cause of the outperforming coworker's success, thereby reducing the envier's effort at work. Thus, in line with literature that suggests reduced performance results from perceived politics in Pakistan (Abbas et al., 2012), this study suggests that, following a co-worker's self-serving behavior, the observing co-worker's performance is reduced. Because envy entails strong feelings of injustice (Smith et al., 1994), reduced performance is likely to occur either as a result of deliberate attempts to restore equity, or inadvertently, following frustration. Thus, insofar as a co-worker's job-focused IM is likely to affect one's well-being (Turnley et al., 2013), the coworker's IM is likely to be of concern. Given that the coworker is perceived to have attained their enviable position unfairly, their potentially rewarding job-focused IM reduces the envier's job performance.

H_{3c}: Job-focused IM by the coworker is negatively associated with the envier's job performance.

2.6 Attributions

2.6.1 The Motivational Basis for the Search of Causality of Coworker IM

The coworker's IM, as a subjectively meaningful behavior for the envier, triggers sense-making of it (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). Because sense-making is influenced by emotions (Elfenbein, 2007), and because of the biases associated with feelings of envy, the envier's attributions are made in ways that protect their self-concept within the organization. Extant literature shows that situations that are negatively valenced, receive greater attention (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001). The coworker's IM is relevant to the envier because of its negative valence to the self. By being potentially rewarded, IM is threatening to the envier's organizational identity as a competent, deserving person, because it threatens to widen the status and outcome differential that already exists between the envier and the coworker. Indeed, the hedonic relevance (i.e., the personal relevance) of social stimuli influences their processing into memory, and associated attributions (Jones & Davis, 1965).

From another perspective, the envier's response to another's IM behavior (as opposed to that of a neutral or equally well-performing co-worker), is more practically significant, and is a context of this study, because of their greater concern regarding the cause of such behavior. Neutral co-workers and those with similar standing within the organization have little reason for trying to infer the causes of another's IM, and hence, are less likely to make similar attributions (Higgins & Bargh, 1987). Furthermore, because envious people have a tendency to be more attentive to, and more evaluative of the coworker and their behaviors, as opposed to those of neutral co-workers (Crusius & Lange, 2014), an actor's behavior has greater implications for an envious onlooker as opposed to a non-envious coworker. Additionally, implications of the envier's attributions and their responses are amplified because negatively valenced events and situations are stronger in influencing behavior (Baumeister et al., 2001). Literature suggests that for attributions to be made, the subject should be motivated to seek causal reasoning of

the event(s)/situation(s) and have sufficient attentional resources to do so (Bargh & Thein, 1985; Higgins & Bargh, 1987; Lichtenstein & Srull, 1985; Sherman, Zehner, Johnson, & Hirt, 1983). We contend, based on arguments above, that the envier has these attentional and motivational resources (see, nature of envy section above) and is therefore, a relevant subject for the current study. The envier has an emotional stake in the coworker's IM. Recent studies describe the salience of the attributing person's moral, evaluative and emotional reactions to attributions made for a given situation (Alicke, Mandel, Hilton, Gerstenberg, & Lagnado, 2015).

2.6.2 Negative Evaluations of IM Behavior

IM may lead to undesired attributions because people do not always accurately ascertain the impressions they leave on others (DePaulo, Kenny, Hoover, Webb, & Oliver, 1987). Thus, although IM behaviors are meant to gain desired outcomes, potential un-intended consequences may follow. In a study by DePaulo et al. (1987), subjects believed they left similar impressions on all 3 partners in interactions on four tasks. Responses from partners revealed little agreement regarding these impressions. In another study investigating failed IM, Crant (1996), manipulated IM tactics to test for their effectiveness in failed and successful outcome situations. Results showed that observers may evaluate IM negatively if it is inconsistent and incongruent with observer's expectations created from pre-success IM. Others have shown that attempts at creating positive impressions are effective only if these positive characteristics are verifiable (Jones & Pittman, 1982). Thus, although IM predominantly results in positive outcomes for the actor, these studies suggest that more work is needed to understand how IM may backfire.

2.6.3 Behavior-Correspondent and Non-Correspondent Attributions

Literature on person perception emphasizes the attribution of behavior to correspondent and non-correspondent inferences. Correspondent attributions are those

made in line with the observed behavior of others, i.e., the behavior is taken as depicting actual dispositions, abilities and traits (Jones & Davis, 1965). Non-correspondent attributions consider underlying motives, and infer other reasons for the behavior (for example, the situation), rather than taking it at face value. For example, in the case of job-focused IM, correspondent attributions could be the actor's expertise, competence and/or ability. Non-correspondent inferences would be reflected in the inferred motive to appear capable. Guided by emotions and the valence of the behavior in question, everyday person-perception involves a considerable degree of non-correspondent attributions. For the envier, non-correspondent attributions are made quite convincingly, overcoming the dilemma whether to attribute a coworker's IM to correspondent or non-correspondent factors, owing to their emotional involvement. People may occasionally face the dilemma whether to attribute IM to the actor's internal state (e.g., competence), or to a motive behind the IM (Fein, Hilton, & Miller, 1990). An inference of the actor's actual competence for job-focused IM would reflect correspondent inference, whereas an inference of an underlying motive would reflect non-correspondent inferences (for a discussion, see Ham & Vonk, 2011).

I argue that non-correspondent attributions (incompetence of the coworker) shape the envier's performance, and behavioral responses to coworker IM. Non-correspondent attributions of the coworker's incompetence, rather than behavior- correspondent attributions of their competence are sought, because of the capacity of such attributions to protect the envier's esteem. This is in line with the egotism hypothesis that attributions are made in ways that protect one's self-esteem. I contend that, in making non-correspondent attributions (the coworker's incompetence) for coworker IM, the envier protects their own self-esteem compromised by the sense of injustice and lack of the desired privilege the high performing coworker enjoys.

2.6.4 Multiple Inferences

Although most initial attribution research focuses on the either-or approach when reporting internal vs. external attributions, or when discussing the actor-observer differences in making situational vs. dispositional attributions, we have reason

to believe that the envier makes multiple attributions i.e., situational as well as dispositional attributions for the coworker's IM. Previously, multiple, even competing inferences for helpful behavior have been reported (Reeder, Vonk, Ronk, Ham, & Lawrence, 2004). However, we contend that because the envier seeks to allay the pain of envy and protect their esteem threatened by the more successful coworker's IM, multiple attributions are made, albeit in the same direction: esteem protection. In a study investigating if trait and situational inferences can co-occur, (Ham & Vonk, 2003) , participants indicated, if probing words implying causality by situation and causality by trait, of a behavior by a hypothetical person, described that behavior. Results showed that behavior can be ascribed to factors both external and internal to the actor. Others have further shown that such multiple social inferences are spontaneous, and not entirely deliberate. For example, in a series of experiments, participants were given behavioral descriptions, implying both situational and dispositional inferences (Todd, Molden, Ham, and Vonk, 2011). Results showed activation of both, situation-specific and trait-specific inferences were non-deliberate and spontaneous. Their forth experiment showed that even when pursuing goals of forming trait-specific or situation-specific attributions, both inferences are activated nonetheless. This concept of multiple spontaneous inferences was applied to the observer's impression of an actor's IM in a study seeking to test the co-occurrence of correspondent and ulterior motive (non-correspondent) inferences (Ham & Vonk, 2011). Results showed participants inferred ulterior motive just as much as the correspondent trait.

This study is fit for investigating non-correspondent attributions because it involves the actor's dependence on the target (supervisor), similar to actor-target dependence manipulated (Ham & Vonk, 2011). Without dependence, many IM behaviors intended to imply a correspondent trait, cannot be fully explained. The envier's attributions of coworker IM, specifically, supervisory-focused IM, can help explain the former's response to it. Dependence is also a dominant cue in determining non-correspondent attributions (Ham & Vonk, 2011; Vonk, 1998). The studies cited above have predominantly relied on behavioral descriptions for evoking inferences. For this study, however, specific scales, are used to elicit attributions.

2.7 Attributions of Coworker IM

Literature consistently shows the existence of self-serving attributions in favorable and unfavorable situations. For example, Dobbins and Russell (1986), demonstrated through an experiment, that subordinates attribute poor performance to leaders whereas leaders attribute poor performance on a manufacturing task to the subordinates.

In addition to the specific behaviors one chooses to manage one's impressions, the decision to engage in IM is discretionary (Leary, 1993). This availability of choice to the actor provides the observer numerous possibilities from which to draw inferences (Jones, 1990). Long (2013), argued that the actor's discretion to choose IM behaviors gives observers a wide range of possible inferences they may draw about the actor. Based on the salient work on attributions and IM by Weiner (1995), and Kelley (1973), Long (2013), argued that the choice the actor has in choosing an IM tactic draws the observer's attention to the actor themselves, and gives them informational cues about the behavior. However, Long (2013), argued for informational cues these behaviors provide the IM target. I contend that more, or at least a similar range of informational cues is available to an uninvolved onlooker as well. An emotionally involved onlooker, such as the envier has greater reason to be more observant of, and to draw inferences for such behaviors.

Bolino (1999), and Allen and Rush (1998), used an attributional lens to comprehend how people give explanations for others' IM behaviors directed towards them. Others give attributional explanations for similar behaviors, such as citizenship and prosocial behaviors. For example, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2002), explored member attributions of supervisor's influence behaviors. Johnson, Erez, Kiker, and Motowidlo (2002), studied attributions of helpful behaviors, while Grant, Parker, and Collins (2009), studied supervisor attributions of member prosocial behaviors. These studies predominantly focus on procsocial, citizenship, and other positive behaviors. These studies emphasize attributions of underlying motives for these positive behaviors. While much of this work has been from the target's perspective, work has also been done on attributions of observers.

Carter and Sanna (2006), showed that IM in the form of indirect self-presentation,

influences observer's perception of the actor. Crant (1996), showed that IM in the form of self-handicapping and causal accounts may not always draw positive observer attributions. Vonk (2002), showed that there exist target-observer differences in assigning attributions to IM behavior. This research acknowledges that observers may have differing attributions for IM. Most of this work assumes some motives as the underlying cause. However, Long (2013), showed that attributions may also be drawn regarding the actor's tacticalness and authenticity. Although underlying motives and tacticalness signal the actor's incompetence in the work domain, and the resultant efforts to manage impressions concerning it, these studies have overlooked the possibility that observers also draw competence attributions for the behavior that may ultimately have behavioral implications at the workplace. When considering an envier's attributions concerning coworker IM, it becomes obvious that the attributions drawn will not be favorable or behavior-correspondent. It is highly likely that job and self-focused IM will not be taken at face value but, instead, draw non-correspondent attributions.

2.7.1 Supervisor Attribution: Lack of Social Perceptiveness

Supervisory-focused IM is often characterized as contrived (Barrick et al., 2009; Bolino & Turnley, 1999; Jones & Pittman, 1982), and is seen to be motivated by insincere intentions. Foulk and Long (2016), reason for potential unsavory aspects of supervisory-focused IM. They reason that the social information conveyed by the ingratiatory behavior provides more information than meets the eye. In other words, although these IM behaviors are indicative of positive actor (envier engaging in IM) and target (the ingratiated supervisor) characteristics on face value, the intentionality of such behaviors and the search for ulterior motives associated with them alert the envier of the possibility of erroneously drawing positive attributions. This is substantiated by studies that show behaviors that appear forged are unlikely to lead to observer attributions of the stimulus/target in the desired direction (Lawson, Downing, & Cetola, 1998). More specifically, Lawson et al. (1998), and Platow et al. (2005), suggest feigned laughter by an audience does not

influence observer ratings of the funniness of the stimulus material. The findings of Platow et al. (2005), confirmed their argumentm based on the self-categorization explanation of social influence. They had argued that the stimulus material would be considered humorous only if audience considered the people laughing at it as members of their in-group. These studies imply that positive attributions about the supervisor would be made only if the ingratiatory behavior came from one's in-group members. However, the envy situation under focus in this study should lead to behavior non-correspondent attributions (Foulk & Long, 2016), owing to low quality group membership with the supervisor and the coworker, and owing to the resulting distrust of the coworker, associated with envy (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2004; Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017a). Hence, the information the coworker's IM behavior conveys about the supervisor's likability (through supervisor-focused IM), and the coworker's own competence (through self and job-focused IM), are unlikely to be believed by the coworker.

Interpersonal skills enable better social adjustment and effective interaction in social life as well as the workplace. Interpersonal skills are goal-directed behaviors including social competencies individuals employ in social interactions. These include, in addition to interaction exchanges, perceptual and cognitive processes in understanding the interacting partners and the social environment (Klein, DeRouin, & Salas, 2006). Interpersonal skills involve a degree of social intelligence. Social intelligence is a set of attributes that enable individuals to, among other things, "perceive and accurately interpret the intricacies of any social situation" (Zaccaro, 2001; p.37).

Thus, social intelligence comprises of an understanding of the social situation and situationally appropriate behavior. Zaccaro (2001), argued that social intelligence comprises of both cognitive and behavioral abilities. He termed the cognitive aspects social awareness and social acumen. Competencies relevant to these two cognitive processes have been described as social perceptiveness (Zaccaro, Gilbert, Thor, & Mumford, 1991). Social awareness refers to the ability to identify relevant cues in a specific social situation for problem solving and social acumen is described as quickness in comprehending the meaning of social cues.

Social perceptiveness refers to one's ability to discern people's intentions behind

their behavior (Silvera, Martinussen, & Dahl, 2001). It is described as a subjective understanding of the social environment or of another's abilities, traits or other characteristic in a social interaction. It refers to a broader understanding of one's social environment during observation or social interaction. However, it has also been described as awareness of others in one's environment (Gilbert & Kottke, 2009), and as an ability to discern people's intentions from behavior (Silvera, Martinussen, & Dahl, 2001). It is an understanding of one's social environment that make the person more proficient at interacting socially by enabling heightened understanding of the message people's words and gestures convey. While emotional intelligence emphasizes an understanding of needs, social perceptiveness is a cognitive sub-aspect of factors comprising otherwise multifaceted constructs of social intelligence (Kosmitzki & John, 1993; Silvera et al., 2001), emphasizing an understanding of people's motives rather than their needs. The cognition of another's motives for behavior has been described as understanding people's "thoughts, feelings and intentions" and as involving an intuitive ability that helps distinguish between good and poor judges (for details, see Kosmitzki & John, 1993 ; Taft, 1955). Aditya and Hause (2002), describe the construct social acumen in similar ways, defining it as the "ability to decipher underlying intentions in other people's behavior" (Aditya & Hause, 2002: p. 218). They argue that it is essential to managerial effectiveness across cultures. It is a social ability, described as capacity or accuracy at understanding the social environment, and of discriminating relevant phenomena (Gilbert & Kottke, 2009; Simons, 1966).

Socially perceptive individuals are able to accurately perceive others' intentions and reactions, implying they can discern truth from fiction, and detect deceit in forming perceptions about people's intentions (Gilbert & Kottke, 2009; Simons, 1966). This implies that a lack of ability to do so should make deliberate attempts in influencing them through IM, easier. Also, a target person's lack of this ability is likely to make ingratiation towards them effective. Extant literature invariably describes social perceptiveness as a cognitive ability that helps understand the social situation. For example, social perceptiveness has been described as the ability to read other's emotions, and as accurately reading people's reactions to an event/behavior in different studies (Anteby, Knight, & Tilcsik, 2016; Bowman, 2015).

Social intelligence, of which social perceptiveness is a cognitive aspect, is an important type of the multiple intelligences extant literature suggests are crucial for effective leadership (Riggio, 2001). The aspect of social intelligence encapsulated by social perceptiveness is essential to leadership success. Thus, Zaccaro (2001), argued that successful leadership requires the ability to reason and comprehend the social situation that enables proper perception and social judgment of the parties involved in the social interaction. Perceptiveness is related to the astuteness dimension of political skill that is associated with a keen observation of others and their surroundings, and an accurate understanding of their own and other's behaviors in these surroundings (Ferris et al., 2007). It is a distal predictor of leader decisiveness that enables leader effectiveness where social astuteness dimension of political skill mediates the relationship between perceptiveness and decisiveness (Gentry et al., 2013).

Thus, because IM occurs in a social context involving the supervisor who is the target for IM, social information processing approach suggests that the envier is likely to weigh the supervisor on their ability to cognitively process this behavior and to tell underlying motives from the IM.

2.7.2 Supervisor-Focused IM and Supervisor Attributions

"Indeed, when people's outcomes depend directly on another, they effectively engage in mindreading, attempting to understand what makes the other person tick", (Fiske, 2010). This argument provides strong rationale for the envier's attempts to understand what makes the supervisor 'tick' or, in other words, how to go about influencing the supervisor, after analyzing what impresses the supervisor. Furthermore, the search for the envier's causal attributions for coworker IM in the social environment (or non-correspondent, situational attributions) such as the supervisor, as opposed to the coworker's own dispositions (correspondent, dispositional attributions), is facilitated by work that shows suspicion of ulterior motivation overcomes the correspondence bias (Fein, Hilton, & Miller, 1990). The fundamental attribution error (Ross, 1977), or the correspondence bias (Gilbert & Jones, 1986), is the tendency to make dispositional attributions for another's behavior

even in the presence of situational stimuli for it. Avoidance of this bias or error is apparent in cases where observers cite situational causality for an actor's behavior, as opposed to the person's own dispositions (i.e., avoiding attributing the coworker's IM to their ulterior motives, but to the supervisor's implicit approval of it). Although the envier's attributions of the coworker's obvious ulterior motives cannot be ruled out, Social Information Processing Theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), suggests that causality for the IM behavior is sought in the social environment that facilitates it, i.e., the supervisor who control important outcomes. Social Information Processing theory suggests the envier, as a result of having had previous experiences where decision outcomes were deemed unfair, pays considerable attention to the supervisor. The theory also implies that the envier resorts to an analysis of what makes the supervisor tick (Fiske, 2010), upon observing coworker IM. This implies that the envier evaluates the supervisor's implicit or unconscious approval of the IM behavior through the latter's lack of social perceptiveness.

This study emphasizes situational attributions i.e., the supervisor's social perceptiveness because ample literature is available on attribution of ulterior motive to the actor. Additional work investigating attributions in the co-worker's ulterior motives would be redundant as these attributions are well-established in literature and these studies repeatedly show negative actor evaluations if intentionality is inferred (Crant, 1996; Lafrenière, Sedikides, Van Tongeren, & Davis, 2016; Nguyen & Hartman, 2008). Furthermore, Olsson (2002), argued that people use situational factors in the process of arriving at actual causes for events / situations. The supervisor who is the decision maker behind another's enviable position is one situational factor.

Supervisor-focused IM involves eliciting the target's attributions of the actor's likability. This may lead observers to attribute a deceptive intent (Banja, 2010). So long as the behavior is perceived to be intentional and unfavorable for observers (Lafrenière et al., 2016), contrary, non-correspondent attributions are highly likely. For example, a person praising the supervisor, conforming to their opinions, and offering personal favors etc. could make an intent coworker skeptical. In line with social information processing theory, the observer weighs social information regarding factors that facilitate the IM behavior. One such factor is the information

about the target that the behavior conveys.

As a result of processing information relevant to supervisory-focused IM in the social environment (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978), the envier is drawn to the decision maker behind previously experienced unfair decisions and the target of the supervisory-focused IM: the supervisor. Thus, although there are grounds for trusting the positive information about the supervisor conveyed through a co-worker's supervisory focused IM (Sundise, Cialdini, Griskevicius, & Kenrick, 2012), a contrary viewpoint suggesting that such behavior is viewed skeptically also exists (Foulk & Long, 2016). Particularly, literature shows observers view ingratiation as feigned behavior (Barrick et al., 2009; Bolino & Turnley, 1999). Additionally, literature shows supervisory focused IM (Fein, 1996; Foulk & Long, 2016; Vonk, 1999), and particularly the non-deserving coworker are viewed unfavorably, implying distrust of the supervisory information their behavior conveys.

The case for attributions regarding supervisor's social perceptiveness is based on literature that suggests individuals are prone to vilify, or relegate a relevant trait/characteristic of the decision maker, when the decision is not in one's favor (Bourgeois & Leary, 2001). Participants in the study were told they had been chosen last by the captain. Participant ratings of the captain showed negative views of the captain. Participants attributed the captain's decision to their lack of knowledge of themselves: participants believed the captain did not know them well. Bourgeois and Leary (2001), concluded that such attributions helped participants maintain their desired images. Others have also shown that when another individual is responsible for verification of one's identity in the attribution process, identity disruptions are received negatively and negative feelings are directed towards the verifying person (Burke & Stets, 2009).

Others suggest that observers divert attention to the target when considering actions of the actor (Burt & Knez, 1995; Foulk & Long, 2016), suggesting that the actions of the actor also convey to the observer, information about the target person. Strong theoretical and empirical support for the envier's supervisory attributions of another's supervisory-focused IM is found in a study by Foulk and Long, (2016). They reported newcomer attributions of the ingratiated supervisor's likability. They showed that newcomers to an organization form opinions about

the supervisor's likability from the ingratiatory behavior of colleagues. Although they concluded that newcomers focus more on the supervisor's behavior and likability and ignore the distasteful aspect of ingratiation, they also implied that an older colleague is likely to view an ingratiated supervisor differently than a newcomer. I argue, based on literature on social information processing, a person who has worked in an organization for enough time to form feelings of envy towards a co-worker and infer differences in theirs vs. coworker relationship with the supervisor is likely to attribute supervisor-focused IM negatively to the supervisor's social perceptiveness.

Foulk and Long (2016), suggested that the social information conveyed through another's ingratiation of a supervisor evokes an evaluation of the supervisor themselves on part of the observer. Because supervisors play a role in evoking envy by making resource allocation decisions important to the envier (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2015), ingratiatory and other IM behavior directed at them draws attention towards them. Attention is drawn to the supervisor who is a key member of the exchange relationship in the supervisor-coworker dyad. Being an intent observer of the IM situation, the envier's attention is drawn towards them in reasoning for its causes (Ross & Nisbett, 2011), also because the co-worker's supervisory-focused IM is stressful as a result of causing relatively lower performance evaluations, opportunities for promotions and a sense of inequity among observers (Turnley et al., 2013).

The supervisor characteristic about which the envier is likely to make attributions is their social perceptiveness (i.e., perceived inability to detect intentions behind the ingratiatory behavior and verbal statements). This argument is based on literature that suggests had the supervisor been able to detect intentions behind these behaviors, the coworker's privileged position would be at stake. Because concealing ulterior intentionality is central for effective IM (Lafrenière et al., 2016), the coworker's IM suggests the supervisor is not adept at social perception . Hence, the envier assumes IM is a result of the supervisor's inability to detect underlying motives behind it. Additionally, because of the affective instrumentality of envy for cognitive processing, it influences attention to social cues and the ensuing information processing (Forgas & George, 2001). The most readily available social cue

for supervisory-focused IM is the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness because the behavior is appealing to the target (supervisor) who is motivated to believe the behavior. Observers, however, are better at detecting underlying motives behind it (Gordon, 1996).

Thus, the literature cited above suggests that coworker's supervisor-focused IM triggers an attributional process whereby the envier seeks to locate the reason for the coworker's behavior in the supervisor's social perceptual ability. Social Information Processing theory suggests that the attributing envier seeks characteristics of the supervisor that facilitate the behavior. Because observers label the actor as a 'boot-licker', 'yes-man/woman' and 'egotist' (.DuBrin, 2010), when he/she engages in supervisory-focused IM tactics, this implies that they attribute the behaviors to the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness because the relatively advantaged coworker seeks to benefit from it.

H_4: The co-worker's supervisor-focused IM is positively associated with the envier's attributions of this behavior to the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness.

2.7.3 Coworker Attributions: Incompetence

Although competence or ability has predominantly been reported as a structure, consisting of components that may be measured to predict learning and performance, it has also been discussed as a social inference (Weiner, 2005). According to Weiner (2005), it is a social inference pertaining to the self or others. It refers to the perceived 'can' aspect regarding a specific task, situation or expected performance of oneself or another. In an achievement setting, other's performance leads people to infer competence (Weiner, 2000), as per the interpersonal theory of motivation. For the workplace context, competence is the perceived possession of skills, knowledge and capacity to carry out one's responsibilities or expected set of tasks. As other social inferences, inference of others' competence implies causality: it is influenced by factors of the specific social/work situation and consequently, influences behavior. This argument is in line with the interpersonal theory of motivation Weiner (2005), described from an attribution perspective.

Among others, one reason people make competence attributions in social settings is because these attributions help develop social understanding and maintain the self-esteem. For example, individuals may exaggerate the ability of an outperformer, acknowledging their superior performance in efforts to maintain their self-esteem (Alicke et al., 1997). They argued that exaggerating the ability of an outperformer is socially believable and also deflects the inferior performer's threat of comparison. However, others (Harvey & Martinko, 2009), have argued that contrary attributions of other's incompetence helps maintain one's positive self -view. For example, it has been argued that "When undesirable events are attributed to external factors, such as another person's incompetence, the individual fails to accept responsibility (Weiner, 1985), and the positive self-view is protected" (Harvey & Martinko, 2009, p. 462).

Various IM behaviors have been reported to either elicit competence attributions, or to elicit incompetence attributions under various circumstances. For example, investigating competence attributions following the use of impression-management-by-association (wasta), during the selection process in Egypt (Mohamed & Mohamad, 2011), it was found that individuals who make use of this IM strategy are evaluated as being low on competence as opposed to those who do not. They argued, based on the discounting principle of attribution theory (Kelley, 1972), that when multiple causes for another's success are available, people discount internal causes for it if plausible external causes are available. As a result, "the person is perceived incapable of repeating the success on his or her own" (Mohamed & Mohamad, 2011). In line with their argument, it is expected that when one witnesses a coworker engaging in IM, the success of the person is attributed to the IM (external cause) and not competence / abilities (internal cause) of that person. This will lead to attributing to the coworker incompetence as opposed to drawing behavior-congruent competence attributions.

Competence attributions are of significance because in social perception literature, competence is one of the core component of interpersonal perception (Çelik, Lammers, van Beest, Bekker, & Vonk, 2013; Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007). They are also the core attributions sought in managing one's impressions in a competitive

environment such as the workplace. Few studies have discussed competence directly in the context of IM. These studies provide indecisive results for competence attributions. For example, taking credit for success does not necessarily indicate performance (Clapham & Schwenk, 1991) or competence. Whereas Staw, McKechnie, and Puffer (1983), found that taking credit for the organizational success while assuming a defensive stance for failures in letters to shareholders succeed because they are followed by an increase in stock price. In another study, concluding that cultural differences exist in taking an impression managing individual's behavior at face-value, Akimoto and Sanbonmatsu, (1999), showed low competence attributions for self-effacing IM among Japanese Americans. In another study, individuals using exemplifying IM behaviors were rated high in ability regardless of whether they were seen as authentic (Gilbert & Jones, 1986).

Long (2013), reasoned that when a specific IM behavior is considered beneficial to the target, it is likely to draw favorable ability and competence attributions. However, their argument overlooks the possibility of observers other than the target. Some research has shown co-worker (observer) attributions of another's IM attempts. For example, Vonk (1998), showed that observing co-workers do not evaluate supervisory ingratiation favorably, specifically when it is accompanied by not so favorable behavior towards others. Additionally, given that the information IM behaviors convey in not always reliable, (Barrick et al., 2009), it is likely that experience influences the envier's attributions of another's IM and causes non-correspondent attributions of incompetence as opposed to attributions correspondent with the coworker's IM behaviors i.e., competence.

Although the correspondence bias generally shapes observer's interpretation of others behaviors, emphasizing the face value of these behaviors (Gilbert & Malone, 1995), suspicion has been reported to overcome this correspondence bias (Fein, 1996). There are obvious reasons to believe that supervisory-focused IM and other competence-conveying IM such as job and self-focused IM should rouse suspicion in the envier. By virtue of being suspicious, the envier is able to overcome the information conveyed by the coworker at face value, triggering attributional thinking. In line with the argument by Ham and Vonk (2011), suspicion of coworker IM triggers non-correspondent attributions, therefore, it is attributed to factors reflective

of the situation, or of the actor's manipulation rather than to IM-correspondent competence and warmth attributions. Unfavorable events (e.g. failure) are attributed externally when people believe that they can do little to improve the situation (Duval & Silvia, 2002). The envier's position maybe somewhat similar since envy entails feelings of injustice along with comparisons.

In an interesting experiment, Bond, Leung, and Wan (1982), had two confederates working on an intellectual task make self-enhancing and self-effacing self attributions (IM). Observers rated them on anxiety, competence and likability. Results showed that self-effacing individuals were better liked than a self-enhancing individual but also rated less competent. They argued that because the Chinese culture values conformity, self-enhancement is atypical for the environment and therefore, observers are likely to make competence attributions, assuming that because it is atypical behavior, the confederate must actually be competent to make these counternormative self-attributions. They did not, however, discuss a personally involved observer such as an envier who is less likely to assign positive competence attributions to a form of self-enhancement such as job and self-focused IM behaviors. It is expected that although culture in Pakistan is also suggestive of a degree of conformity (Hofstede, 2011), the envy renders coworker IM unfavorable, leading to incompetence attributions because such attributions are protective to the envier's self-concept (Harvey & Martinko, 2009).

2.7.4 Supervisor-Focused IM and Incompetence Attributions

Observers evaluate ingratiating co-workers negatively (Eastman, 1994; Fein, 1996; Vonk, 1999; Vonk, 1998b). Negative evaluation of IM by the envier is further suggested by studies that show greater attentional biases towards members of a disliked group in general (Howard & Rothbart, 1980), and towards the coworker in particular (Crusius & Lange, 2014; Zhong et al., 2013). These studies show that IM behavior in general and supervisor-focused IM in particular, are viewed as insincere and are attributed to an underlying motive.

Because people engaging in supervisor focused IM are viewed unfavorably (Fein,

1996; Vonk, 1998), and because the coworker is seen as belonging to an outgroup, therefore, the envier is less likely to accept supervisor focused IM as evidence of the supervisor's positive characteristics. This suggests these behaviors are indicative of the some of the actor's own characteristic(s). Foulk and Long (2016), argued that situations in which co-workers are not trusted, supervisory focused IM is unlikely to draw positive inferences, suggesting non-correspondent inferences are more likely. This is particularly implicated by studies that show social influence is not as effective when observers have a reason to doubt the authenticity of information conveyed by another's behavior (Lawson et al., 1998; Platow et al., 2005). The envier is not likely to trust the information about the supervisor conveyed by the coworker's supervisor focused IM. Attribution literature suggests that inferences for a behavior are drawn about the actor themselves when perceived intentionality of the behavior is established (Vonk, 1998). This implies that the coworker's supervisor focused should draw some inferences about the actor themselves. Particularly, IM has been reportedly attributed as a defense against failure (Vonk, 1999), signaling that the envier is likely to attribute it to a similar cause associated with the actor's competence.

Behaviors such as supervisory ingratiation, flattery and opinion conformity that constitute supervisory-focused IM have been described in ways suggesting perception of manipulation and deceit by observers/co-workers etc. For example, the ingratiator has been described as the 'yes man' or 'apple polisher', attributing the use of ingratiatory behavior to vested interests (Giacalone & Promislo, 2014, p. 235). Supervisor enhancement by flattery and acquiescence also draws other labels such as 'boot-licker', 'yes-man/woman' and 'egotist' (DuBrin, 2010). Thus, coworker attributions of another's supervisory focused IM signals to the co-worker the ingratiator's lack of competence in pursuing the career ladder without resorting to ingratiatory tactics.

Sezer et al. (2018), showed perceived insincerity in bragging of one's achievements draws attributions of incompetence. They reported results for three IM behaviors: bragging, humble bragging and complaining, and found that each resulted in negative attributions of the impression manager's competence. Although the

negative result was stronger for humble bragging (implying the attributor's consideration of the actor's intentionality in managing impressions), all three, nonetheless, drew observer attributions of incompetence. Steinmetz et al. (2017), argue that the backfiring of IM that seeks to convey competence but instead, draws incompetence attributions, arises from a depletion of the actor's self-regulatory mechanism. Although this study does not aim at investigating the coworker's success or self-regulatory depletion, attributions of incompetence from the envier's perspective, nonetheless, hold implications for their subsequent reactions and performance. Given that supervisor-focused IM draws negative inferences about the actor (Gordon, 1996; Vonk, 1998), attributions of competence are also likely because literature suggests mistrust of the envied person (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2004), suggesting that any information he is conveys regarding the supervisor's positive characteristics is not likely to be trusted by the envier, resulting in contrary attributions of their own incompetence as a means to conceal it, or as a defense against potential failure.

H_{5a}: The co-worker's supervisor focused IM is positively associated with the envier's attributions of their incompetence.

2.7.5 Self-Focused IM and Incompetence Attributions

In describing causal reasoning for other's behaviors that are personally meaningful, Ybarra (2002), implies that another's behavior along the lines of manipulation (dishonesty about one's competence) provides information about the underlying categories (incompetence) to which the actor is likely to be assigned because manipulation/exaggeration regarding competence is more diagnostic of incompetence than competence (Skowronski & Carlston, 1987). Similar arguments are suggested by the relational schemata approach which suggests the schema of job-focused IM (exaggeration and manipulation regarding competence) relates these behaviors to incompetence. According to this approach, the schema people have of behaviors determine inferences to underlying dispositions (Reeder & Brewer, 1979). For example, with regard to manipulation of competence information, observers expect that competent people tend to enact behaviors that do not reflect a need

for exaggerated claims, whereas incompetent people may choose to exaggerate performance/achievements (Ybarra, 2002). Memory of previous instances of exaggerated claims and the envy situation also play a role.

In close alignment with arguments above that suggest a cognitive element in drawing competence attributions, is the categorization perspective of person perception (Bruner, 1957). According to this, when seeking to understand cause(s) of a coworker's self-focused IM, the envier may first interpret or encode this behavior by assigning it to a trait category. The category to which the behavior (self-focused IM) is assigned is chosen through comparison of features of the behavior (manipulation/ exaggeration etc.), with those of behaviors that typically exemplify this category. This trait is then organized into a configural representation of that person e.g., 'incompetent person' (Srull & Wyer, 1980). For example, the manipulation of information or exaggeration of achievement inherent in self-focused IM may be assigned to the dishonesty category. Because dishonesty is generally a behavior representative of people who are untruthful, the person providing the competence information through job-focused IM is likely to be providing false information, and thus, is actually incompetent. This categorization also involves using cues regarding the context and the specific behavior. Because the high performing coworker's relative position is unjustified and painful, the incompetence category is perceptually accessible for the envier seeking to allay this pain (Bruner, 1957; Srull & Wyer, 1980; Tai et al., 2012). One factor that may result in easier detection of motives underlying self and job-focused IM is the motivation of the envier. A high motivation to appear distinct and noticeable in the eyes of the supervisor and/or others at work may give away the actor's IM through various non-verbal cues (Giacalone & Rosenfeld, 2013). Heightened use of attentional and cognitive resources following suspected deception in another's behavior enables deception detection (Buller & Burgoon, 1996). And given the attentional and memory-based biases inherent in envy, the envier is unlikely to trust the competence information conveyed through the coworker's self-focused IM.

Tactically managing one's impressions is not associated with ability attributions by intended targets (Long, 2013). Although Long (2013), had predicted otherwise,

their findings showed that attributions of tactfulness for IM does not draw supervisor attributions that the actor is competent. He concluded that when attributions of tactfulness are made for another's IM behavior, it is taken as an indication of an innate characteristic. Despite contrary findings in his study, it is predicted that for the envier, attributions drawn will be of the coworker's inability or incompetence in the performance domain. Because the envier dislikes the person he envies (Smith et al., 1994), and considering the envier believes the coworker is non-deserving of their advantage and cannot be trusted (Dunn & Schweitzer, 2004; Johar, 2011), self and job-focused IM aimed at depicting competence should draw contrary attributions of incompetence. The envier perceives that not the coworker, rather they themselves are deserving (Smith, 1991; van de Ven et al., 2012a). In other words, the envier is likely to believe that the coworker engages in the behavior in order to conceal their incompetence.

H_{5b}: The co-worker's self-focused IM is positively associated with the envier's attributons of their incompetence.

2.7.6 Job-Focused IM and Attributions of Incompetence

Literature has shown that observers may not always see the impression managing individual as they attempt to depict, signaling an incongruence in the perspective of observers and the actor (Crawford, Kacmar, & Harris, 2018). Others reason that in hopes of advancing their image, self-promoters are faced with the 'self-promoters paradox' (Bolino et al., 2016), because, in overemphasizing their credentials/competence, individuals may appear self-interested and may actually appear incompetent (Berman, Levine, Barasch, & Small, 2015; Jones & Pittman, 1982). Perhaps for the envier who is more attentive to the coworker's potentially rewarding job-focused IM behavior, this paradox comes into play. These studies show that a co-worker attempting to be seen as competent may actually be perceived as incompetent by their co-workers.

According to Jones and Nisbett (1971), observers tend to make internal, dispositional attributions to others' behaviors. These dispositional attributions may

include various dispositional attributions such as personality, traits, and competence attributions. Attentional and memory biases as well as suspicion improve the envier's judgmental accuracy (Crusius & Lange, 2014; Zhong et al., 2013). Others have also found that informational selectivity causes variation in observer attributions (Zadny & Gerard, 1974). Accordingly, the envier's IM attributions may vary from those made by a non-envious coworker. Most work on attributions and the actor-observer effect (AOE) was done in the 70s and 80s. Researchers began investigating it again in the last decade of the 20th century (Robins, Spranca, & Mendelsohn, 1996). Nevertheless, the accuracy of self-attribution vs. observer-attribution is beyond the scope of the current study. From the viewpoint of the envier, so far as their own consequent on-the job-behaviors are concerned, their attributions are likely to be instrumental in influencing them.

Mikulincer, Bizman, and Aizenberg (1989), stated that in addition to one's failure, other's success may also threaten self esteem. Boski (1983), termed this motivation to negatively attribute events and situations in a competitive setting as egotism. Earlier, the term was defined in terms of attributions as the tendency to put oneself in the best possible light (Snyder, Stephan, & Rosenfield, 1976). The egotism hypothesis suggests that in instances of threatened self- esteem, attributions are made in ways that protect or enhance one's self esteem (Carver & Scheier, 2012). This includes making attributions externally for failures. Others report the use of self-enhancing biases in appraisals of situations of threat (Menon & Thompson, 2007). Although other studies in addition to Mikulincer et al. (1989), predominantly focus on performance for investigating self and other attributions, we contend that, in line with attribution theory that suggests a search for causal reasoning for events and situations that are personally meaningful, another's IM that is threatening to the self should also rouse attributions in a similar manner, especially when the actor is disliked (e.g. an envied person). Ashkanasy (1997), showed that attributions for other's behavior that is self-threatening is strongly influenced by the actor's dissimilarity to the self, and especially so when the actor is a specific individual (as in case of an envied coworker) rather than a general other (co-workers in general).

The attribution of job-focused IM to the coworker's incompetence is substantiated

by attribution studies that show people resort to their naïve theories of causal reasoning for other's behaviors that are personally meaningful. According to Ybarra (2002), social experience determines the rule of thumb followed when making naïve causal reasoning. In the context of the current study, the envier's social experiences (Bandura & Walters, 1977), of the competence level of the people who normally use IM tactics, and of those who use them within the organization, informs them of the actor's competence. Conversely, social experience of those who refrain from the use of IM in routine social interactions and within the organization also contributes to this knowledge. Thus, as a naïve psychologist, the envier's reasoning regarding the coworker's IM involves causal reasoning regarding the ability of the latter to carry out job requirements and to progress the career ladder without resorting to these tactics. In other words, he reasons that if a person feels the need to engage in IM behaviors (supervisor, self and job-focused.), he is actually not as competent as he appears. This conjectured reasoning is substantiated by literature that suggests employee use of IM is encouraged by unjust organizational reward decision processes (Zivnuska, Kacmar, Witt, Carlson, & Bratton, 2004). Generally, a boastful person would take credit for their success and attribute it to internal factors such as ability and competence (Bond et al., 1982).

Objective measures of performance and reward allocation decisions are unlikely to encourage IM by the competent because they do not fear objective evaluation. The incompetent, on the other hand, are inferred to be more motivated to avoid exposure of incompetence or to conceal failure, engaging in IM tactics (Vonk, 1999). Substantial amount of IM literature suggests the use of IM and dramaturgy to conceal falling short of expected levels of competence. Various forms of IM are known to reduce negative outcomes following failure (Crant & Bateman, 1993), and build supervisor's confidence in prevention of potential failure (Wood & Mitchell, 1981). Interviewees falling short of expected levels of competence, skills, and experiences fake them in employment interviews (Tsai, Huang, Wu, & Lo, 2010; Weiss & Feldman, 2006). Organizations engage in corporate social reporting to conform to expected levels of engagement in socially responsible activities (Reggy Hooghiemstra, 2000).

Organizations also engage in IM to gain legitimacy following a crisis (Allen &

Caillouet, 1994), and in anticipatory IM to prevent escalation of existing threats (Tyler, Connaughton, Desrayaud, & Fedesco, 2012). Organizational spokespeople justify and defend organizations following attention-catching illegitimate action by its member(s) and endorse the organization following successful attainment of legitimacy (Elsbach & Sutton, 1992). Organizational members also engage in IM to outsiders in attempts to conceal organizational crises (Caillouet & Allen, 1996). With the modern-day increase in the use of technology, this deception has also spilled over to IM in computer-mediated communications within organizations (Carlson, George, Burgoon, Adkins, & White, 2004). While there are reasons to believe that not all IM is completely fake from an individual's IM perspective (Carlson et al., 2011), others still hold that it invariably always involves some form of fabrication or deception (Gardner & Avolio, 1998 ; O'Sullivan, 2000).

Veiga et al. (2014), reasoned that the envier's appraisal of the situation involving the coworker activates an assessment of the threat the situation poses to the evaluating envier's social standing. According to them, the envier's assessment of the cause of the relevant event triggers an assessment of how it affects them. Viega et al. (2014), argued that the relevant event triggers among the envier, a comparison of their relative social standing to that of the coworker's. We contend that such a comparison should not be confined to the social status alone but in case of the coworker's behavior that conveys competence information (job-focused IM), the comparison process should also involve relative non-social advantages (e.g. outcomes, promotions etc.) the behavior might help the coworker accrue. Although social interaction inherently involves comparison (Festinger, 1954), envy inherently involves a greater degree of comparison of " what I have versus what another has" (Parrott & Smith, 1993). Veiga et al. (2014), reasoned that the envier should be particularly prone to comparing because individuals faced with uncertainty are more likely to engage in social comparisons (Buunk, Schaufelii, & Ybema, 1994; Shah, 1998).

It is contended that the attribution process is influenced by the degree to which the potential advantages accrued by the co-worker's job-focused IM is likely to threaten the envier's own standing within the organization. The relative status perspective (Frank, 1985; 2013), suggests that mutually understood achievement

criteria within the organization are of particular concern to individuals, and that individuals compare themselves to others on these criteria. Particularly, this perspective asserts that envy alerts the envier of the relative advantages enjoyed by the coworker (Hill & Buss, 2006). Therefore, because the envier is particularly concerned with the coworker's achievements that he perceives reflect badly on themselves (Veiga et al., 2014), it is likely that the job-focused IM behavior that is promising in gaining the coworker greater social standing and organizational outcomes should draw the envier's contrary incompetence attributions in efforts to maintain a positive self-view. These contrary attributions are likely because literature suggests people explain events in self-protective ways, and because coworker IM is perceived as detrimental to one's well-being (Turnley et al., 2013). Job-focused IM, like other forms of IM, are rewarding for one's social standing and material outcomes. Competition within the organization to maintain relative levels of social standing and outcomes should drive self-protective attributions. Such self-protective attributions are known to help maintain one's sense of identity and in preventing problems associated with unfavorable information about the self. Thus, behavior-non-correspondent inferences of the coworker's incompetence, contrary to the impression their job-focused IM intends to convey, can also be seen as the envier's effort at self-affirmation. The coworker's behavior that conveys their competence is threatening to the envier, triggering a self-affirming search of causal reasoning for it. Steele (1988), argued that when faced with self-threat, self-affirming thought processes are activated to maintain a positive self-image e.g. an image of one's competence. In the context of envy, such self-affirming processes are likely to involve self-serving attributions.

Leary and Kowalsk (1990), argued that one motive to engage in IM is the discrepancy between the current and desired image. They also reasoned that higher the value of goals (e.g. performance evaluation), greater the motivation to manage impressions (e.g. competence). Because job-focused IM aims at creating an impression of competence (Bolino et al., 2016a), and because this social influence tactic is reportedly also used manipulatively, the coworker's job-focused IM is likely to draw unfavorable attributions about the actor. Others have shown social influence is not as effective when observers are suspicious of it (Lawson et

al., 1998; Platow et al., 2005), and that actors miscalculate other's reactions to their positive self-claims (Scopelliti et al., 2015). Particularly, Sezer et al. (2018), reported that perceived insincerity in bragging of one's achievements draws attributions of incompetence. While bragging about one's abilities and achievements draws unfavorable attributions even for non-enviers, we contend that the envier who is particularly prone to viewing the coworker unfavorably should draw such attributions more strongly that are instrumental in protecting their own self-view concerning their sense of personal competence. Accordingly, it has been shown that over-emphasis of one's credentials makes one appear self-interested and less competent (Berman, Levine, Barasch & Small, 2014). A discrepancy between how people like to be seen and how they actually are, motivates them to manage relevant impressions (for example, engaging in job-focused IM when one is not actually competent but desires to be seen as such) (Bolino et al., 2016a; Leary & Kowalski, 1990). Thus, either the attentional biases of the envier (Crusius & Lange, 2014), are likely to help them avoid the correspondence bias or their inclination towards engaging in self-serving reasoning (van de Ven & Zeelenberg, 2015), are likely to cause behavior non-correspondent attributions of incompetence. Either way, it is expected the envier attributes the coworker's job-focused IM to their incompetence.

H_{5c} : The co-worker's job- focused IM is positively associated with the envier's attributions of their incompetence.

2.8 Attributions and Reactions

2.8.1 Attributions of Supervisor's Social Perceptiveness and the Envier's Responses

Tai et al., (2012), argued that the challenge-oriented action tendency of envy drives discretionary positive behavior towards others in order to be viewed favorably. They reasoned that doing so can enhance one's image in others' eyes, which the envier may need in order to progress. Positive behaviors such as offering help

and being outwardly pleasant improves one's image, performance evaluations, and builds trust (Moorman, Brower, & Grover, 2016). Positive behaviors raise others perceptions of one's competence (Salamon & Deutsch, 2006), and increase alliances by make competition less threatening (Casciaro & Lobo, 2008). Positive behaviors towards the supervisor particularly in the form of ingratiation, helps them develop social capital with the supervisor, increasing fair treatment by influencing supervisor's perception of the exchange quality of their relationship (Koopman, Matta, Scott, & Conlon, 2015). The successful coworker's supervisor focused IM serves as either model behavior or acceptable behavior, based on the social information processing approach. The successful coworker's behavior may set implicit norms about it, and the envier may follow suit because social influence process shapes the envier's behavior (Baumeister, 2013).

Liden and Mitchell (1988), elaborated on the ingratiation process and discussed factors that motivate the behavior. Theirs was one of the pioneering and valuable studies on ingratiatory behavior within organizations. Elaborating on an individual's choice to proceed or refrain from engaging in ingratiatory behavior (target-focused IM), they argued that among the prime reasons that motivate the behavior is the actor's perceived susceptibility to it. In other words, they suggested that an individual would engage in the behavior after weighing, among other things, the likelihood that the target would believe the behavior to be sincere. Others have reinforced this argument (Appelbaum & Hughes, 1998). In view of the current study, this argument suggests that the envier's attributions of the supervisor as lacking social perceptiveness encourages supervisor focused IM towards them because he is believed to be susceptible to it.

Furthermore, based on the expectancy theory, the behavior is likely to be exhibited when it is expected to yield rewards (Appelbaum & Hughes, 1998). I infer that attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness provide the basis for the expectation that it will be rewarded because such behavior is appealing to the target. Furthermore, the social influence opportunity provided by the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness increases supervisor-targeted political behavior (McAllister, Ellen, & Ferris, 2018). Following the envier's attributions that the supervisor lacks social perceptiveness, he adopts supervisor focused IM behaviors

as an adapting strategy, in order to improve their image. Supervisory focused behavior is employed as it is an effective adapting strategy to further career goals (Sibunruang et al., 2016).

Resulting from the envier's attributions that the supervisor lacks the skill to tell people's intentions from their behavior, he infers that strategic or manipulative IM is likely to go undetected. Appelbaum and Hughes (1998), and Liden and Mitchell (1988), argued that another factor influencing the decision to engage in target-focused behavior is the perceived cost-benefit ratio of engaging in it. Previous literature reports that sensing manipulation or deceit in a behavior is penalized, and is followed by adverse outcomes for the actor (Valle, Kacmar, & Andrews, 2015; Shapiro, 1991). Although others have reported conflicting findings (Roulin et al., 2014), and others still report that the target may not always detect deceit in IM (Roulin et al., 2015), the risk of adverse consequences of ingratiation remain (Robin, Rusinowska, & Villeval, 2014). We hold that attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness encourage similar IM by signaling that it will be undetected as manipulative. Instead, it is likely to encourage supervisor focused IM because of the reduced fear/threat of detection.

H_{6a} : Attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness is positively associated with the envier's supervisor focused IM.

The equity theory holds that individuals compare their own outcomes: inputs ratio to that of others (Adams, 1965). This gives them an idea of organizational fairness and any discrepancy in one's outcomes to inputs ratio relative to that of others is displeasing. Adams (1965), suggested that the employee will attempt to resolve the tension created as a result. Work on equity theory has repeatedly shown that one way employees address this inequity is by altering performance (Greenberg, 1988a, 1989). Thus, equity theory provides grounds for reduced performance at the workplace following a sense of injustice, whereas justice perceptions result in improved performance by increasing member's organizational embeddedness (Ghosh, Sekiguchi & Gurunathan, 2017). From an envier's perspective, Tai et al. (2012), used the equity perspective in reasoning that one way the envier may seek to restore equity is by reducing performance. Reduced efforts towards performance

improves one's outcomes to inputs ratio relative to that of others. Other studies have shown that hindrance stressors such as politics and conflict reduce various aspects of task performance by influencing people's perceptions of justice (Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014).

Recent work on envy has reiterated the equity perspective for the envier's reduced performance. For example, Clercq, Haq and Azeem (2018), reported that envy results in reduced performance by increasing the individual's sense of unfairness. In the context of psupervisor perceptions, numerous studies have shown both performance and non-performance behaviors are influenced by attributions about the supervisor. For example, Eberly and Fong (2013), found that attributions of supervisor sincerity influence their perceptions of leadership effectiveness. Burton, Taylor, and Barber (2014), found that external attributions for supervisory abuse lead to stronger aggressive behaviors and reduce OCB directed towards them. Sue-Chan, Chen, and Lam (2011), found that subordinate attributions about the supervisor's motive behind coaching influenced both objective and subjective performance. Others have also shown, under different contexts of supervisory behavior and subordinate attributions, that subordinate perceptions about the supervisor influences their behaviors such as effort put into their work (Vogel et al., 2015).

Based on the above argumentation and cited literature, it is hypothesized that:

H_{6b} : Attribution of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness is negatively associated with the envier's job performance.

2.8.2 Attributions of Co-worker's Incompetence and the Envier's Responses

Counterproductive work behavior (CWB), is a reaction to perceived injustice at the workplace (Barclay & Kiefer, 2017). Studies either adopt an equity based perspective or a social exchange perspective (Cropanzano et al., 2017), arguing that individuals seek to restore equity whenever they are faced with outcomes or situations that suggest unfairness. The same equity based perspective has been adopted by envy literature that suggests that the envier seeks to deal with the pain of envy by resorting to tactics that harm the coworker (Tai et al., 2012). Others

have elaborated on the emotions involved in counterproductive behavior, reporting that it results from anger following perceived injustice (Barclay & Kiefer, 2017; Khan et al., 2013). We contend that the same equity based perspective- that the envier seeks to harm the coworker in attempts to restore equity- holds true for the current study.

In addition to restoring equity, individuals engage in counterproductive behavior as a coping strategy in the face of stress. Following injustice at work, a desire for revenge and the expectancy that revenge would be emotionally pleasing, predicts counterproductive behavior (Jones, 2009). Others have reiterated similar views, reporting that individuals engage in counterproductive behavior in response to unfavorable situations, if they believe they will be emotionally beneficial (Krischer et al., 2010). Others also report that people behave harmfully at work because they believe in the instrumentality of the behavior in feeling better (Bushman, Baumeister, & Phillips, 2001). The perceived instrumentality of the behavior to be emotionally pleasing is shaped by the person's perceived control over the source of stress (Shoss, Jundt, Kobler, & Reynolds, 2016). Furthermore, hindrance stressors such as politics and conflict increase CWB by increasing experienced strain (Zhang, LePine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014). Therefore, the envier engages in CWB following attributions that the coworker is incompetent, as it is emotionally pleasing to harm the incompetent person who enjoys a relatively stronger standing despite their incompetence.

In line with the literature cited above, attributions that the successful (envied) coworker is incompetent, arouses concern for the coworker's relatively better standing within the organization. This motivates CWB towards the coworker in efforts to restore equity. Evidence of the explanatory role of the envier's attributions in explaining CWB towards the coworker is available (Khan et al., 2014). Attributions of the coworker's incompetence are particularly self-relevant to the envier because of the upward comparisons with them, and because perception of their incompetence signals to the envier that they enjoy their successful standing unfairly/non-deservingly.

Therefore, based on the above-cited evidence from literature, it is hypothesized that:

H_{6c} : Attribution of the co-worker's incompetence is positively associated with the envier's counterproductive behavior towards them.

Based on the equity restoration perspective, Tai et al.(2012), argued that the envier reduces their performance in order to restore equity. They argued that by exerting reduced effort on the job for job tasks, the envier contributes less, thereby improving their outcomes to inputs ratio relative to that of others (Pinder, 2008). Employees who perceive unfairness within the organization are less engaged in their work as they identify less with their organization (Gupta & Kumar, 2013). This reduces their willingness to exert energy and efforts towards activities that enhance performance (Shin, Seo, Shapiro & Taylor, 2015), whereas perceptions that the organizational outcomes are fair enhance performance (Raja, Sheikh, Abbas & Bouckenooghe, 2018). We contend that equity restoration attempts by reduced contribution to work tasks are even more likely when the coworker is also perceived to be incompetent because this reflects the perceiver's perceptions that the organization is unfair. The envier's attributions that the coworker (comparatively successful) is incompetent, yet receives more organizational outcomes than themselves, motivates action tendencies to reduce their own effort.

Reduced performance may also be explained by the envier's reduced satisfaction and confidence in organizational processes behind reward allocation decisions. De Clercq, Haq, and Azeem (2018), reported that the envier reduces their performance as a result of perceptions of organizational unfairness in information provision that follow envy. Their findings are relevant to this study because they reported their findings in the context of organizational politics. IM behaviors are also political by character. I contend that equity restoration explanation for reduced performance hold true following the envier's perceptions that the coworker is incompetent.

H_{6d} : Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence is negatively associated with the envier's job performance.

2.9 Attributions as Mediators

2.9.1 Attribution of Supervisor's Social Perceptiveness as a Mediator between Coworker IM and the Envier's Responses

Informed by the successful coworker's IM techniques, the envier is compelled to engage in supervisor-focused IM in efforts to reap similar rewards (organizational outcomes such as promotions, favors, etc.). According to the attribution theory, behavior is shaped by the attributions one assigns to situations of personal relevance (Heider, 1958). Martinko, Harvey, and Dasborough (2011), reiterated that attributions influence all workplace behaviors reinforced by rewards (or expectancy of rewards). I argue that a successful coworker's supervisor-focused IM is personally relevant to the envier and it shapes similar behavior by them, as a result of their attributions that the supervisor lacks the ability to tell self-serving IM from genuine praise. Thus, according to the attribution theory, the envier's attribution that the supervisor lacks social perceptiveness should mediate this link.

Based on a lack of empirical studies and explanation in literature, for differences in responses to various IM techniques, we hypothesize no differences in the mediating mechanism of attribution of supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness.

Thus, based on the above argument, and the attribution theory, it is hypothesized that:

H_{7a} : Supervisor's social perceptiveness attributions mediate the relationship between the coworker's supervisor-focused IM and the envier's own supervisor-focused IM.

Job performance has many direct and indirect implications for the organization (Wright, Gardner, & Moynihan, 2003). Therefore, job performance has attracted a considerable amount of research over the years in order to investigate practices that enhance performance, and ultimately, firm performance (Shin & Konrad, 2017). As work on emotions has identified the instrumentality of emotions for job

performance (De Clercq, Haq, & Azeem, 2018 ;Mulki, Jaramillo, Goad, & Pesquera, 2015), it is arguably of interest how the emotion of envy influences workplace attributions and ensuing job performance. More specifically, a co-worker's supervisor-focused IM is personally meaningful, and is unfavorable to the observer (Turnley et al., 2013). The prime reason a coworker's supervisor-focused IM should influence the co-worker and their attributions is that co-workers come in constant contact with each other, and are competing for similar outcomes (Sterling & Labianca, 2015). Therefore, the coworker's supervisor-focused IM that draws attention to themselves, and is potentially rewarding (Bolino, Long, & Turnley, 2016), is threatening to the envier, and is ill-received.

Literature suggests that performance is unlikely to improve under conditions when one is unwilling to take responsibility for ones outcomes and to make an effort in the direction of desired change. Particularly for an envier, the threat from the coworker's supervisor-focused IM is likely taken as a threat. For the envier's reduced performance, Tai et al., (2012), argued that reduced job performance should be a means for the envier to restore equity. When attributions are made externally to the supervisor's social perceptiveness, there is little reason for the envier to believe their improved efforts will be noticed, thereby, reducing their performance.

People who assume "personal responsibility for success ... persevere as if they genuinely believe in their self-efficacy" (Greenwald & Breckler, 1985, p. 130). However, in the case of external, self-serving attributions that assign the supervisor responsibility for one's failure, perseverance in the form of job performance is unlikely. Literature suggests that self-serving attributions are not productive for increased effort and are manifestations of a lack of desire to change (Alina Ciabuca & Lucian Gheorghe, 2014). Self-serving attributions that one's condition is unlikely to improve with effort, is likely to reduce it. Fast and Tiedens (2010), argued that attributions that involve making external blame attributions for failure are not rewarding. Extant literature shows that groups in which blaming is a common practice are non-conducive to learning and are less productive (Edmondson, 1996). Blaming is ineffective because attributions in the form of blame reduce well-being and influence health, in addition to damaging one's reputation (Lee & Robinson, 2000; Lee & Tiedens, 2001; Tennen & Affleck, 1990). Because blame is

associated with unfavorable outcomes, blame in the form of external, self-serving attributions to the supervisor's lack of social perception is likely to explain reduced performance following a coworker's job-focused IM.

Fairness at the workplace enhances employee productivity, whereas reducing performance is one method people employ in order to restore the sense of inequity they experience at the workplace (Konovsky & Cropanzano, 1991). The envier also engages in such an evaluation of outcome/inputs ratio and is likely to restore a sense of injustice relative to the outcome/inputs ratio of others by reducing performance (for a discussion, see Tai et al., 2012).

In addition to restoring equity, the envier is also likely to reduce effort towards their job performance because the attribution that the supervisor lacks social perceptual ability informs them that their effort is unlikely to be noticed and rewarded (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). This argument is in line with the social information processing approach that suggests one's social environment provides cues to be processed in order to arrive at attributions and ensuing behavior vis. performance.

Attribution theory (Kelley, 1967), also states that people make attributions about their experiences and that human behavior is shaped by the attributions they arrive at concerning their specific situation under consideration (Harvey 2014). Additionally, equity theory (Adams, 1963), states that people seek to restore equity by reducing effort when their outcomes to inputs ratio is perceived to be unfair. Therefore, it may be argued that because envy entails a sense of injustice, the envier is likely to seek to restore the perceived inequity (Wilkin & Connelly, 2015). Hence, insofar as supervisor-focused IM is rewarding (Bolino et al., 2008 ; Higgins et al., 2003), the use of supervisor-focused IM behaviors by a coworker is unfavorable (Turnley et al., 2013). It can reduce the envier's job performance through their attributions that the supervisor lacks the ability to discern people's intentions behind their behavior (social perceptiveness), and is unlikely to reward performance unless accompanied by supervisor-focused IM such as opinion conformity, supervisory ingratiation and flattery etc.

Therefore, based on literature cited above, and based on the basic premise of attribution theory that attributions explain responses to unfavorable experiences

(Seele & Eberl, 2020), it is hypothesized that:

H_{7b} : Attribution of supervisor's social perceptiveness mediates the relationship between the coworker's supervisor-focused IM and the envier's job performance.

2.9.2 Attributions of Coworker Incompetence as a Mediator between Coworker IM and the Envier's Responses

Counterproductive behavior is a means to restore equity in the interpersonal domain at the workplace. For example, Cohen-Charash and Mueller (2007), argued that the three goals CWB towards the high performing coworker can achieve include restoring equity by reducing the advantaged person's advantage (Heider, 1958; Silver & Sabini, 1978); regulating the envier's affect by reducing frustration (Fox & Spector, 1999); and because harming behavior increases self esteem (Fein & Spencer, 1997), it is a means to protect the self-esteem damaged as a result of another's desired outcomes and position (envy), thereby compensating for the envier's sense of inadequacy (Barth, 1988). These arguments, along with attribution theory, imply that explanations of one's experiences preceding these behaviors explain responses to them.

Zillman (1978), showed that hostility towards an attacker is reduced when the mistreated person's attributions are altered to demonstrate that the attack was not deliberate and personal. In so far as people believe others had a role to play in thwarting their personal achievement of desired goals, they react aggressively (Dodge, 1986; Ferguson & Rule, 1983). This was also suggested by Weiner (1985), in his attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. So far as frustrations are defined along the lines of constraints in the achievement of desired goals, attributions for frustrating situations arouse emotional reactions (Smith & Ellsworth, 1985; Weiner, 1985) such as envy, and these attributions should determine CWB directed towards the source of envy. This conception was also elaborately discussed in one of the seminal works on the frustration-aggression hypothesis (Berkowitz, 1989). The basic premise is that attributions of intentional

and personally directed thwarting of goal achievements instigate deviant behavior. Furthermore, because the envier is already in a painful state for which he seeks redress and holds the coworker accountable, and to the extent that their IM behavior is seen as intentionally motivated to conceal incompetence, it should instigate deviant behavior towards them. Because the potentially rewarding IM of the coworker comes at an expense to the envier, "the displeasure... adds to the negative affect generated by the frustration itself" (Berkowitz, 1989; 64). Interpersonal attributional theory of motivation emphasizes the role of attributions in explaining behavioral reactions to unfavorable events such as another's behavior (Elliot & Dweck, 2005). The role of attributions in explaining CWB responses to a coworker's IM is also evident in studies that discuss the envier's appraisal and attributions of the situation under consideration explains CWB towards the coworker (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007 ; Khan et al., 2014).

Based on the above literature and the basic premise of attribution theory, it is hypothesized that:

H_{7c} : Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence mediate the relationship between the coworker's job-focused IM and the envier's counterproductive behavior towards them.

Brees et al. (2013), elaborately described an attributional approach towards workplace aggression. Their model describes primary appraisal and associated attributions as explanatory factors in the decision to behave counterproductively, following triggering events. They proposed that external and stable attributions associated with feelings of powerlessness and frustration, coupled with feelings that the events that are personally disturbing are intentional and within control, would instigate negative behavior towards them. The basic premise for an attributional approach in comprehending CWB is that the pain of envy, coupled with the envier's frustration at lack of control in achieving the desired goal instigates behavior that, although not overtly harmful, is damaging in some respect. More specifically, the attributional approach suggests that attribution explains how CWB should be directed towards the source of this frustration i.e., the high performing coworker who also seeks to benefit from self-focused IM at the workplace, thereby potentially widening the discrepancy between the envier and the coworker's outcomes

and social status within the organization. The envier's interpretation of the unjust situation in self-protecting ways results in hostility towards the coworker (Vidaillet, 2008). Others have also highlighted the role of attributions in determining CWB responses to unfavorable situations and/or workplace environment. Spector (1997), reasoned that a situation can become a frustrator if the individual appraises it so. He cited previous literature, discussing that individual reactions to the work situation depend on their appraisal of it with respect to their personal work-related goals. Barney & Elias (2016), reasoned that stressful work situations such as job insecurity lead to CWB, particularly among individuals with high core self evaluations. The moral disengagement following envy in situations of low identification with one's environment facilitates undermining behavior (Duffy et al., 2012).

Like job-focused IM, self-focused IM is also rewarding in that it draws attention towards oneself by highlights one's favorable qualities (Bolino et al., 2016 ; Wayne & Ferris, 1990). The envier's frustration is highly likely when the coworker poses as the ideal worker under observation and displays other self-focused IM behaviors. Like job-focused IM, coworker self-focused IM is also displeasing, as they are believed to reflect negatively on oneself, drawing the supervisor's attention towards the actor at their expense (Turnley et al., 2013). Thus, insofar as self-focused IM tactics are rewarding (Higgins et al., 2003;Turnley & Bolino, 2001), they are displeasing to the co-worker. In the absence of literature suggesting otherwise, it is expected that self-focused IM tactics, like job-focused IM, elicit CWB, following attributions of the coworker as an incompetent person. These attributions are likely to magnify the frustration at the coworker's superior position, thereby eliciting counterproductive behavior in efforts to restore equity and restoring one's self-esteem.

We hypothesize no differences in mediating mechanism of coworker attributions in explaining CWB in response to various IM types. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H_{7d} : Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence mediate the relationship between the coworker's self-focused IM and the envier's counterproductive behavior towards them.

H_{7e} : Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence mediate the relationship between the coworker's supervisor-focused IM and the envier's counterproductive behavior towards them.

Individual job performance has direct implications for organizational performance. Hence, job performance is of prime concern to organizations who seek to maximize individual performance (Shin & Konrad, 2017). Individuals reduce effort towards performing their job when they perceive their work outcomes are unjust compared to others', by reducing motivation (Haynie, Cullen, Lester, Winter, & Svyantek, 2014 ; Zapata-Phelan, Colquitt, Scott, & Livingston, 2009). The envier is particularly likely to reduce performance following a sense of unfairness (De Clercq et al., 2018). Ghosh, Sekiguchi, and Gurunathan (2017), argued that organizational justice enhances job performance by embedding the individual into the organization. For an envier who perceives the organization is unfair in not rewarding them the same outcomes as the coworker, the sense of injustice is likely to result in alienation following a sense of lack of meaning and ultimately result in reduced performance (Ceylan & Sulu, 2011 ; Nair & Vohra, 2010).

If a coworker enjoys a superior position based on their self-focused IM, drawing attributions of incompetence, the envier is less likely to put effort towards their job in an effort to restore equity. Individuals are known to reduce performance in efforts to restore equity when their outcome/inputs comparison signals organizational unfairness (Adams, 1963). The envier, by attributing self-focused IM to the coworker's incompetence, is likely to believe effort would be of little consequence in gaining them the desired outcomes.

Thus, based on attribution and equity theory, it is hypothesized:

H_{7f}: Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence mediate the relationship between the coworker's self-focused IM and the envier's job performance.

Turnley et al. (2013), suggested that impression management by coworkers is displeasing as it occurs at one's expense in a competitive work environment. They suggested that this displeasure at another's IM results from the perception that

their rewards will be accompanied by some form of decrease in one's own rewards, given the limited organizational resources. Therefore, they did not suggest any differences in performance reactions to various IM techniques by coworkers.
No differences were found in literature explaining varying performance in reaction to coworker IM techniques. Turnley et al. (2013), also suggested no distinct reaction for one IM technique from another. Additionally, no empirical evidence is available to suggest differences. Therefore, based on the argumentation of the mediating role of coworker attributions in explaining reduced performance of the envier, we hypothesize a similar mediating mechanism for job-focused IM and supervisor-focused IM by the coworker.
Therefore, based on the similar premise as above, we hypothesize that:

H_{7g}: Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence mediate the relationship between their job-focused IM and the envier's job performance.

Similarly, a coworker's supervisor-focused IM is likely to reduce the envier's job performance by creating a perception that the impression managing coworker is in fact, incompetent. (Abbas, Raja, Anjum, & Bouckenooghe, 2019), found that people with low perceived competence engage in more impression management at the workplace. Thus, perhaps the observing coworker reasons that because the coworker is managing impressions by engaging in supervisor flattery and praise etc., he/she may in fact be incompetent. They therefore, try to secure organizational outcomes through non-performance means or by limiting their performance, believing that IM techniques are more instrumental within the organization in gaining rewards.
Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H_{7h}: Attributions of the co-worker's incompetence mediate the relationship between their supervisor-focused IM and the envier's job performance.

2.10 Attributional Style

2.10.1 Attributional Style as an Regulator of Attributions

Individuals respond differently to stimulus events (Weiner, 1986). The kind of attributions individuals are prone to making differ according to their innate propensities to do so. Individual tendencies towards making similar attributions across similar situations are referred to as attributional styles (Peterson et al., 1982), and are distinct from the actual attributions made (Russell, 1991). Attributional style refers to individual differences in tendencies to attribute causes of favorable and unfavorable situations to stable/unstable, controllable/uncontrollable and internal/external causes. These explanations or attributions are based on information from internal motives and convictions, and the external environment (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Attributions made for intrapersonal behavior are distinct from those made for another's behavior (Weiner, 2000). The tendency to assign causes of favorable/unfavorable events to various causes on internal/external dimensions influences consequent behavior e.g. aggression (Brees et al., 2013). Attributional styles are individuals' trait-like tendencies to making attributions (Martinko et al., 2007). Others have described attributional style as "descriptions of how and the degree to which a person is biased in their attribution processes" (Martinko et al., 2017, p.4), and as biases in people's causal explanations for situations (Martinko, Harvey, Sikora, & Douglas, 2011). They are stable characteristics predictive of behavior (Martinko et al., 2011). The application of attributional styles has been predominantly focused on mental health, vis. depression and helplessness etc. However, scholars in organizational behavior have begun to identify the role of attributional style in making attributions at the workplace.

Core dimensions of attributions include stability, controllability, and locus of causality (Weiner, 1985). Locus of causality, somewhat relevant to locus of control refers to the self or another as the cause of an event. Controllability refers to one's degree of perceived control over an internally-caused event. Some internal causes, such as lack of motivation, are perceived as controllable, whereas others such as lack of skill essential to perform a task, are deemed uncontrollable. Stability refers

to permanence/temporary nature of the cause in a person or the environment. An example of permanence of the cause of poor performance, for example, is lack of steadiness whereas illness is an example of something temporary. Scholars have identified various attributional styles based on individual propensity to assign these dimensions of causes to various reasons.

Various attribution styles, initially proposed by Abramson, Seligman, and Teasdale (1978), have been identified. A depressive attributional style involves making internal attributions for negative outcomes, and for attributing positive outcomes externally such as fortune (Abramson et al., 1978; Ciarrochi, Heaven, & Davies, 2007). Such an attributional style is associated with depression and anxiety (Hu, Zhang, & Yang, 2015). A pessimistic attributional style involves the tendency to make stable, global and internal attributions for unfavorable events such as failure, and unstable and external attributions for success (Brees et al., 2013; Schinkel, van Vianen, & Ryan, 2016). A hostile attributional style is represented by stable, external attributions for negative or unfavorable events such as a failure and is associated with aggression and abusive supervision (Martinko et al., 2011). People with a hostile attributional style are also likely to justify deviant behavior (Harvey, Martinko, & Borkowski, 2017). An optimistic or self-serving attributional style is characterized by internal attributions for success and external attributions for unfavorable outcomes. Such an attributional style is associated with positive adjustment and academic performance (Ciarrochi et al., 2007; Schulman, 2014).

Individuals prone to making positive self attributions (self-serving attributional style), hold the external environment such as co-workers and/or the organization responsible for their negative outcomes. These individuals make self-serving attributions in an effort to restore self-esteem. They take credit for their success and blame others/circumstances for their failure (Mezulis, Abramson, Hyde, & Hankin, 2004b). For example, an employee may believe that their good performance ratings are due to effort, whereas, if he receives no promotion, he may attribute it to unfair processes. A self-serving attributional style is similar to the hostile attributional style in that both involve placing the blame for negative situations external to oneself, thus, both are likely to result in frustration following unfavorable experiences. A self-serving attributional style also involves making

internal attributions for success (Zuckerman, 1979). Harvey and Martinko (2009), found that frustration from placing the blame on the external environment such as supervisors, and failing to share credit for one's success results in conflict with supervisor (Martinko & Gardner, 1987).

Following the logic of attribution theory, it may be argued that a self-serving attributional style more strongly influences self-serving attributions that place the blame for a coworker's IM on external parties, e.g. supervisor and the coworker. Spector and Fox (2010), reasoned that of dispositional factors that influence attributions and consequent behavior, attributional style is most important. An envier with a self-serving attributional style is most likely to refuse personal responsibility for their relatively less favorable position and blame it on external factors (for a discussion, see Martinko et al., 2011). It is for this reason that such an attributional style is also referred to as a self-serving attributional bias (Miller & Ross, 1975). It is expected that individuals with a self-serving attributional style are less likely to self-reflect, but to seek causality for another's IM behavior in self -serving ways that protect their self-concept.

2.10.2 Self-Serving Attributional Style as a Moderator of Coworker IM and the Envier's Responses

The nature of self-serving attributional style implies greater propensity to make self-serving attributions. Individual differences in the propensity to make similar attributions in similar situations exist. Certain dispositional tendencies make one more prone to making self-serving attributions e.g. perfectionism (Levine et al., 2017). However, the dispositional variable most important in predicting attributions and consequent behavior is attributional style (Spector & Fox, 2010). It is also the most theoretically relevant dispositional variable for attributions. Thus, although other dispositional factors are important in predicting attributions, attributional style remains the most relevant for predicting attributions. A self-serving attributional style is relevant for supervisor-focused IM because this behavior is rewarding and personally relevant for the envier. Because it is seen as coming at the expense of oneself (Turnley et al., 2013), an individual prone to making

self-serving attributions is likely to more strongly assign self-serving explanations for it.

Because people are motivated to maintain positive self-identities which is reflected in their self-serving attributions when faced with identity-threatening situations such as failure (Greenwald & Breckler, 1985), a self-serving attributional style that involves making external, unstable attributions for unfavorable events should explain stronger attributions to the supervisor's lack of social perception. Self-serving attributions have been previously discussed in the context of IM. For example, while discussing factors that contribute to a motivation to manage one's impressions, Leary and Kowalski (1990), argued that people who have failed to create a desired image in people's eyes will seek to make counterfactual arguments for it such as making self-serving attributions for their failure. Arkin, Appelman, and Burger (1980), reported that self-serving attributions are in fact, a reflection of the desire to maintain one's favorable impression. The coworker's potentially rewarding behavior such as supervisory-focused IM, that puts them in a positive light, threatens the envier's own self-view and challenges the envier's own private identity. The envier, thus, seeks to bolster their desired private identity that has been challenged by another's behavior.

A self-serving attributional style should shape the envier's attributions for the coworker's supervisor-focused IM in ways that protect their self-esteem. The primary value of the self-serving attributional style is self-protection from harm that may arise from self-threatening situations/experiences (Taylor & Brown, 1988). Such an attributional style is adaptive because such individuals are happier and better adjusted. For example, Abramson, Alloy, and Metalsky (2013), and Sweeney, Anderson, and Bailey (1986), reported that for the opposite attributional patterns (internal, stable attributions for negative events), depression and hopelessness is more likely. Cheng and Furnham (2003), found that optimistic style of attributing events is associated with greater self-reported happiness. However, others have shown that mental health may be better predicted by optimistic attributions in positive situations and pessimistic attributions in negative situations (Cheng & Furnham, 2001). Thus, although contrary evidence for effects of the attributional style exists, literature predominantly indicates it is used in situations

that require protecting ones self-views. Esteem-protecting function of a self-serving attributional style is well established (Blaine & Crocker, 1993). Because people seek to maintain positive self-views (Heine, Lehman, Markus, & Kitayama, 1999), and self-serving attributions assist in that regard, an inherent propensity to engage in self-serving attributional style should magnify that effect.

A person with a self-serving attributional style is more likely to attribute the behavior in self-serving ways (non-correspondent attributions), rather than to the supervisor's likability (correspondent attributions) for two reasons. First, the sense of injustice inherent in envy should mar the possibility of such an attribution. Secondly, such an attribution has favorable implications for the self. As the decision maker behind decisions that place the coworker unfairly at the enviable position, IM is unlikely to be attributed to the supervisor's likability. Furthermore, a self-serving attributional style is highly relevant for the envier because counterfactual and self-serving explanations for one's disadvantaged position are common in envy (van de Ven & Zeelenberg, 2015). Therefore, insofar as supervisor-focused IM such as supervisory ingratiation is rewarding (Huang et al., 2013), and considered unfavorable among observing employees (Vonk, 1998), a self-serving attributional style is likely to strengthen self-serving attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness.

H_{8a}: A self-serving attributional style strengthens the relationship between the co-worker's supervisor-focused IM and the envier's attribution of the behavior to the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness.

Instead of assigning random cause(s) to events, people seek plausible cause(s) for events that are logically and motivationally connected to the event (Duval & Silvia, 2002). For an envier seeking to draw inferences about another's behavior, those factors are most likely to be considered that are logically connected to the behavior. For example, an individual considered to be offering the supervisor personal favors is likely to be doing so in order to win personal favors based on social exchange (Blau, 1968). Additionally, based on the discounting principle of the attribution theory (Kelley, 1972), people discount those causes for other's success that are personally threatening or not personally favorable (Campbell &

Sedikides, 1999). Thus, the intended motives for the behavior are analyzed for possible plausible reasoning.

This reasoning is most likely motivated by the kinds of reasoning one is inherently prone to make. For example, an individual with a hostile attributional style is likely to be aggressive because this attributional style influences their reasoning in ways that assigns responsibility for unfavorable situations to external, stable causes (Aquino, Douglas, & Martinko, 2004). An individual prone to making depressive attributions is likely to attribute failure to themselves (Schulman, 2014), whereas, an individual with a self-serving attributional style is equipped to reduce depressive symptoms (Tianqiang Hu, Zhang, & Ran, 2016). As such, attributional style is a dispositional factor that influences the kinds of attributions people make for surrounding situations and the ensuing behavior that follows as reactions to these events. Like hostile attributional style, a self-serving attributional style also involves making external atributions for unfavorable situations, however, it is different from it in that it involves making unstable instead of stable attributions.

The self-serving attributional style is similar to the locus of control characteristic of personality in that both consider direction of attributions internal/external to the self in assigning causes to events. However, whereas an individual high on externality is likely to attribute factors externally, the individual with the self-serving attributional style assigns causes externally for unfavorable situations and internally for positive situations such as success. In addition, the self-servivng attributional style also has another dimension to it: the stability of the cause. Campbell and Sedikides (1999), found that an external locus of control magnifies the self-serving bias, implying that externality of causation is sought in self-threat situations. They argued that those with an external locus of control experience greater self-threat. This argument lends credence to the argument proposed in the current study. Because individuals prone to making self-serving attributions are prone to perceiving self-threat, they resort to causations that guard them against it. Because external causation is an element of a defensive self-maintenance strategy, it is similar to the self-serving attributional style that should also be expected to influence defensive attributions. For a coworker's IM, this implies that, the self-serving attributional style is likely to strengthen the relationship between the

coworker's supervisor-focused IM and attributions of the actor's incompetence. In line with the dispositional approach towards understanding attributions, it is expected that for individals prone to making self-serving attributions, the relationship between coworker IM, and the envier's own attributions of those behavior would be stronger in the self-serving direction. In other words, a self serving attributional style should influence the relationship between coworker IM, and the envier's attirbutions of this behavior to the former's incompetence.

H_{8b}: A self-serving attributional style strengthens the relationship between the co-worker's supervisor-focused IM and attributions of their incompetence.

In line with the above arguments, and considering that self-focused IM behaviors are potentially rewarding by presenting the coworker as the ideal worker and as a hardworking person, such behavior is unfavorable for the envious onlooker (Turnley et al., 2013). Because attributional style is the most relevanth dispositional variable for attributions (Spector & Fox, 2010), it influences attributions in the direction of their specific nature (external attributions for unfavorable situations and internal attributions for favorable situations in case of a self serving attributional style as opposed to internal attributions for a pessimistic attributional style). Thus, a self-serving attributional style should lead to stronger incompetence attributions of the coworker because "When undesirable events are attributed to external factors, such as another person's incompetence, the individual fails to accept responsibility (Weiner, 1985), and the positive self-view is protected" (Harvey & Martinko, 2009, p. 462). As such, the envier is likely to attribute the potentially rewarding self-focused IM behavior of the coworker to the coworker's incompetence (a self-serving attribution) more strongly when he has a self-serving attributional style.

H_{8c}: A self-serving attributional style strengthens the relationship between the co-worker's self-focused IM and attributions of their incompetence.

In the absence of literature suggesting different effects of self-serving attributional

style on self-serving attributions for various IM behaviors, it is expected that the same argument for supervisor-focused IM will hold true for job and self-focused IM behaviors. Specifically, self-serving attributional style will strengthen the relationship between job and self-focused IM tactics of the coworker and the envier's attribution of these behaviors to the former's incompetence (i.e., a self-serving attribution). Because attribution theory is concerned with the process by which individuals arrive at perceived causes or attributions, this process is most likely influenced by any dispositional propensity to engage in specific kinds of attributions (Hu et al., 2015). This argument is made considering that like supervisor-focused IM tactics, job-focused IM behaviors are potentially rewarding and enacted with the intention to create favorable impressions of oneself, hence, unfavorable to the co-workers (Vonk, 1998). Additionally, given that all three categories of IM tactics are considered to reflect negatively on oneself when performed by a co-worker (Turnley et al., 2013), a self-serving attributional style should strengthen self-serving outcomes following a coworker's engagement in any of these IM behaviors.

H_{8d}: A self-serving attributional style strengthens the relationship between the co-worker's job-focused IM and attributions of their incompetence.

2.11 Theoretical Framework

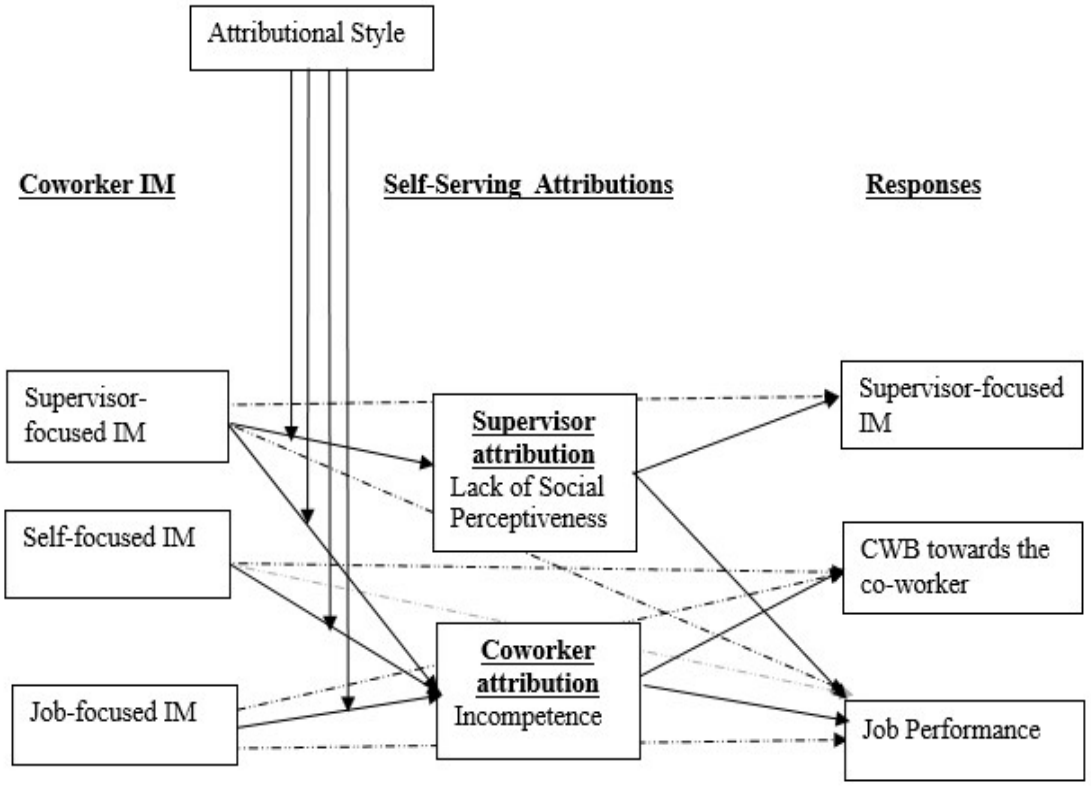

FIGURE 2.1: Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3

Methodology

The core elements of the research methodology discussed herein include: research paradigm, the research process, research methodology followed, research design, data collection details, data analysis technique and instrumentation. The discussion on research design elaborates the study type, time horizon, study setting and unit of analysis.

The study follows a positivist philosophy, which holds that reality is best described through an objective viewpoint without researcher interference in the phenomena under investigation.

Following this, scientific investigations in modern research translates to empirical investigations of phenomena under study (Bailey & Eastman, 1994), through analyses of data collected through some objective measurement instruments. Accordingly, this study follows a positivist research philosophy, with the approach of hypotheses testing.

3.1 Research Methodology

The survey methodology was suited for the study objectives as the key variables under study are measurable and quantifiable constructs that can be tested through the survey (questionnaire) method.

3.2 Research Design

Sekaran (2013) suggests some main features of a research design, namely; study purpose, type of investigation, extent of researcher interference, time horizon, and unit of analysis. These sections of the research design are explained based on (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2009) and (Sekaran, 2013).

3.2.1 Purpose of the Study

The study purpose was hypothesis testing. It involved testing direct, mediating and moderating relationships between variables through hypotheses formulated for finding answers to the research questions.

3.2.2 Type of Investigation

The study is causal because it involves testing causal relationships between variables of the study, including direct, mediation, as well as moderation hypotheses.. To this end, Smart PLS runs regression analyses to establish causal relationships between study variables.

3.2.3 Extent of Researcher Interference

No variables were manipulated and respondents simply responded to items in the questionnaire without interference by the researcher.

3.2.4 Study Setting

The study was non-contrived because it did not involve manipulation of levels of independent variables for testing their effects on dependent variables and involved testing for any hypothesized relationships between variables without any manipulation. Because the study objectives and scope did not require experimental

design or manipulation of variables for their varying effects on dependent variables, a non-contrived setting was well-suited for the study (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009).

3.2.5 Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis was supervisor-employee dyads (Sekaran, 2013) . Individual employees responded to the self-administered questionnaires containing scales for IM, attributions and attributional style. Their supervisors were later contacted for the former's job performance. The objective of the study required observer-reported responses for coworker IM, owing to their implications for coworker behaviors. Furthermore, owing to the issues associated with self-reported job performance, it was assessed through a supervisory-reported scale.

3.2.6 Time Horizon

The study followed a time-lagged design for mediation, in order to avoid common method bias concerns (Podsakoff et al., 2003). . Data were collected in time lags from June to August, 2018. At T1, data were collected for supervisor focused IM, self-focused IM, job-focused IM and attributional style. At T2, data were collected for coworker and supervisor attributions. At T3, data were collected from the respondents for counterproductive behavior, and supervisor focused IM (envier) and from their supervisors for job performance. Following earlier IM literature, (Abbas et al., 2018), the time period was 3 weeks between data collection.

3.2.7 Population and Sample

The population of the study was service sector employees in Pakistan, selected through the non-probability convenience sampling technique. These included finance, telecommunications, hospitality, education, and technology sectors. A percentage-wise breakdown of the study sample is shown in **Table 3.1**. The sample was based in the cities Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Lahore, and Karachi. These

cities were selected as they are the largest in terms of economic activity from the service sector, being the federal and provincial capitals. Therefore, a sample based in these cities is more representative of service sector employees in the country.

For example, Lahore, Karachi and Islamabad are leading destinations for business travel and hence, have a greater number of hotels and restaurants (Invest Pakistan), providing ample opportunities for competitive impression tactics among employees. Additionally, owing to their educational and economic activity, Islamabad, Karachi, Lahore and Rawalpindi also are the country's the largest telecommunication centers (Businesswire), suggesting greater sample representativeness in these cities than from elsewhere. Likewise, these cities have the most branches of commercial banks (SBP), host the most software export export houses (Pakistan Software Export Board), are the economic hubs of the country as they have hosted the country's Stock exchanges, and are the most populous cities of the country (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics), explaining large activity in these cities for the selected services sector.

The reason for focusing on white collar positions was that white-collar employees are most likely to experience competition as a result of the desire to progress up the career ladder, explaining earlier focus of impression management literature in white collar environments (Whitehead, 2021; Zivnuska et al., 2004). Additionally, services sector was selected because services entail work environments that are likened to 'theatrical performances', where managing impressions takes on a significant routine role (Grove & Laforge, 2010).

Explaining IM in services sector, others have referred to the services environment as requiring 'performances' (Lovelock, 1981), while others have used the theatre metaphor for a range of services industries such as healthcare and restaurants (Grove & Laforge, 2010). Along these lines, it may be deduced that non-services work environments such as production workers, such as factory workers, and workers in oil and gas exploration etc. stand less to gain from impression management attempts as managing impressions does not constitute a significant aspect of their work environments. Additionally, production workers are less likely to come in

frequent contact with direct supervisors on a routine basis that may involve competition with coworkers. Of the manufacturing vs. services sector, the service sector involves more competition and chances of progression for the individual through IM, hence, they were the focus of the study.

Respondents were white collar (middle level management) employees in a number of service sector organizations who repeatedly come in contact with their coworkers and supervisors. Organizations included in the sample had 10-30 employees. Following Fernández-Muniz, Montes-Peón, and Vázquez-Ordás, (2014), in order to ensure generalizability, data were collected from a number of services sector organizations. Frequent contact of respondents with the supervisor and the comparison coworker was required for two reasons: 1. perception regarding the frequency of a coworker's behavior can be formed only if the two come into contact on a frequent basis. 2. It was required because formation of attributions requires the respondent have some contact with both the supervisor and coworker. Middle level management jobs were targeted because their nature of jobs often require a collaboration/cooperation on tasks, hence enabling contact between coworkers and because they report to a same supervisor. Executive level jobs were not considered because it was difficult to collect data concerning the executive's job performance from their supervisors.

3.2.8 Sampling Technique

Convenience sampling, a non probability technique was used for this study. A non-probability sampling technique is suggested for the purpose of testing presumed theoretical relationships (Hulland, Baumgartner, & Smith, 2017), without a bearing on the quality of the research (Memon et al., 2017). . Besides, using probability sampling (i.e. random or stratified) or calculating sample size based on probability sampling without the complete list of population under study, is problematic (Cooper & Schindler, 2011).

Because behavioral sciences researchers aim at theory generalizability as opposed to the generalizability of the sample (Highhouse & Gillespie, 2009), as long as the sample is taken from the population under consideration, the specific sampling

technique followed makes little difference (Vandenberg, 2009). Behavioral science researchers are interested in understanding behaviors and theoretical generalizability is related to elucidating sample behaviors (Highhouse & Gillespie, 2009), and the extent to which a causal link can be generalized across individuals (Sackett & Larson Jr, 1990) or across populations (Shadish, Cook, & Campbell, 2002).

The industries included in the sample belonged to the sectors finance (banks and insurance companies), education (college and universities), telecommunication (mobile companies), technology (software houses) and hospitality (hotels and restaurants). Four organizations were selected from each industry for a broader generalizability. Because the study sample included respondents from a number of service-sector industries, a representation of respondents from various industries was more important than of the number of respondents contacted within each organization. Furthermore, in line with earlier studies on impression management, the study assumed no differences in public-private organizations, no organization-wide differences, and no industry-wide differences (Abbas et al., 2019, Turnley et al., 2013). Additionally, earlier literature on attributions also does not provide a reason to assume differences in attributions across sector and industry . Hence, for the purpose of generalizability of the tested model, and of implications of the study, the study included a sample from a number of organizations in the services sector. The breakdown of industry alongwith the number of organizations is given in **Table 3.1.**

Table 3.1: Industry-Wise Breakdown of Included Sample

Industry	**Number of Organizations**	**% of the included sample**	**Sample/ responses**
Finance	2 banks + 2 insurance	22.65%	75
Education	2 college + 2 universities	21.75%	72
Telecom	4 mobile companies	19.33%	64
Technology	4 Technology firms (software houses)	18.73%	62
Hospitality	2 hotels + 2 restaurants	17.52%	58
Total	18	100%	331

3.3 Data Collection Procedure

Self-administered questionnaires were used for data collection because the response rate is highest for this data collection technique than others (Gasquet, Falissard, & Ravaud, 2001). Respondents were provided pen-and-paper (hard copies) of questionnaires. This enabled clarifying respondent queries during the data collection process, explaining the objective and domain of study to facilitate respondent understanding (Sekaran, 2006). Major advantages of the self-administered technique of data collection include enabling data collection in a short time span, it is a relatively economical method and respondents can fill questionnaires at their convenience without time constraints (Bryman, 2015; Sekaran, 2013).

Letters were addressed to heads of various organizations requesting cooperation for data collection. This helped collect required data after ensuring anonymity of the respondents and the organizations as respondents and their supervisors are generally reluctant to disclose information related in any way to their workplace. A cover letter briefly familiarizing respondents with the basic idea of the research was attached with the questionnaires. The cover letter ensured anonymity and confidentiality in addition to declaring the data would be used solely for research purposes. It also elaborated that the items in the questionnaire required responses to the best of their knowledge and that there were no correct/incorrect responses. These explanations helped diminish social desirability bias and evaluation apprehension among respondents (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

The challenge during data collection was that the data was to be collected in three waves, i.e., T1, T2 and T3. The variables of the study were assessed in these time lags as discussed in section 3.2.6, time horizon. To preserve anonymity and to match respondents' questionnaire for the three waves , a unique identifier code was assigned each time for data collection (Carmeli, Reiter-Palmon, & Ziv, 2010). Respondents were provided with a sheet wherein they mentioned their names alongside the code. At T3, supervisors were provided this list of respondents and their unique identifier from their organization, enabling the researcher to match the respondent's responses with their supervisor's evaluation of their job performance.

600 questionnaires were distributed each time, T1, T2 and T3. At T1, 427 out of 600 distributed questionnaires were returned (71%response rate). At T2, 394 were returned (66% response rate). Lastly, at T3, 411 were returned (69% response rate). The overall response rate of the study was 68%. After correlating the questionnaires it was revealed that only 360 respondents filled the questionnaires at all three time lags. Therefore the researcher proceeded with only these 360 cases for further analysis.

3.4 Instrumentation

Impression Management behaviors were measured using the scale by Wayne and Ferris, (1990). Others have used this or some variation of this scale to measure IM behaviors (Wayne & Liden, 1995). Items of the scale were adopted to reflect the envious coworker's use of these behaviors. Respondents were instructed to bring to their minds a coworker with whom they constantly compare themselves and who outperforms them on an organizational outcome for which they are also striving. In accordance with previous studies, the word 'envy' was not included in order to prevent biased responses. They were asked to respond to items based on the extent to which people at work generally perceive he/she engages in the stated behavior. Anchor points : 1= Never, to 5= Always.

The **supervisor-focused** scale consists of 7 items. Sample items: 'Take an interest in his/her immediate supervisor's personal life'.

The **self-focused IM** scale consists of 5 items. Sample Items: 'work hard when he/she knows results will be seen by the supervisor'.

The **job-focused IM** subscale consists of 12 items. Sample Item:' Disagree with his/her supervisor on major issues' and 'create an impression that he/she is good person to the supervisor'.

Attributions of supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness: Literature has acknowledged a variety of ways in measuring attributions. Scholars have emphasized that the correct way to measure attributions is to measure dispositional and

situational attributions on separate scales and include both in reports to enable clear conclusions (Solomon, 1978). Most researchers measure attributions by directly asking respondents to indicate their extent of agreement with statements formulated to indicate causal attributions with their intended objective of study.

In accordance with the method employed previously for measuring attributions (Allen & Rush, 1998), we measured attributions by asking respondents to indicate, for each set of IM behaviors, the degree to which the behaviors were caused by the supervisor's lack of ability to tell underlying motives from people's behavior (Silvera et al., 2001). Anchor points were: 1=Never, 5= Always. For the set of behaviors mentioned above, indicate the extent to which you believe that the above mentioned behaviors were caused by the supervisor's inability to tell people's motives from their behavior'. Attributions have been measured in similar manner in previous studies (Khan et al., 2014; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004).

Attributions of the coworker's incompetence: In accordance with the method employed previously for measuring perceived competence (Kim, Dirks, Cooper, & Ferrin, 2006), we measured competence attributions by asking respondents to respond on the three-item scale. Sample item was "X is very capable of performing his/her job". Anchoring points: (1=Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree).

In accordance with previous studies (Khan et al., 2014), the word 'envy' was not included in the scales to prevent biased responses.

Counterproductive workplace behavior: Counterproductive workplace behavior was assessed on the scale developed by (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007). The scale has been used for envier's responses (Khan et al., 2014). Respondents were asked the degree to which each statement represented their behaviors towards the comparison person (X). Sample items included: 'Interfere with X's performance'. Anchoring points: (1= Not representative at all, 5= Very Representative). High scores indicated higher incidence of counterproductive behavior towards the envied other. Self-reports of counterproductive behavior were considered instead of supervisory reports because such behavior is mostly performed in the absence of the supervisor and/or without the supervisor's knowledge in order to prevent repercussions(Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Fox & Spector, 1999).

Therefore, self-reports are likely to generate more reliable responses as opposed to supervisory-reports. Self-reports are also viable alternatives to other-reports of CWB (Berry, Carpenter, & Barratt, 2012). Numerous previous studies consider self-reports of counterproductive behavior (e.g. Bolton, Becker, & Barber, 2010; Fox, Spector, Goh, Bruursema, & Kessler, 2012; Khan, Quratulain, & Crawshaw, 2013; Khan et al., 2014).

Job performance: The 7-item job performance scale (Williams & Anderson, 2001) was used to assess job performance. The scale has been reliably used as a measure of performance (Allen & Rush, 1998;Bommer, Dierdorff, & Rubin, 2007) Sample item: 'Adequately completes assigned duties'. Supervisors will be asked to rate how subordinates performed on given indicators of performance. Anchor points were 5 strongly disagree and 1, strongly agree.

Attributional Style: Attributional Style was measured using the OASQ (Organizational Attributional Style Questionnaire) (Kent & Martinko,1995; Campbell & Martinko, 1998). Respondents were asked to consider negative and positive workplace scenarios and indicate the cause for each on the dimension of causality. Respondents were asked to respond to 3 hypothetical positive and 3 hypothetical negative scenarios. Sample items include: 'You fail to receive a promotion for a long time' and 'You receive almost no raise compared to others in your department'. Respondents indicated to what extent they believed "To what extent is this caused by you (1) or circumstances and others (5)?" An aggregate of positive and negative scenarios gives a self-serving attributional style after reverse-coding for positive scenario items (Harvey & Martinko, 2009). High external scores for negative scenarios and high internal scores for positive scenarios indicated a self-serving attributional style.

Demographics: ANOVA was performed before hypothesis testing and results revealed that $p>0.05$ for all demographic variables. The controls for which data was sought included gender, age, tenure. However, the pilot results showed no role of these variables and the correlation matrix for the complete sample showed similar results. Hence, control variables were not included in the final hypotheses testing.

Table 3.2: Instrumentation Summary

Study variable	Definition	Number of items	Source of scale used
Co-workers Supervisor-focused IM	The use of favor-doing and ingratiation behaviors towards one's supervisor (Wayne & Ferris, 1990).	7 items	Wayne & Ferris, 1990
Co-workers Self-focused IM	The use of self-presentation behaviors intended to reflect oneself as a polite and likable individual at work (Wayne & Ferris, 1990)	5 items	Wayne & Ferris, 1990
Co-workers Job-focused IM	The use of a set of behaviors involving creating an impression of competence and superior job performance (Wayne & Ferris, 1990).	12 items	Wayne & Ferris, 1990
Attributions of supervisor's social perceptiveness	The extent to which an individual believes the supervisor lacks the perceptual ability to detect people's motives behind their behavior (Silvera et al., 2001).	3 items	Silvera et al., 2001

Continued Table: 3.2 Instrumentation Summary

Coworker incompetence attributions	The degree to which an individual believes that the coworker in question is incapable of performing their job well.	3 items	Kim et al., 2006
Respondent's Supervisor-focused Tactics	The extent to which an individual behaves in a favorable and likable manner towards their supervisor (Wayne & Ferris, 1990).	7 items	Wayne & Ferris, 1990
Counterproductive work behaviors	The frequency with which an employee engages in behaviors harmful to their organization and/or its members	12 items	Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007)
Job Performance	The extent to which an employee performs their job responsibilities effectively (Allen & Rush, 1998).	7 items	Williams & Anderson, 2001
Self-serving attributional style.	The extent to which an individual is likely to make self-serving attributions involving internal attributions for favorable outcomes and external attributions for unfavorable outcomes (Cambell & Martinko, 1998)	6	Kent & Martinko, 1995

3.5 Ethical Considerations

For the purpose of ensuring compliance with research ethics, the study was conducted with willful consent of all respondents. The cover letter of the questionnaire ensured respondents of their complete anonymity and confidentiality. Furthermore, they were also ensured that no data provided for the purpose of the study would be used elsewhere or for non-research purposes. The cover letter also clearly mentioned that their responses would not, in any way, be associated with their employing organizations. Additionally, the scales used in the study did not involve any copyright infringement issues.

3.6 Data Analysis

The following softwares were employed for analysis of data:

- SPSS : Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0 Version).
- Patrial Least Square (PLS 3.2.7).

For all results involving testing the measurement (validity) and structural models (hypotheses), results were obtained through Smart PLS. For other information regarding frequencies, demographics and correlation etc., SPSS was used.

3.6.1 The Use of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

SEM is currently considered most reliable and efficient statistical technique available to test complex moderating or mediating models (Preacher, Rucker, & Hayes, 2007). Additionally, it enables distinguishing between various paths and models to enable an analysis of multiple models to compare which one fits the model best (Preacher & Hayes, 2008). This enables the researcher's better interpretation of the results as to which which path more appropirately fits the model and explains the theory best. The two major approaches within SEM, ie., the co-variance based approach (CB-SEM) and variance based approach (PLS-SEM), both have distinct fundamental statistical presumptions (Hair, Gabriel, & Patel, 2014).

3.6.2 The Choice between CB-SEM and PLS-SEM

Co-variance based SEM (CB-SEM) and variance based SEM are the two widely accepted second generation techniques. Of these, PLS-SEM is the most widely used. Both are widely accepted second generation techniques (Avkiran, 2017). CB-SEM is mainly used in order to test established relationships between variables or for a comparison between theories, while PLS-SEM is used to test theoretical relationships that are not well-established (Hair, Matthews, Matthews, & Sarstedt, 2017). PLS-SEM is more bent towards prediction and should be used for such hypothesized models (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016) is replication of theoretically established covariance matrices(Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011). Additionally, when normality of data presents a problem, PLS-SEM should be used as it does not necessitate the normality of data for analysis whereas CB-SEM requires the data to be normally distributed. (Hair et al., 2017). Because prior knowledge is limited among the relationships under study, PLS-SEM is appropriate for it because it is recommended to be used when the preceding knowledge on structural model relationships is limited (Hair et al., 2014).

3.6.3 Partial Least Squares

For approximating causal and empirical models, PLS-SEM is referred to as the "silver bullet" (Hair et al., 2011). Data normality is not a requirement of PLS-SEM, an assumption almost impossible to meet when dealing with primary data (Reinartz, Haenlein, & Henseler, 2009). Additionally, its requirements regarding the sample size are somewhat flexible as it can give fine results with small sample sizes, although it is believed a small sample size itself is not ample justification for the use of PLS (Reinartz et al., 2009). The reason for using PLS-SEM is also that the proposed model is less developed theoretically. This is the basic guideline or requirement for choosing PLS-SEM (Henseler et al., 2016). The primary objective of study is understanding if an envier's reactions to a coworker's impression management behaviors can be explained by his attributions regarding the supervisor and the envied actor. Little is known about the specific attributions a coworker's

impression management behavior elicits and reactions to a coworker's impression management behavior has only been theoretically proposed as yet (Turnley et al., 2013).

3.7 Pilot Study

In order to establish reliability of the scales, a pilot study was conducted (Bryman, 2015). Data for the pilot study were conducted in July 2017. Some questionnaires were distributed among respondents to analyze if they were understandable. Thereafter, the questionnaire was modified to include a comparison person who would be named as "X" for the purpose of the study in order to make it easier to understand. This was done in line with previous studies that involved comparisons with another (Khan et al., 2014). Data for the pilot study were collected from 49 respondents, out of which 39 (79.60%) were male and 10 (20.40%) were female. Most respondents 30 (61.20%) were between 20-30 years old, while 7 (14.30%) were 41-50 years old. In terms of tenure, maximum number of respondents 39(79.60%) had a tenure of 0-5 years, while the least respondents 1 (2.0%) had 16-20 years of organizational tenure. Complete demographic information of respondents is provided in **Table 3.2**.

Table 3.3: Pilot Study Demographics

Demographic Information	Frequency (N=49)	Percentage
Gender		
Male	39	79.60%
Female	10	20.40%
Age		
20-30 years	30	61.20%
31-40 years	12	24.50%
41-50 years	7	14.30%
51-60 years	0	0
Above 60	0	0
Tenure		
0-5 years	39	79.60%
6-10 years	6	12.20%
11-15 years	3	6.10%
16-20 years	1	2.00%
Over 20 years	0	0

In order to test scale reliability, Cronbach Alpha values of were assessed using SPSS. **Table 3.3** provides the alpha values of the constructs along with guidelines for acceptability according to literature (Gliem & Gliem 2003; George & Mallery, 2003, p.231). The Alpha values of all constructs in the table below show that all the instruments are reliable and internally consistent.

Table 3.4: Cronbach's Alpha of Constructs in the Pilot Study

Construct	**Mean**	**Cronbach Alpha**	**Guidelines for Acceptability**
Coworkers Supervisor-focused IM	3.514	0.89	Good
Job-focused IM	4.25	0.922	Good
Self-focused IM	3.473	0.764	Acceptable
Supervisor Attributions	3.82	0.88	Good
Coworker Attributions	3.433	0.825	Good
Respondents Supervisor-focused Tactics	3.079	0.866	Good
Counterproductive Behavior	4.263	0.88	Good
Job Performance	3.843	0.94	Good
Attributional Style	3.48	0.823	Good

3.8 Data Screening

The 360 responses were scrutinized during data entry process to identify incomplete data. 18 of the 360 responses were found to be invalid or incomplete. The remaining 342 responses were further screened for missing values, multicollinearity issues, and common method bias.

Missing Values: To check for potential missing values, the "Frequencies" tab in the "Descriptive Statistics" tab under the "Analyze" option was employed. The results of the Frequencies table showed there more than a few missing values for 11

respondents. These cases were deleted and the researcher continued with further analysis on 331 cases.

Multicollinearity: Tolerance statistics showed values 0.71 (job-focused impression management), 0.75 (supervisor focused impression management), 0.68 (supervisor attributions) and 0.76 (coworker attributions), which is acceptable as it exceeds the minimum threshold value of 0.20 (Menard, 1995). In case of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) the values ranged from 1.31 to 1.47, these values are also below the required threshold value of 3.3 (Kock & Lynn, 2012). The results of both these tests show there are no multicollinearity issues for this data set.

Common Method Bias: Harman's single factor test was employed to check for biasness in the data. Common method bias exists if the extracted single factor accounts for majority of the variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). That factor should not contribute to more than 50% variance in order to eliminate concerns of common method bias (Riley, Mohr, & Waddimba, 2017). Results of un-rotated component analysis showed that the single factor accounted for only 20.15% of the variance. Therefore common method bias was ruled out.

3.9 Demographic Information

Table 3.4 shows demographic information of the respondents. The respondents included 233 males and 98 females. These made up 70.4% and 29.6% of the total respondents respectively. 312 respondents had male supervisors and 19 had female supervisors. These made up 94.3% and 5.7% respectively.

170 respondents were between 20-30 years of age (51.4%), 122 were between 31-40 years (36.9%), 34 were between 41-50 years (10.3%) and 5 respondents were between 51-60 years (1.5%). Frequency details show that 71 (21.5%) respondents had an intermediate level of education, 131 (39.6%) were graduates, 99 (29.9%) had a 16 year degree, 27 (8.2%) had 18 years of education and 3 (0.9%) were PhDs.

Table 3.5: Respondent Demographics

Demographic	**Frequency (N=331)**	**Percentage**
Gender		
Male	233	70.40%
Female	98	29.60%
Age		
20-30 years	170	51.40%
31-40 years	122	36.90%
41-50 years	34	10.30%
51-60 years	5	1.50%
Education		
Intermediate	71	21.50%
Graduate	131	39.60%
Masters (16 year education)	99	29.90%
MS (18 year education)	27	8.20%
PhD	3	0.90%
Supervisor		
Supervisor Gender		
Female	19	5.70%
Male	312	94.30%

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Results

This chapter describes the steps followed in analysis of the data, as well as the associated results. The two-steps process for analyzing data in PLS-SEM using Smart PLS was employed. This included assessing the requirements of measurement model for assessing discriminant and convergent validity. It uses criteria such as factor loadings, HTMT ratios, Fornell and Larcker Criteria, etc. for establishing the measurement tool's reliability and validity. The second step in the analysis involved assessing the structural model. Smart PLS offers the advantage that this structural model does not base on conservative criteria such as that of data normality, and assesses complex models simultaneously as a whole.

4.1 Means, Standard Deviation and Correlation

Table 4.1 shows means, standard deviations and correlations. It shows that supervisor attributions were positively correlated with coworker's supervisor-focused IM (r=.270, p<.001), job-focused IM (r=.154, p<.001) and self-focused IM (r=.211, p<.001). Coworker attributions were positively correlated with coworker's supervisor-focused IM (r=.468, p<.001), job-focused IM (r=.563, p<.001) and self-focused IM (r=.304, p<.001). The respondent's supervisor focused IM was significantly correlated with coworker job-focused IM (r=.455, p<.001), supervisor-focused IM (r=.140, p<.05), self-focused IM (r=.177, p<.001), coworker attributions (r=.475, p<.001) and supervisor attributions (r=.244, p<.001).

Table 4.1: Correlations, Means, Standard Deviations

	Mean	SD	Education	Gender	Age	SPFIM	JFIM	SFIM	Sup Att	Cow Att	SPFIM R	CWB	JP
Education	2.64	1.026	1										
Gender	1.42	0.496	0.068	1									
Age	1.65	0.715	-0.16	0.061	1								
SPFIM	3.75	0.647	0.046	0.018	-0.008	1							
JFIM	3.98	0.554	0.085	0.046	0.062	.399**	1						
SFIM	3.71	0.622	-0.099	-0.028	0.117	.239**	.200**	1					
Sup Att	3.64	0.703	0.128	-0.115	0.137	.270**	.154**	.211**	1				
Cow Att	3.98	0.792	.176*	0.117	0.083	.468**	.536**	.304**	.226**	1			
SPFIM R	3.57	0.618	0.092	-0.021	0.088	.455**	.140*	.177**	.475**	.244**	1		
CWB	3.76	0.603	0.109	0.128	-0.069	.437**	.363**	.242**	.148**	.447**	.256**	1	
JP	2.45	0.926	-.171*	0.044	-0.082	-.244**	-.283**	-.209**	-.111*	-.325**	-.270**	-.214**	1
AS	3.15	0.849	0.001	-0.009	-0.028	-0.061	-0.085	-.149**	-.177**	-0.097	0.006	-0.046	-.220**

Note: **p $<$ 0.001, *p $<$ 0.05.

SPFIM: Supervisor focused Impression Management; JFIM: Job-focused Impression Management; SFIM: Self-focused Impression Management; Cow Att: Attributions of co-worker incompetence; Sup Att: Attributions of Supervisor's Social Perceptiveness; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Management by the envier; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job Performance; AS: Attributional Style.

Counterproductive behavior towards the coworker was significantly correlated with coworker's job-focused IM (r=.437, p<.001), supervisor-focused IM (r=.363, p<.001), self-focused IM (r=.242, p<.001), coworker attributions (r=.447, p<.001) and supervisor attributions (r=.148, p<.001). Job performance was negatively correlated with the coworker's supervisor -focused IM (r=-.244, p<.001), job-focused IM (r=-.283, p<.001), self-focused IM (r=-.209, p<.001), supervisor attributions (r =-.111, p<.05) and coworker attributions (r=-.325, p<.05).

Self-serving attributional style was negatively correlated with job performance (r=-.220, p<.001) and supervisor attributions (r=-.177, p<.001).The demographic variables including respondent age, gender, tenure, as well as supervisor gender were not significantly correlated with any of the variables. This eliminated the need to control these variables in subsequent analyses for hypothesis testing.

4.2 Data Normality

Skewness and Kurtosis values are generally used to assess a normal distribution of the data set (Bai & Ng., 2005). Highly skewed data (data distribution when the data curve is distorted either to the left or right), indicates deviation of the data set from a normal distribution. Likewise, heavy tailed distribution also shows deviation from the normal distribution (kurtosis). For social sciences, scholars suggest threshold values of +/- 7 for kurtosis and +/-2 for skewness (Hair et al., 2010). For the current study, all variables were within the acceptable range.

Coworker's supervisor-focused IM had a skewness of -1.002 and kurtosis of 1.449. Coworker's Job-focused IM had a skewness of -.636 and kurtosis of 1.577. Coworker's self-focused IM had a skewness of -.819, and kurtosis of 1.262. Job performance had a skewness of -.07 and kurtosis of 0.283. CWB had a skewness of -1.107 and a kurtosis of 3.415. Respondent's supervisor-focused IM had a skewness of -1.188 and kurtosis of 2.158. Attributional style had skewness of -.438 and kurtosis of .412. These values indicate that the data were within acceptable threshold of skewness and kurtosis.

4.3 Measurement Model

Before assessing the structural model for hypotheses testing, the measurement model was assessed in order to establish the validity and reliability of the relationship between latent variables and their respective measured variables (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2016). This was done in line with the standard recommended two-step analytical approach (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The measurement model consisted of 9 constructs. These constructs consisted of items ranging from 3 to 12. Measurement model assessment involved establishing the scale item's internal consistency reliability through composite reliability, individual indicator reliability, and average variance extracted in order to establish convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

4.3.1 Convergent Validity

Convergent validity was established by assessing the items' outer loadings, composite reliability and average variance extracted.

4.3.1.1 Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

Composite reliability is a means to ensure internal consistency of items of a construct. Higher values indicate that the items belong together in meaning and extent. Traditionally, Cronbach Alpha was used to establish internal consistency. However, recent literature recommends replacing it with composite reliability (Mcneish, 2017; Rasoolimanesh, Jaafar, Kock, & Ramayah, 2015). Measured variables were internally consistent as their composite reliability exceeded recommended threshold of 0.7 (Hair et al., 2016). Table summarizes composite reliabilities of the measured items. Supervisor- focused, job- focused and self -focused impression management had composite reliabilities of 0.907, 0.911 and 0.881. Supervisor attributions and coworker attributions had composite reliabilities of 0.864 and 0.925. Of the dependent variables, Supervisor-focused impression management (respondent) had a composite reliability of 0.88, counterproductive behavior had a composite reliability of 0.938 and job performance had a composite reliability of

0.938. Attributional style had a composite reliability of 0.844.

Table 4.2 shows that the Cronbach's alpha is above the 0.7 threshold for all scales. Average Variance Extracted values for all scales, using the retained items after deleting those with low outer loadings are above the 0.5 threshold. Average variance extracted establishes convergent validity on the construct level. These values are the mean values of the squared loadings of the indicators.

AVE values of 0.50 indicates that more than half of the variance of the indicators is explained by the construct. Composite reliability of all scales is above the 0.7 threshold. The AVE of JFIM was lower than the threshold 0.5 at 0.475. Upon inspecting the item loadings, it showed that outer loadings of some JFIM items were below the threshold 0.7. I deleted them one by one. Upon deleting JFIM 10 which had a loading of 0.607, the AVE improved to 0.489, still below the AVE required threshold. Upon deleting JFIM12 which had a loading of 0.581, the AVE improved to 0.507. Although some JFIM items still showed outer loadings below 0.7, they were retained as AVE of 0.507 and composite reliability of 0.911 was above the required threshold.

Similarly, Attributional style initially had an AVE of 0.493. Item loadings showed that AS2 loaded at 0.577. It was eliminated, which improved the AVE and Composite Reliability above the required thresholds.

TABLE 4.2: Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted

	Cronbach's Alpha	**Composite Reliability**	**Average Variance Extracted (AVE)**
Attributional Style	0.773	0.844	0.533
Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.928	0.938	0.557
Coworker Attributions	0.877	0.925	0.803
Job-focused IM	0.891	0.911	0.507
Job Performance	0.923	0.938	0.686
Self-focused IM	0.83	0.881	0.596
Supervisor Attributions	0.762	0.864	0.68
Supervisor Focused IM	0.881	0.907	0.582
Supervisor Focused IM Respondent	0.835	0.88	0.554

Although some items of AS still had loadings below 0.7, they were retained because the AVE and CR met threshold requirements.

The item loadings of the items retained in the model are given in table 4.3 and the Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability, and Average Variance Extracted values are given in **Table 4.2**.

4.3.1.2 Indicator Reliability

Table 4.3 shows item loadings. As a rule of thumb, item loadings should be 0.7 or higher (Kock, 2011). High loadings indicate that "the associated indicators have much in common, which is captured by the constructs" (Hair et al., 2014, p. 102). Items with loadings between 0.40- 0.7 should be considered for removal only if doing so increases the composite reliability or Average Variance Extracted above the threshold value (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2016). Items with low loadings may also be retained based on their contribution to content validity, and items with loadings below 0.40 are to be eliminated always.

Table 4.3: Item Loadings

Variables	**Items**	**Loadings**
Supervisor-focused Impression Management	SPFIM1	0.772
	SPFIM2	0.829
	SPFIM3	0.716
	SPFIM4	0.759
	SPFIM5	0.746
	SPFIM6	0.734
	SPFIM7	0.777
Job-focused Impression Management	JFIM1	0.765
	JFIM2	0.747
	JFIM3	0.817
	JFIM4	0.754
	JFIM5	0.674
	JFIM6	0.692
	JFIM7	0.734
	JFIM8	0.588
	JFIM9	0.678
	JFIM11	0.645
Self-focused Impression Management	SFIM1	0.788

	SFIM2	0.771
	SFIM3	0.717
	SFIM4	0.799
	SFIM5	0.783
Supervisor Attributions	SupAtt1	0.853
	SupAtt2	0.853
	SupAtt3	0.853
Attributions of Co-worker Incompetence	CowAtt1	0.906
	CowAtt2	0.869
	CowAtt3	0.913
Supervisor-focused Impression Management (Respondent)	SPFIM R1	0.621
	SPFIM R2	0.618
	SPFIM R3	0.836
	SPFIM R4	0.739
	SPFIM R6	0.793
	SPFIM R7	0.827
Counterproductive Work Behavior	CWB1	0.782
	CWB2	0.749
	CWB3	0.742
	CWB4	0.762
	CWB5	0.744
	CWB6	0.747
	CWB7	0.722
	CWB8	0.747
	CWB9	0.76
	CWB10	0.741
	CWB11	0.76
	CWB12	0.702
Job Performance	JP1	0.885
	JP2	0.861
	JP3	0.868
	JP4	0.827
	JP5	0.774
	JP6	0.861
	JP7	0.707
Attributional Style	AS1	0.849
	AS3	0.812
	AS4	0.816
	AS5	0.407
	AS6	0.672

4.3.2 Discriminant Validity

In order to confirm that latent variables measure different constructs and can be distinguished as such, we assessed discriminant validity using Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait- Monotrait ratio.

4.3.2.1 Fornell-Larcker Criterion

This criterion is said to have been met when the square root of AVE for all constructs is greater than the correlations among all constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2016; Kock, 2015). **Table 4.4** shows that the square roots of AVE for all constructs (indicated on the diagonals) are greater than the values within the correlation matrix, satisfying the Fornell-Larcker criterion.

4.3.2.2 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) is considered to be a more reliable method and is a relatively recent method for establishing discriminant validity (Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). Although some suggest maximum value of 0.9 (Gold & Malhotra, 2001), many suggest that the values must be below the 0.85 threshold. (Hair et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2015). **Table 4.5** shows results of the HTMT. It shows that all values are below the 0.85 threshold, establishing discriminant validity for the measurement model.

These results of the measurement model establish acceptable convergent and discriminant validity for the study variables, allowing us to proceed with hypotheses testing. The snapshot of the measurement model from the Smart PLS software is attached in the appendix section.

Table 4.4: Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	AS	CWB	CowAtt	JFIM*AS	JFIM	JP	SFIM	SupAtt	SPFIM	SPFIM R
AS	0.73									
CWB	0.06	0.747								
CowAtt	0.024	0.449	0.896							
JFIM	-0.025	0.365	0.538	-0.166	0.712					
JP	-0.065	-0.216	-0.328	0.07	-0.304	0.828				
SFIM	0.128	0.245	0.304	-0.07	0.202	-0.211	0.772			
SupAtt	0.217	0.149	0.225	0.024	0.131	-0.115	0.211	0.825		
SPFIM	0.067	0.444	0.475	-0.131	0.412	-0.252	0.246	0.276	0.763	
SPFIM R	0.043	0.252	0.251	-0.059	0.159	-0.265	0.17	0.464	0.444	0.744

Values on the Diagonals: Square Root of AVE.

SPFIM: Supervisor focused Impression Management; JFIM: Job-focused Impression Management; SFIM: Self-focused Impression Management; Cow Att: Coworker Attributions; Sup Att: Supervisor Attributions; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Management Respondent; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job Performance; AS: Attributional Style.

Table 4.5: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio

	AS	**CWB**	**CowAtt**	**JFIM*AS**	**JFIM**	**JP**	**SFIM*AS**	**SPFIM*AS**	**SFIM**	**SPFIM**	**SPFIM R**
AS											
CWB	0.083										
CowAtt	0.079	0.494									
JFIM*AS	0.059	0.047	0.131								
JFIM	0.098	0.39	0.596	0.184							
JP	0.122	0.232	0.361	0.076	0.324						
SFIM*AS	0.179	0.052	0.105	0.254	0.09	0.044					
SPFIM*AS	0.15	0.068	0.024	0.461	0.147	0.053	0.221				
SFIM	0.164	0.276	0.357	0.085	0.234	0.238	0.051	0.02			
SupAtt	0.268	0.175	0.275	0.044	0.165	0.137	0.034	0.089	0.264		
SPFIM	0.131	0.48	0.528	0.136	0.439	0.266	0.053	0.06	0.278	0.328	
SPFIM R	0.094	0.286	0.298	0.07	0.181	0.308	0.099	0.078	0.203	0.572	0.513

SPFIM: Supervisor focused Impression Management; JFIM: Job-focused Impression Management; SFIM: Self-focused Impression Management; Cow Att: Coworker Attributions; Sup Att: Supervisor Attributions; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Management Respondent; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job Performance; AS: Attributional Style.

4.4 Structural Model

The validity of structural model was established by assessing path coefficients (β), and coefficient of determination (R^2) using bootstrapping (Hair et al., 2016). Furthermore, f^2, and Q^2 values were also reported (Kaufmann & Gaeckler, 2015). The mediation hypotheses were tested following previous recommendations (Hayes, 2009; Preacher et al., 2007). Change in R^2 is represented by f^2 in case of effect size (Hair et al., 2014). The criteria for effect size is: > 0.35 substantial, > 0.15 moderate and 0.02 weak (Chin, 2010; Cohen, 1988).

4.4.1 Testing Hypotheses for Direct Relationships

Table 4.6 shows results for direct hypotheses. Hypothesis 1 predicted that supervisor focused IM by a coworker would be associated with similar behavior by the observing coworker. Results confirm this hypothesis β=0.342 (t=5.834, $p < 0.001$) so hypothesis 1 was accepted. Hypotheses 2a, 2b and 2c predicted that supervisor-focused, self-focused and job-focused IM by the high performing coworker would lead to the envier's counterproductive work behavior towards them. Hypothesis 2a was accepted β=0.264 (t=3.107, $p < 0.001$), whereas 2b and 2c were not supported β=0.085 (t=1.528, n.s.); β = 0.11 (t=1.470, n.s.). Hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c predicted that supervisor-focused IM, self-focused IM and job-focused IM by the coworker would reduce the observer's job performance. Results confirmed hypothesis 3b: β=-0.106 (t= 1.774, $p < 0.05$), and 3c: β=-0.157 (t=1.942, $p < 0.05$) whereas hypothesis 3a: β=-0.076 (t=1.470, n.s.) was not supported.
Hypothesis 4 predicted that supervisor-focused IM by the high performing coworker would be positively associated with the envier's attribution that the supervisor lacks social perceptual ability. This hypothesis was confirmed by the results β=0.263 (t=4.023, $p < 0.001$). Hypotheses 5a, 5b and 5c predicted that supervisor-focused IM, self-focused IM and job-focused IM by the coworker would lead to attributions of their incompetence. The data confirmed the hypothesis 5a: β=0.274 (t=4.092, $p < 0.001$), 5b β=0.153 (t=2.948, $p < 0.001$) and 5c β=0.394 (t=6.605, $p < 0.001$).

Hypotheses 6a, and 6b predicted that supervisor attributions would lead to supervisor -focused IM and reduced job performance. Results supported 6a β=0.369 (t=5.787, $p < 0.001$) but not 6b β=-0.012 (t=0.058, p=n.s.). 6c and 6d predicted relationship between supervisor and coworker attributions and the envier's outcomes. Hypothesis 6a and 6b predicted that attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness would be positively associated with the supervisor-focused IM and negatively with job performance. Results confirm hypothesis 6a β=0.369 (t=5.787, $p < 0.001$), but not 6b β=-0.012 (t=0.213, p= n.s.). Hypotheses 6c and 6d predicted that coworker attributions would lead to CWB towards the coworker and reduced performance. Results support both 6c β=0.239 (t=3.214, $p < 0.001$)and 6d β=-0.172 (t=2.397, $p < 0.05$).

Assessing the coefficient of determination R^2, the f^2 effect size and predictive Relevance Q^2 are the next steps in evaluating the structural model. This coefficient of determination is the exogenous variables' combined effect on the endogenous variable. With possible values from 0 to 1, higher values of R^2 indicate greater predictive accuracy. It *(R^2)* explains the combined variance in the dependent variable caused by independent variables. If $R^2 > 0.26$, the explained variance is considered substantial whereas if it is >0.13, it is considered moderate. R^2 of .02 is weak (Cohen, 1988). **Table 4.8** shows the combined variance in CWB caused by the independent variables is 0.287 which is substantial. R^2 for job performance is 0.146 which is moderate. R^2 for SPFIM R is 0.323 which is substantial. R^2 for coworker attribution is substantial at 0.39. R^2 for Sup Att is 0.116 which is moderate.

Table 4.6: Results for Direct Hypotheses

Hypotheses	**Beta**	**St Dev**	**T**	**Bias corrected Confidence Interval**		**p**	**Decision**
				5.00%	95.00%		
Coworker Attributions → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.239	0.074	3.142	0.104	0.353	0.001	Accepted
Coworker Attributions → Job Performance	-0.172	0.075	2.397	-0.29	-0.046	0.011	Accepted
JFIM*AS → Coworker Attributions	-0.02	0.066	0.308	-0.128	0.083	0.379	Not Accepted
Job-focused IM → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.11	0.071	1.47	-0.025	0.205	0.061	Not Accepted
Job-focused IM → Coworker Attributions	0.394	0.061	6.605	0.298	0.491	0.000	Accepted
Job-focused IM → Job Performance	-0.157	0.082	1.942	-0.277	-0.011	0.029	Accepted
SFIM*AS → Coworker Attributions	-0.066	0.051	1.308	-0.152	0.015	0.096	Not Accepted
SPFIM*AS → Supervisor Attributions	-0.013	0.06	0.219	-0.119	0.087	0.413	Not Accepted
SPFIM*AS2 → Coworker Attributions	0.063	0.057	1.101	-0.035	0.153	0.136	Not Accepted
Self-focused IM → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.085	0.056	1.528	-0.028	0.164	0.064	Not Accepted
Self-focused IM → Coworker Attributions	0.153	0.052	2.948	0.058	0.23	0.002	Accepted
Self-focused IM → Job Performance	-0.106	0.059	1.774	-0.214	-0.015	0.038	Accepted

Continued: 4.6 Results for Direct Hypotheses

Hypotheses	**Beta**	**St Dev**	**T**	**Bias corrected Confidence Interval**		**p**	**Decision**
				5%	**95%**		
Supervisor Attributions → Job Performance	-0.012	0.058	0.213	-0.109	0.082	0.416	Not Accepted
Supervisor Attributions → Supervisor Focused IM Respondent	0.369	0.064	5.998	0.271	0.474	0.000	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.264	0.259	3.107	0.122	0.403	0.001	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Coworker Attributions	0.274	0.055	4.092	0.186	0.364	0.000	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Job Performance	-0.076	0.066	1.47	-0.186	-0.031	0.125	Not Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Supervisor Attributions	0.263	0.065	4.092	0.145	0.357	0.000	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Supervisor Focused IM Respondent	0.342	0.059	5.834	0.238	0.428	0.000	Accepted

*Note: **p < 0.001, *p < 0.05.*

SPFIM: Supervisor focused Impression Management; JFIM: Job-focused Impression Management; SFIM: Self-focused Impression Management; Sup Att: Attributions of Supervisor's social perceptiveness; Cow Att: Attributions of co-worker incompetence; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Mangement by the envier; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job performance.

For f^2 effect size, a value of 0.02 represents small effect size, a value of 0.15 represents medium effect size and a value of 0.35 represents a large effect size of the exogenous variable. **Table 4.8** shows effect sizes which range from small to large for various relationships.

Table 4.7 also shows predictive relevance *(Q^2)*. It is also measured using the blindfolding procedure in Smart-PLS. It validates that not only are the observed relationships statistically relevant but they also have practical relevance. It is only applied on the endogenous constructs. In order to achieve predictive relevance , the Q^2 value of endogenous constructs must be greater than 0. If less than 0, there is no predictive relevance (Chin, 2010; Hair et al., 2016). The predictive relevance Q^2 of endogenous variables are all above zero, shown in table 4.7.

TABLE 4.7: Effect Size (f^2), Coefficient of Determination (R^2) and Predictive Relevance (Q^2)

Relationships	$\boldsymbol{f^2}$	**Effect Size Rating**	$\boldsymbol{R^2}$	$\boldsymbol{Q^2}$
Cow Att → CWB	0.049	Small to medium	0.145	
JFIM → CWB	0.011	Small		
SFIM → CWB	0.009	Small		
SPFIM → CWB	0.071	Small to medium		
SPFIM → JP	0.005	Small	0.147	0.091
JFIM → JP	0.02	Medium to large		
SFIM → JP	0.012	Small		
Cow Att → JP	0.021	Small		
Sup Att → SPFIM R	0.186	Medium to large	0.323	0.163
SPFIM → SPFIM R	0.159	Medium to large		
JFIM → Cow Att	0.204	Medium to large		
SFIM → Cow Att	0.037	Small to medium	0.397	0.289
SPFIM → Cow Att	0.098	Small to medium		
SPFIM → Sup Att	0.078	Small to medium	0.116	0.064

SPFIM: Supervisor focused Impression Management; JFIM: Job-focused Impression Management; SFIM: Self-focused Impression Management; Cow Att: Attributions of co-worker incompetence; Sup Att: Attributions of Supervisor's Social Perceptiveness; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Management by the envier; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job Performance; AS: Attributional Style.

4.4.2 Testing Mediation Hypotheses

Mediation was tested through the Preacher and Hayes' indirect approach using Smart PLS 3. **Table 4.8** shows results for mediation hypotheses 7a-7h. The table shows that attributions of supervisor's social perceptiveness mediate the relationship between the co-worker's supervisor focused impression management and similar behavior by the envier, providing support for hypothesis 7a (β=0.097; t=3.605, p<0.05). The upper and lower confidence interval also did not contain zero. However, no support was found for hypothesis 7b that predicted supervisor attributions would mediate the relationship between coworker's supervisor focused IM and the their job performance (β=-0.003; t=0.209, p= n.s.). The upper and lower confidence interval for these results contained zero. Coworker attributions mediated the relationship between JFIM (β=0.094 ; t= 3.061, p< 0.001), SFIM (β=0.036; t=1.863, p<0.05) and SPFIM (β=0.065; t=2.638, p<0.01) and counterproductive work behavior. The upper and lower confidence intervals also did not contain zero for result. Therefore, hypotheses 7c, 7d and 7e were accepted. Coworker attributions also mediated the relationship between JFIM (β=-0.026 ; t=2.052, p<0.05), SFIM (β=-0.068; t=1.828, p<0.01) and SPFIM (β=-0.047; t=2.026, p<0.01) and job performance. The upper and lower confidence intervals also did not contain zero for any of these results. Therefore, hypotheses 7f, 7g and 7h were accepted.

4.4.3 Testing Moderation Hypotheses

Table 4.6 also shows the effect of interaction terms on the mediators. Moderation hypotheses 8a-8d were not supported as the bias corrected upper and lower confidence intervals contained zero for all interaction effects.

Table 4.8: Mediation Analysis

Hypotheses	**Beta**	**Sample Mean (M)**	**St.Dev**	**T Statistics (O/STDEV)**	**P Values**	**Bias corrected Confidence Interval**		**Decision**
						5%	95%	
Job-focused IM → Coworker Attributions → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.094	0.092	0.031	3.061	0.001	0.042	0.152	Accepted
Self-focused IM → Coworker Attributions → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.036	0.039	0.02	1.863	0.032	0.01	0.073	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Coworker Attributions → Counterproductive Work Behavior	0.065	0.066	0.025	2.638	0.004	0.027	0.109	Accepted
Job-focused IM → Coworker Attributions → Job Performance	-0.068	-0.07	0.033	2.052	0.02	-0.132	-0.018	Accepted
Self-focused IM → Coworker Attributions → Job Performance	-0.026	-0.028	0.014	1.828	0.034	-0.053	-0.006	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Coworker Attributions → Job Performance	-0.047	-0.049	0.023	2.026	0.022	-0.088	-0.012	Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Supervisor Attributions → Job Performance	-0.003	-0.004	0.015	0.209	0.417	-0.004	0.008	Not Accepted
Supervisor Focused IM → Supervisor Attributions → Supervisor Focused IM Respondent	0.097	0.097	0.027	3.605	0	0.053	0.144	Accepted

*Note: **p < 0.001, *p < 0.05.*

SPFIM: Supervisor focused Impression Management; JFIM: Job-focused Impression Management; SFIM: Self-focused Impression Management; Sup Att: Attributions of Supervisor's social perceptiveness; Cow Att: Attributions of co-worker incompetence; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Management by the envier; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job performance.

4.4.4 Model Fit and Out-Sample Prediction

In order to avoid model misspecifications, SRMR is reported as a goodness of fit measure for PLS-SEM. It is the difference between the observed and model implied correlation matrix. A model is said to have a good fit if SRMR values are less than 0.8. With an SRMR value of 0.058, the theoretical model was fit.

Out-sample prediction fits were also evaluated using PLS Predict (Shmueli, Ray, Estrada & Chatla, 2016). **Table 4.9** shows that Q2 values of the PLS model outperform those of the linear model (LM). In addition, root mean squared error (RMSEA) and the mean absolute error (MAE) for the PLS model are smaller the same values for the LM model. Thus, the tested model shows that the sample of the study is representative of the larger population and that it has predictive validity.

Table 4.9: PLS Predict Assessment

	LM			PLS			PLS-LM		
	RMSE	**MAE**	**Q^2_predict**	**RMSE**	**MAE**	**Q^2_predict**	**RMSE**	**MAE**	**Q^2_predict**
CWB5	0.826	0.659	-0.019	0.776	0.617	0.102	-0.05	-0.042	0.121
CWB1	0.756	0.594	0.086	0.739	0.587	0.128	-0.017	-0.007	0.042
CWB3	0.815	0.639	-0.024	0.773	0.616	0.079	-0.042	-0.023	0.103
CWB10	0.802	0.616	0.103	0.79	0.599	0.129	-0.012	-0.017	0.026
CWB6	0.83	0.625	0.003	0.789	0.609	0.099	-0.041	-0.016	0.096
CWB8	0.812	0.619	-0.013	0.768	0.593	0.094	-0.044	-0.026	0.107
CWB9	0.789	0.605	0.048	0.749	0.581	0.142	-0.04	-0.024	0.094
CWB12	0.807	0.628	-0.001	0.768	0.598	0.094	-0.039	-0.03	0.095
CWB7	0.747	0.584	0.077	0.73	0.572	0.118	-0.017	-0.012	0.041
CWB2	0.756	0.588	0.011	0.708	0.551	0.133	-0.048	-0.037	0.122
CWB11	0.835	0.649	0.066	0.804	0.619	0.132	-0.031	-0.03	0.066
CWB4	0.775	0.603	0.058	0.75	0.582	0.116	-0.025	-0.021	0.058
CowAtt1	0.743	0.564	0.304	0.745	0.554	0.301	0.002	-0.01	-0.003
CowAtt3	0.8	0.614	0.242	0.767	0.58	0.304	-0.033	-0.034	0.062
CowAtt2	0.754	0.586	0.205	0.724	0.546	0.268	-0.03	-0.04	0.063
JP7	1.16	0.915	-0.017	1.124	0.897	0.046	-0.036	-0.018	0.063
JP5	1.19	0.967	-0.002	1.135	0.949	0.089	-0.055	-0.018	0.091
JP4	1.095	0.873	-0.023	1.038	0.84	0.081	-0.057	-0.033	0.104

Continued: Table: 4.10 PLS Predict Assessment

	LM			PLS			PLS-LM		
	RMSE	**MAE**	**Q^2_predict**	**RMSE**	**MAE**	**Q^2_predict**	**RMSE**	**MAE**	**Q^2_predict**
JP6	1.112	0.898	-0.047	1.036	0.84	0.091	-0.076	-0.058	0.138
JP2	1.125	0.915	-0.019	1.079	0.879	0.062	-0.046	-0.036	0.081
JP3	1.13	0.906	-0.006	1.085	0.89	0.072	-0.045	-0.016	0.078
JP1	1.114	0.881	0	1.069	0.858	0.08	-0.045	-0.023	0.08
SupAtt2	0.895	0.724	-0.044	0.86	0.711	0.036	-0.035	-0.013	0.08
SupAtt3	0.896	0.704	-0.024	0.865	0.695	0.046	-0.031	-0.009	0.07
SupAtt1	0.79	0.615	0.049	0.776	0.623	0.083	-0.014	0.008	0.034
SPFIM 2 R	0.782	0.621	-0.024	0.734	0.611	0.098	-0.048	-0.01	0.122
SPFIM 7 R	0.858	0.666	0.053	0.846	0.674	0.077	-0.012	0.008	0.024
SPFIM 3 R	0.867	0.673	0.066	0.838	0.673	0.127	-0.029	0	0.061
SPFIM 5 R	0.775	0.614	-0.009	0.746	0.586	0.065	-0.029	-0.028	0.074
SPFIM1 R	1.01	0.765	0.019	0.981	0.749	0.074	-0.029	-0.016	0.055
SPFIM 6 R	0.912	0.714	0.022	0.895	0.715	0.058	-0.017	0.001	0.036
SPFIM 4 R	0.874	0.69	0	0.833	0.666	0.092	-0.041	-0.024	0.092

Cow Att: Attributions of co-worker incompetence; Sup Att: Attributions of Supervisor's Social Perceptiveness; SPFIM R: Supervisor-focused Impression Management by the respondent; CWB: Counterproductive work behavior; JP: Job Performance.

Chapter 5

Discussion, Conclusion, Limitations and Recommendations

Impression management at the workplace has received a great deal of scholarly attention. A coworker's attempts at gaining greater supervisory favors, securing greater outcomes etc. is displeasing to the coworker owing to a sense of competition at the workplace (Turnley et al., 2013). However, limited empirical research is available to validate these suggestions, and no attempt has been made to give an explanation for an observer's displeasure at a coworker's impression management. Furthermore, despite literature that suggests a sense of competition makes a coworker's impression management personally meaningful (Turnley et al., 2013), previous studies have ignored the relevance of envy to another's rewards-seeking behavior in a competitive setting i.e., workplace. The current study was conducted to investigate if the envier's attributions explain their reactions to a coworker's behavior intended to gain greater organizational rewards.

This chapter highlights the research questions this study set off to investigate, the relevant hypotheses formulated to seek answers to those questions and what findings suggest. In addition, this chapter also gives an insight into the limitations of the study and suggestions for future studies.

5.1 Research Question 1

Does impression management by a coworker have implications for the envier's behavior and performance?

5.1.1 Results Summary for RQ1

Hypotheses 1, 2a, 2b and 2c were framed to investigate behavioral reactions of the envier. Results show support for the hypotheses while Hypotheses 3a, 3b and 3c were framed to investigate if coworker IM affects envier's performance.

5.1.2 Discussion of Findings for RQ1

According to the results, the envier follows the coworker's supervisory-focused impression management with his own efforts at appearing likable to the supervisor by similar behavior. This shows that the envier seeks likability in the eyes of the supervisor and makes strategic use of likable behavior (supervisor focused impression management) towards them. This finding is in line with literature that suggests individuals imitate behavior of others to which they attribute their success (Heider, 1958). Because the coworker is the target of upward comparisons, he is likely to imitate supervisory-focused tactics that signal they are likely to be rewarded and to which he attributes the coworker's success. This argument is also in line with previous studies (Turnley et al., 2013), that suggest that upon viewing a coworker's supervisory ingratiation, coworkers are pressurized into engaging in similar behavior. In line with social learning theory, it may be concluded that the envier reasons that supervisor flattery, opinion conformity and praise-giving etc. associated with supervisor-focused impression management are needed in order to get ahead or progress within the organization. He is likely to think that the organization/supervisor encourages or rewards such behaviors, thereby influencing similar behavior.

In the context of Pakistani work culture, this finding can be discussed in light of previous literature that suggests the use of non-performance based means to get

ahead at the workplace are common practice. For example, it has been reported that nepotism and favor-doing is a common practice in Pakistan (Islam, 2004). Perhaps individuals have developed an understanding that supervisor flattery and praise-giving are indisputable ways of progressing within the organization. It is understandable that in such an environment, the envier is motivated to seek likability in the eyes of the supervisor through supervisor-focused impression management. Results of hypotheses 2a show that a coworker's supervisor focused impression management predict the envier's counterproductive behavior towards them. These findings show that behaviors that are potentially rewarding by possibly gaining the coworker greater organizational outcomes/rewards is unfavorable for the envier because it is likely to increase the status and outcome differentials between them. Thus, because these behaviors have the potential for making the envier feel more relatively deprived (Turnley et al., 2013), the envier seeks to reduce this differential by counterproductive behavior towards them. Social undermining of the coworker as a threat-oriented response has been discussed in envy literature (Tai et al., 2012). Such behavior serves the purposes of compensating the envier for a sense of inadequacy, regulating their affect by releasing frustration and reducing the advantage of the coworker by equating the lots (Khan et al., 2014). Thus, as an essentially threat-oriented action tendency of envy, these covert behaviors serve to dispel the envier's pain of greater status and outcome differentials likely to follow the coworker's supervisory focused impression management. It has been reported that in competitive contexts, envy following low self-esteem predicts hostile tendencies (Rentzsch et al., 2015). Such behavior may also be a means of letting off steam in a painful situation (Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997).

Perhaps the lack of support for hypotheses about counterproductive responses to job and self-focused IM can be discussed in light of relative effectiveness of counterproductive behavior in reducing the perceived status and outcome differential in response to the types of IM. Self and job-focused IM would imply some form of performance that is highlighted. Perhaps in line with the equity restoration perspective, the envier feels highlighting one's efforts are not as unfair a means to secure rewards as trying to please the supervisor through behaviors not based on performance.

Results also showed different performance responses to various IM behaviors. Results show that coworker's self-focused IM and job-focused IM reduce the envier's performance. A potential explanation for this could be that perhaps cynicism and decreased ability to accomplish work following coworker self and job-focused IM reduces performance outcomes (Turnley et al., 2013). Reduced performance has been shown to have an equity-restoring effect in previous literature (Swalhi, Zgoulli & Hofaidhllaoui, 2016). However, it remains to be seen why similar reduced performance does not follow supervisory-focused IM. Perhaps the focus in the case of supervisor focused IM is more on the pressure to engage in similar IM as in H1, than on reducing one's performance (Turnley et al., 2013).

Results show that the coworker's job-focused and self-focused impression management are negatively associated with the envier's job performance. These results are in line with literature that suggests that manipulative forms of a coworker's impression management may result in reduced ability to accomplish work, procrastination and burnout (Turnley et al., 2013). It may be concluded that the potentially rewarding job and self-focused impression management are seen as a threat to the envier's self-concept who is already disturbed by the perceived unfairness of rewards and outcome distribution at the workplace. The envier's job and self-focused impression management that presents them in the positive light as a hardworking, competent and polite person threatens to the envier the former's potentially greater favorability in the eyes of the supervisor, increasing his sense of inequity and thereby reducing his performance.

The envier is likely to believe the organization values these behavior as opposed to genuine effort at work, thereby, reducing his input to work. These results are in line with studies that suggest that the envier's reduced performance is a result of equity-restoration attempts (Tai et al., 2012). For example, it has been argued that the threat-oriented tendency of envy reduces the envier's performance in order to balance out his outcomes to inputs ratio relative to that of the coworker (Tai et al., 2012). Although they also argued for a challenge-oriented tendency of envy, in the context of coworker's impression management that is unfavorable for the envier and potentially rewarding for the coworker, the threat-oriented tendency of envy is more likely to come into play. The envier seeks to allay his pain of envy

by contributing less on the job, thereby attempting to achieve a sense of equity. In addition to equity-restoration, the envier sees little reason to continue making efforts for his performance when the supervisor is likely to ignore it altogether. Given that envy follows relatively low quality of relationship with one's supervisor (Shu & Lazatkhan, 2017b), feelings that any effort one puts in towards his job will be ignored are likely to be strengthened. Thus, the envier is likely to reduce his inputs in order to avoid contributing to the organization that yields no or inequitable rewards.

Results did not show reduced performance as an equity restoring attempt following the coworker's supervisory-focused impression management. These results may be discussed in light of results of H1 where it was found that supervisory-focused impression management tactics trigger similar behavior in the envier. It is inferred that the opportunity to progress by imitating the coworker's potentially rewarding behaviors determines whether he is likely to do so. Thus, falling short of accomplishments to highlight through job and self-focused impression management, these behaviors encourage among the envier, reduction in performance whereas supervisory-focused behaviors encourage similar flattering tactics. Therefore, the threat-oriented, equity-restoration action tendency of envy does not spring into action indiscriminately. The pain of the coworker's potentially rewarding influencing tactics is allayed by imitating the behavior when the opportunity to do so is available. For other behaviors, equity restoration by reducing performance may allay the pain of envy.

Unlike the imitation of supervisor-focused impression management, job and self—focused impression management tactics are unlikely to be imitated owing to the envier's perceived lack of opportunities for progress that could be highlighted with influence tactics. The envier perceives unfairness in the form of perceived lack of opportunities. Therefore, it may be concluded that without an opportunity for self and job-focused impression management through lack of opportunities to perform, dissatisfaction and frustration prevent improvement in performance, rather reduces it to restore equity. Literature shows that comparisons do not increase in performance if the envier perceives a certain achievement is unattainable (Niels

Van De Ven et al., 2011). Furthermore, supervisor-focused impression management by the coworker is unlikely to reduce performance in an equity restoration attempt owing to the fear that losses from doing so may outweigh the gains of comfort from equity restoration by reduced performance.

5.2 Research Question 2

Do coworker IM trigger envier attributions about coworker competence and supervisor's social perceptual ability?

5.2.1 Results Summary for RQ2

Hypotheses 4 was framed to investigate the envier's supervisory attributions whereas hypotheses 5a, 5b and 5c were framed to investigate if coworker IM triggers attributions of the coworker's competence. Results showed support for these hypotheses, providing answers to research question 2.

5.2.2 Discussion of Findings for RQ2

Hypothesis 4 suggested that the envier's supervisor-focused IM is positively associated with the envier's attributions of this behavior to the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness. Results showed support for the hypothesis. The envier's supervisory attributions can be explained by literature that suggests that when individuals depend on the supervisor for desirable outcomes, they attempt to reflect on what sort of behavior the supervisor finds appealing (Fiske, 2010) in order to be able to influence them through the same behaviors. An explanation for the relationship between supervisory focused tactics and the envier's attributions of them to the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness is that supervisory- targeted influence tactics aim to strategically appear likable and similar to the supervisor, which, if successful, obscures the supervisor's perception. The envier is likely to infer that the supervisor is unable to detect intentions behind people's behavior because such deceptive behavior is directed towards the supervisor by a person

who is successful at the workplace. This explanation is in line with literature that shows individuals question the supervisor's knowledge of subordinates when his decision is not in their favor (Bourgeois & Leary, 2001). They reported that subordinates attribute supervisory decisions to the supervisor's lack of knowledge of themselves when the decision is not in their favor (Bourgeois & Leary, 2001). Such attributions, they explained, help maintain one's self concept. Likewise, the envier's attributions that the supervisor lacks social perceptiveness serves a self-protective function by implying that the envied actor's success is a result of this inability. Supervisory focused influenced tactics of the coworker are disruptive to the envier's identity because they threaten greater rewards for the envied actor. This leads to self-protective supervisor attributions. Literature has also shown that the verifying person (i.e., the supervisor) is viewed negatively when he/she is responsible for verifying information that disrupts one's self-concept (Burke & Stets, 2009). Foulk and Long (2016), also argued that another's supervisory ingratiation draws the observer's attention to the supervisor themself. Because the coworker's success is disturbing to the envier, he discounts the role of this likable behavior in indicating the actor's actual likability. Instead,he attributes it to the supervisor's inability to detect that the behavior is strategically targeted towards achieving desired ends.

Results also confirm hypotheses 5a, 5b and 5c that speculated that supervisory, self and job-focused impression management tactics of the coworker are attributed to his incompetence. Others have previously discussed that using influence tactics such as overemphasizing one's achievements and credentials may make the actor appear self-interested and less competent (Berman, Levine, Barasch & Small, 2015; Bolino et al., 2016). Results of the current study show that not only is the coworker's attention-seeking behavior disturbing, it is attributed to the envied actor's competence in ways that are self-serving, hence, serving the function of protecting the envier's self-concept. The strategic nature of seeking supervisory support and organizational outcomes based on these non-performance behaviors signals to the envier the actor's inability to progress without them. The current study suggests that the feeling of envy plays a significant role in influencing observer's attributions because envy renders the coworker's advantage as unfair. The

envier thus seeks reasoning for behavior that may potentially increase this advantage in ways that are protective of his self-concept as a competent person. He does this by denying the coworker's competence and ability to progress without resorting to impression management.

The envier's attributions of these behaviors to the coworker's incompetence may also be explained in light of literature that suggest that people engage in self, job and other-focused influence tactics strategic benefits. However, these tactics are successful when the target is unable to detect them. Findings of the current study suggest that envy makes the envier suspicious, preventing the envier from falling victim to a manipulative behaviors. Because previous literature suggests that suspicion helps overcome the correspondence bias (Fein et al., 1990), an explanation could be that perhaps the biases inherent in envy alert the envier of the actor's underlying motives and inherent characteristics e.g. competence, dependability, dedication to work. It should be kept in mind, however, that these biases do not confirm the authenticity of the envier's attributions. They may, on the contrary, contribute to other negative biases that prevent an objective assessment of the envier's talents and abilities.

Nonetheless, these results suggest that regardless of the (in)authenticity of the observer's attributions, these attributions may influence observer behavior and performance. Furthermore, it is pertinent to note that similar coworker and supervisory attributions by multiple individuals are likely to create a work environment driven by attempts to ingratiate the supervisor and/ or exaggerate claims of performance etc. This holds importance consequences for the work environment that may suffer.

5.3 Research Question 3

Do the envier's attributions explain their responses to coworker IM?

5.3.1 Results Summary for RQ3

Hypotheses 7a- 7h were framed to investigate this research question. These hypotheses predicted the mediating role of envier's supervisory and coworker attributions in explaining their responses to coworker IM. Results show support for all hypotheses except 7b.

5.3.2 Discussion of Findings for RQ3

Hypotheses 7a and 7b hypothesized that attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness would mediate the relationship between the coworker's supervisor-focused impression management and the envier's job performance and their own supervisor focused impression management.

An explanation for the first relationship is that attributions of the supervisor's lack of social perceptiveness should motivate the envier to behave in ways that attempt to flatter and praise them. In line with the attribution theory that states that attributions of another's behavior determine behavioral reactions to it (Kelley & Michela, 1980), the envier reasons that because the supervisor is unable to detect such strategically directed behaviors, and because such behavior is successful for the coworker, one should also attempt to gain supervisory favor by behaving in similar ways. Another explanation for the relationship is that in a social environment wherein favor doing and nepotism (e.g. Pakistan) are common methods to progress, (Islam, 2004), attribution theory suggests that an understanding that the supervisor is not able to detect people's motives underlying their behavior should further encourage these behaviors among observers. These results can also be explained in line with the social information processing theory (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). The coworker's supervisory focused behavior informs the envier of his inability to detect them, motivating similar behavior.

Hypotheses 7c, 7d and 7e postulated that attributions of the coworker's incompetence will mediate the envier's job performance and counterproductive behavior responses to coworker IM. The mediating effect can be explained with literature that suggests attributions about stimulus situations and about other's behavior

determine a person's response to it. This has been the primary premise of attribution literature that suggests reactions to situations are determined by one's attributions. The envier, upon attributing the coworker's behavior to his incompetence responds by reducing his performance and behaving counterproductively towards them in order to restore a sense of equity along the lines of equity theory. Results also suggest that the envier's attributions of coworker incompetence mediate the relationship between their various IM behaviors and the envier's job performance. Perhaps this can be explained in light of equity restoration literature. The envier may perceive that the coworker has achieved an enviable position based on these IM behaviors whereas they are, infact, not competent. The reduced performance, coupled with counterproductive behavior towards these colleagues (7c, 7d, 7e) come as the envier's efforts to restore equity. The envier may believe that more emphasis should be placed on IM behaviors than on work itself.

The mediating role of self-serving attributions explains an important aspect of workplace behaviors. Namely, that impression management behaviors have the potential to trigger a similar set of behaviors by others, specifically when the behaviors are supervisory-focused. Accordingly, the mediating role of attributions in this study provides previously unexplored domain of third-party (observer) attributions in a seemingly disconnected situation.

5.4 Research Question 4

Do individual differences in attributional style influence the envier's supervisor and coworker attributions?

5.4.1 Results Summary for RQ4

Hypotheses 8a- 8d were formulated to investigate this research question. Results provided no support for these hypotheses.

5.4.2 Discussion of Findings for RQ4

These hypotheses postulated that the envier's attributional style would moderate his attributions of the coworker's impression management in such a way that a self-serving attributional style would strengthen self-serving supervisor and coworker attributions. Results found no support for these hypotheses. Previously, lack of support for a hostile attributional style in predicting envier's coworker attributions has also been reported (Azeem, Zafar & Khan, 2020). They reasoned that because envy is sufficiently unpleasant on its own, it renders the envier's attributional style irrelevant in predicting coworker attributions. We had earlier expected that a person predisposed to making self-serving attributions would have a tendency to describe coworker IM in self-serving ways. However, in line with Azeem et. al. (2020), we infer that for the painful feeling of envy that includes a sense of injustice, a self-serving attributional style is not meaningful to influence self-serving attributions.

With regards to supervisor attributions of the lack of social perceptiveness, the envier's self-serving attributional style was expected to strengthen these attributions following the coworker's supervisory, job and self-focused IM. However, based on results, we reason that because these influence tactics are displeasing to the envier by drawing the actor supervisory attention, the envious attributor draws self-serving attributions regardless of their attribution style. Although a moderating role was hypothesized based on literature on self-serving attributional style, based on results, it can be inferred that coworker IM is unfavorable, and leads to self-serving attributions regardless of attributional style. Perhaps the work environment that entails competition for supervisory approval, resources, and performance ratings makes coworker IM unfavorable for all attributional styles, or with no regard for it. Literature on the moderating role of a self-serving attributional style in influencing self-serving attributions is rare, although some do suggest this.

It is probable that cultural factors influence the envier's attributions. For example, earlier studies have suggested that because people's attributions are based on their perceptions shaped by cultural factors and the environment, people are likely to assign attributions in different ways in different cultural contexts (Scott, Restubog,

& Zagenczyk, 2012;) (Rockstuhl et al., 2012;) (Torelli et al., 2014). For example, studies that suggest IM is pervasive in the Pakistani work environment (Islam, 2004b), imply the role of cultural context in influencing behaviors and attributions. However, although the role of culture seems unavoidable in explaining people's perceptions of the social context (Hofstede, 2011), the relevance of specific cultural variables in influencing findings of moderation in the current study is only initial, and warrants scholarly attention in future studies.

5.5 Theoretical and Practical Implications

5.5.1 Implications for Theory

This study has important implications for attribution theory. It adds to the vast amount of literature in support of the theory and provides a new perspective from a coworkers' lens. It implies that the attribution theory can explain not only employees' own behavior, but also of coworkers, with evidence that the contemporary world of work politics is yet to gain from the study of observer attributions. For the attribution theory, it implies that not only do individuals respond through attributions to situations in which they are involved directly, but they also do so for situations involving a potential (not currently materialized) relative disadvantage.

This study also has implications for attribution theory in previously unexplored domain. It implies three possible ways in which people react to unfavorable situations, based on their attributions. First, external, self-serving attributions for an unfavorable situation may lead to an imitation of others' behaviors that seem potentially rewarding. Second, through other self-serving attributions, they may attempt to minimize the relative advantage of the person seeking to potentially gain from the situation unfavorable to the observer. Third, they may attempt to seek retribution or to restore equity through reduced performance. Previously, an imitation and equity-restoration perspective has not been suggested for the attribution theory. Overall, this implies that attribution theory may help explain the way organizational culture may emerge or persist especially in the context of

environments of managing impressions. This also suggests that attribution theory may explain how IM behaviors and supervisory reward of these behaviors holds greater implications for the overall work environment.

Theoretically, this study suggests that our understanding of work behaviors are somewhat incomplete without taking into consideration employee attributions. Because behaviors are based on what employees feel rather than what the factual reality is, understanding why and /or how they assign causes to coworker behaviors is important.

Theoretically, this study also implies that emotions (envy etc.) be incorporated into more theoretical models in order to arrive at realistic understanding of employee behaviors because ignoring emotions (whether positive or negative) from theoretical models would give hypothetical results at best.

The contribution of the study is to consider integrated models that consider various psychological perspectives (e.g. attributional) as an underlying cause of peoples' work behaviors. Without understanding the causes people assign to other's behaviors, we cannot arrive at an informed conclusion regarding the cause of differences in the ways people react to similar situations.

From the attributional perspective, this study considerable contribution. It points to a greater need to investigate organizational behavior from an attributions perspective in order to facilitate a better understanding of behavior at work.

5.5.2 Practical Implications

Practically, this study has important implications.

(i) First, it implies that one reason for employee behavior is their attribution for that of another, relatively privileged coworker. The attribution that the coworker is engaging in supervisor-focused IM because of a lack of competence or because the supervisor is unable to correctly perceive it, is disturbing to the observer. This may lead to an IM-competition whereby a politically

motivated culture comes into being, where each individual expends relatively more effort into pleasing their supervisors and bragging about their achievements than on future achievements.

(ii) Supervisors and managers are required to identify impression management efforts and ways to curtail them. Perhaps explicitly discouraging impression management attempts seems far-fetched, however, it is imperative that supervisors develop an understanding of motives behind such behaviors rather than being influenced by them. Doing so would enable them to rule out possibilities of unduly rewarding non-deserving individuals or of rewarding non-performance behaviors. This is imperative in order to avoid negatively influencing the work environment and to rule out hostility and ill will among employees.

(iii) A culture of politics, envious competition, lower performance overall, and harm-doing to colleagues are likely to foster in environments that reward IM. Additionally, if the race to be most pleasant towards the supervisor develops, performance is likely to be compromised and a culture of politics is likely to develop, setting wrong performance standards or expectations. On the other hand, the attributions that the impression managing individual is incompetent but being rewarded for IM is likely to lead to greater problems.

(iv) Managers need to be cognizant of their actions that reflect approval of employee IM in order to prevent ill will and negative behaviors including increase in similar IM behavior by others.

From a practitioner's perspective, it is essential to recognize the ramifications of fostering an environment that rewards IM knowingly or unknowingly. Supervisors should be wary of rewarding these behaviors, lest they should offend other employees and set off an environment of competition based on measures other than objective performance, compromising the work environment, performance and quality of work.

5.6 Limitations and Future Research Recommendations

Despite some major contributions of the study, it was limited in scope for a number of reasons. Firstly, the current study was limited to a sample from the Pakistani services sector. Although the choice of the services sector was based on literature that suggests that services provide greater opportunities for IM, however, Iin order to draw more conclusive results, future studies should attempt cross-cultural and industry-specific investigations to analyze results of the study. For example, it could be investigated if imitation of the coworker's behavior is likely across cultures or some particular ones culture based on the level of societal collectivism. Perhaps collectivist societies see more imitation of another's supervisor focused behavior than individualistic ones because supervisory approval and likeness is highly sought after in these cultures. Furthermore, it could be investigated if the drop in job performance and increase in counterproductive behavior is of a similar magnitude across cultures varying in levels of collectivism. For example, it may be investigated if within collectivist societies, coworker impression management is a cause of greater concern that elicit stronger reactions because a coworker's attempts at surpassing them are more disturbing.

Another limitation of the study is source bias. This is because one variable in the study (job performance) was measured through other (supervisory) reports. This may entail some common source bias. Future studies should consider assessing respondent IM as well as their counterproductive behaviors through supervisory reports in order to avoid this concern. Furthermore, another limitation in the study design was the concern for causality. Although data for the study were collected in time-lags, in order to fully address causality concerns, future studies should consider comparing models with data for all variables at all time lags. This may provide additional insight into understanding how attributions and coworker responses shift with time, in response to the coworker IM.

Although establishing validity of the envier's perspective is not directly relevant to studies investigating it, future literature should attempt to investigate specific

attributions involving an envied vs. a non-envied coworker's impression management to develop greater understanding of coworker impression management and their associated attributions and reactions.

It is pertinent to note that although hypotheses for the three influence tactics were made separately for their relationships with supervisor and coworker attributions, results showed overwhelmingly significant results for all influence tactics. Perhaps future studies should consider relatively in-depth analysis of the specific kinds of attributions following coworkers' impression management tactics other than target-focused tactics. Other potential impression management tactics that could be studied with respect to the specific attributions include excuse-making, humble-bragging, feigned helplessness etc. Furthermore, comparisons of various classifications of impression management tactics could also be investigated for coworker and target attributions. For example, it may be investigated if various direct impression management tactics lead observers to draw similar attributions distinct from indirect impression management tactics. Perhaps soft impression management tactics also draw attributions distinct from those influenced by hard tactics.

Lastly, the current study investigated a limited number of the envier's reactions. Although these were based on suggestions from extant envy literature (Tai et al., 2012), future studies should investigate other behaviors the coworker's impression management may motivate. It is expected that frustration from another's impression management at one's expense may incite more overt forms of reactions. For example, it may be investigated if, in order to restore equity or to protect one's self-concept as the deserving person, the envier attempts to malign the impression managing coworker in the eyes of the supervisor by calling them out on his self-professed/ exaggerated claims of performance and competence.

In line with literature that suggests supervisor focused impression management draws resentment towards the supervisor among ingratiators (Keeves et al., 2017), future studies should also investigate if the successful coworker's supervisory focused impression management fosters dislike for the supervisor, creates undue pressure to engage in supervisory ingratiation, and contributes to the observer's job dissatisfaction.

Future research should identify specific measures to assess attributions. Attributions have been measured in different ways in extant literature. Some use single item-direct measures regarding a specific cause of an event/situation while others have made specific scales for measuring them. For example, Dasborough and Ashkanasy (2004) developed an 8-item scale to measure follower attributions of leader intentionality.

Additionally, future studies should see attributions for impression management and other behaviors from a coworker's perspective. Coworkers are essential part of the work environment and an oversight in literature on attributions of coworker behavior and underlying motives means a significant aspect of workplace behavior is unexplored. Furthermore, future studies should also identify if attributions regarding coworker impression management vary depending on social dynamics such as being close to the actor versus belonging to an out-group. These dynamics greatly influence perception of competition, envy and achievement-oriented behavior. Therefore, these social dynamics need to be investigated in depth with respect to impression management.

While the study emphasized response of the envious coworker, our study does not enable strong conclusions regarding envy. Because envy was not an explicit part of the tested hypotheses, our assumption regarding the envier's behavior does not imply envy leads to such behavior.

Additionally, the attributions assessed in the current study are not an exhaustive. Future studies should investigate if there are other potential attributions regarding various IM techniques elicited for the impression managing coworker, the target of IM (based on the type of IM technique being used) and the organization (organizational policies, culture etc.).

5.7 Conclusion

The study investigated impression management from a coworker's perspective, integrating attribution and impression management literature. It is an attempt to elaborate the mechanism of workplace behaviors based on the attribution of

coworker behavior to various causes and the ensuing reactions based on the relative status (envy). The proposed attributional perspective in evaluating coworker impression management was supported. Findings show, in line with the attribution theory, that the envier's response follows their attributions of coworker IM. Results showed that a self-serving attributional mechanism is triggered following a coworker's impression management. Results of the study also support the proposed hypotheses that coworkers react in various ways to different impression management tactics. However, unexpectedly, attribution style did not moderate the self-serving attributions of the envier. This is an important finding, suggesting that regardless of one's attributional style, coworker impression management is sufficiently unpleasant to lead to self-serving attributions. Similar findings have been reported for a hostile attributional style (Azeem, Zafar & Khan, 2020).

The attribution about the supervisor's social perceptual ability was another important contribution of this study. As an important entity of the workplace impression management domain where the supervisor is in control of most outcomes an employee desires, it is not unheard of that employees use impression management for strategic ends. Therefore, understanding that observers not only evaluate the actor but also the target (supervisor) is an important finding for understanding workplace behaviors.

Additionally, we also conclude that attributions of coworker impression management do not overlook the actor's competence. Because employees may use impression management techniques and become 'good actors', our findings suggesting coworkers evaluate the credibility of the impression managing coworker are interesting. Attributing impression management to incompetence suggests that people may believe that a truly competent individual would not need to manage impressions through bragging and ingratiation. However, further studies in this domain may give conclusive results.

The integration of attribution and impression management literature from a coworker's perspective helped elaborate why a person would find coworker impression management displeasing and the ways they may react to it.

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Appendices

Appendix-A

Permission Letter for Data Collection

To,

[Name]

[Designation]

Re: Request for data collection

Respected sir/madam,

This is in line with our telephonic conversation regarding data collection for a PhD dissertation survey. I am Sundas Azeem, and am currently enrolled at the PhD (Management Sciences) program at CUST, Islamabad. I would like to request you and your company/ organization for permission to collect data from employees of your organization working in white-collar positions. Furthermore, this study requires that the respondents' supervisors are also contacted for data collection purposes.

I shall be using the collected data for academic purposes of scholarly research that will not involve yours, your employees' or your company name. It is intended for use in academic research in the field of Management and Organizational Behavior, and nowhere will the names of any individual or company be sought.

I shall be grateful for your permission in allowing data collection. This would help me complete my study, in addition to making some contribution to the field of

Management and Organizational Behavior. I assure you that all your protocols for confidentiality will be followed, and ethics of research shall be adhered to.

If you have any further queries I shall be happy to answer them through sundas.azeem@hotmail.com.

Sincerely,

Sundas Azeem,

PhD Scholar

CUST, Islamabad

Appendix

Appendix-B

Cover Letter for Survey Participation

Dear Participant,

My name is Sundas Azeem, and I am enrolled in the PhD program (Management Sciences) at the Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad. For my dissertation, I am studying people's responses to coworker Impression Management. I am inviting you to participate in this survey because you are working in a white-collar environment in the services industry in Pakistan.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Should you agree to participate, I must assure you that your participation in this study does not entail any implications for you, your career, or your organization. You are assured of complete anonymity and confidentiality for your responses. I also state that no responses you provide shall be used for any purposes other than academic/ scholarly study.

Should you disagree participation in this survey, you may leave this unfilled questionnaire in the envelope provided and it will be collected from you shortly. In case you agree to be a part of this study, I request you to respond to each item with honesty. The only right answers are your honest responses.

In case some item is unclear, please do not hesitate to mention it to the individual who provided you with this questionnaire. Once complete, leave the questionnaire in the envelope provided and it will be collected shortly.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Sundas Azeem

PhD Scholar,

Capital University of Science and Technology, Islamabad.

Research-Questionnaire (Time 1)

Unique Identifier:_____

Dear Respondent,

This study is about the coworker views of the use of influence attempts at work by others. This research is purely of academic nature and your anonymity will be maintained at the highest level. We therefore need your valuable time to fill out the following questionnaire.

Please provide your unique identifier code at the top right corner of this page. This will help us reach you again for subsequent phases of data collection.

Sundas Azeem

Section: 1	**Personal Information: Please circle/tick mark your responses.**
Your gender:	1- Male 2- Female
Your age:	1 (20-30), 2 (31-40), 3 (41-50), 4 (41-50), 5 (51-60)
Nature of employing organization:	1 (Public), 2 (Private)
How long have you been working here?:	1 (2-5 years), 2 (6-10 years), 3 (11-15 years) 4 (16-20 years), 5 (Over 20 years)
What is the gender of your boss?:	1 (Male), 2 (Female)

Section-2: Supervisor - Focused IM by the Coworker

What is the gender of the coworker 'X'? 1. Male 2. Female

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Never behaves this way	Rarely behaves this way	Behaves this way sometimes	Behaves this way a often	Always behaves this way

How frequently does 'X' behave in ways mentioned below?						
1	Take an interest in the supervisor's personal life.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Praises the immediate supervisor on his/her accomplishments.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Does personal favors for the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Offers to do something for the supervisor that he/she was not required to do , that is, he/she does it as a personal favor for the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Volunteers to help the immediate supervisor on a task.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Compliments the supervisor on his/her dress or appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Agrees with the supervisor's major ideas.	1	2	3	4	5

Section-3: Self-focused IM by the Coworker

Please think of a coworker with whom you constantly compare yourself and who outperforms you on an organizational outcome for which you are also striving (We will call this person 'X'). Using the scale below, respond to the items that follow:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Never behaves this way	Rarely behaves this way	Behaves this way sometimes	Behaves this way a often	Always behaves this way

How often does 'X' behave in ways mentioned below?						
1	Presents himself/herself to the supervisor as being a friendly person.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Presents himself/herself to the supervisor as a polite person.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Try to act as a 'model' employee in front of the supervisor by, for example, never taking longer than the established time for lunch.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Works hard when he/she knows that the results will be seen by the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Let his/her supervisor know that he/she tried to do a good job in his/her work.	1	2	3	4	5

Section-4: Job-Focused IM by the Coworker

Please think of a coworker with whom you constantly compare yourself and who outperforms you on an organizational outcome for which you are also striving (We will call this person 'X'). Using the scale below, respond to the items that follow:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Never behaves this way	Rarely behaves this way	Behaves this way sometimes	Behaves this way a often	Always behaves this way

How often does this coworker 'X' behave in ways mentioned below?						
1	Exaggerate the importance of a positive event that he/she has taken credit for.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Try to make a positive event that he/she is responsible for appear better than it actually is.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Try to take responsibility for positive events even when he/she is not solely responsible for it.	1	2	3	4	5

4	Try to make a negative event that he/she is responsible for not appear as severe as it actually is to the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Try to let the supervisor think that he/she is responsible for the positive events that occur in his/her workgroup.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Arrive at work early in order to look good in front of his/her supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Work late at office so that his/her supervisor will see him/her working late and think that he/she is a hard worker.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Make his/her supervisor aware of his/her accomplishments.	1	2	3	4	5
9	Agree with his/her immediate supervisor's major opinion outwardly even when he/she disagrees inwardly.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Create the impression that he/she is a 'good' person to the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Disagree with the supervisor on major issues. (r)	1	2	3	4	5
12	Take responsibility for negative events, even when he/she is not solely responsible.	1	2	3	4	5

Section-5: Attributional Style

Consider the following NEGATIVE scenarios at work. For each scenario, answer the questions that follow.

Scenario 1: You fail to receive a promotion that you wanted for a long time.

1. To what extent is the unfavorable performance evaluation caused by you or others and circumstances?

Scenario 2 : You don't receive a favorable performance evaluation compared to others in your department.

1 Completely due to you	**2** Mostly due to you	**3** Partially due to you and partially due to others	**4** Mostly due to others/ circumstances	**5** Completely due to others and circumstances

1. To what extent is the unfavorable performance evaluation caused by you or others or by circumstances?

1 Completely due to you	**2** Mostly due to you	**3** Partially due to you and partially due to others	**4** Mostly due to others/ circumstances	**5** Completely due to others and circumstances

Scenario 3 : You receive almost no raise compared to others in your department.

1. To what extent is the unfavorable performance evaluation caused by you or others and circumstances?

1 Completely due to you	**2** Mostly due to you	**3** Partially due to you and partially due to others	**4** Mostly due to others/ circumstances	**5** Completely due to others and circumstances

Consider the following POSITIVE scenarios at work. For each scenario, answer the questions that follow.

Scenario 1. Imagine you receive a promotion that you wanted for a long time. Think about the causes of this success.

1. To what extent is this promotion caused by you or others and circumstances?

1 Completely due to you	**2** Mostly due to you	**3** Partially due to you and partially due to others	**4** Mostly due to others/ circumstances	**5** Completely due to others and circumstances

Scenario 2. Imagine you receive a favorable performance evaluation. Think about the causes of this achievement.

1. To what extent is this achievement caused by you or others and circumstances?

1 Completely due to you	**2** Mostly due to you	**3** Partially due to you and partially due to others	**4** Mostly due to others/ circumstances	**5** Completely due to others and circumstances

Scenario 3. Imagine you receive a pay raise that you wanted for a long time. Think about the causes of this achievement.

1. To what extent is this success caused by you or others and circumstances?

1 Completely due to you	**2** Mostly due to you	**3** Partially due to you and partially due to others	**4** Mostly due to others/ circumstances	**5** Completely due to others and circumstances

Research-Questionnaire (Time 2)

Unique Identifier:_____

This data is being collected in continuation of a study for which you were previously contacted for data collection. This research is purely of academic nature and your anonymity will be maintained at the highest level. We therefore need your valuable time to fill out the following questionnaire.

Please provide your unique identifier code at the top right corner of this page. This will help us reach you again for subsequent phases of data collection.

Sundas Azeem

Section-1: Supervisor Attributions

Please bring to your mind your supervisor/boss. Please respond to the following items about your supervisor/boss on the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

Think of X's above set of behaviors.						
1	The supervisor can often understand what the supervisor is trying to accomplish without the need for them to say anything.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2	The supervisor can predict how others will react to his behavior.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3	The supervisor can often understand what others mean through their expressions, body language etc.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Section-2: Coworker Attributions

Please bring to your mind a coworker with whom you constantly compare yourself and who outperforms you on an organizational outcome

for which you are also striving (We will call this person 'X'). Using the scale below, respond to the items that follow about that coworker. Use the following scale to respond to the items:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

Think of X's above set of behaviors.						
1	"X" is very capable of performing his/her job.	1	2	3	4	5
2	"X" has much knowledge about the work that needs to be done on the job.	1	2	3	4	5
3	I feel very confident in "X's" skills.	1	2	3	4	5

Research-Questionnaire (Time 3)

Unique Identifier:_____

This data is being collected in continuation of a study for which you were previously contacted for data collection. This research is purely of academic nature and your anonymity will be maintained at the highest level. We therefore need your valuable time to fill out the following questionnaire.

Please provide your unique identifier code at the top right corner of this page. This will help us reach you again for subsequent phases of data collection.

Sundas Azeem

Section-1: Supervisor-Focused IM

Please indicate, using the following scale, how often you engage in the described behaviors towards your supervisor/boss:

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Mostly	Always

How frequently do you engage in the following behavior?						
1	Take an interest in your supervisor's personal life.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Praise the immediate supervisor on his/her accomplishments.	1	2	3	4	5
3	Do personal favors for the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
4	Offer to do something for the supervisor that you are not required to do , that is,you do it as a personal favor for the supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Volunteer to help the immediate supervisor on a task.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Compliment the supervisor on his/her dress or appearance.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Agree with the supervisor's major ideas.	1	2	3	4	5

Section-2: Counterproductive Behavior towards the coworker

Please bring to your mind a coworker with whom you constantly compare yourself and who outperforms you on an organizational outcome for which you are also striving (We will call this person 'X').Please indicate, using the following scale, how often you engage in the described behaviors towards your coworker "X".

1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Mostly	Always

Rate each item on the extent to which it represents YOUR BEHAVIOR TOWARDS THAT 'X" PERSON.						
1	Interfere with X's performance?	1	2	3	4	5
2	Try to sabotage X's reputation?	1	2	3	4	5
3	Withhold work related information from X?	1	2	3	4	5
4	Create coalitions against X?	1	2	3	4	5
5	Start an argument with X?	1	2	3	4	5
6	Backstab X?	1	2	3	4	5
7	Tell others about something wrong done by X or about a mistake made by X?	1	2	3	4	5
8	Be nasty to X?	1	2	3	4	5
9	Provide incorrect information to mislead X?	1	2	3	4	5
10	Slow down all correspondence to X?	1	2	3	4	5
11	Talk to others about the bad nature of X?	1	2	3	4	5
12	Look at X with disrespect?	1	2	3	4	5

Section: 3 Job Performance

Please consider the employee whose unique identifier you have mentioned above. For this employee, please provide their job performance evaluation on the items that follow. Please use the following scale.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither disagree nor agree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

To what extent do you agree/disagree with each of the following regarding the specific employee's job performance?						
1	Adequately completes their assigned duties.	1	2	3	4	5
2	Fulfils the job responsibilities described in his/her job description.	1	2	3	4	5
3	That he/she performs the tasks that are expected of him/her.	1	2	3	4	5
4	That he/she meets the formal performance requirements of the job	1	2	3	4	5
5	That he/she engages in activities that will positively affect his/her performance evaluation.	1	2	3	4	5
6	That he/she neglects aspects of the job he/she is obligated to perform.	1	2	3	4	5
7	That he/she fails to perform essential duties.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix-C

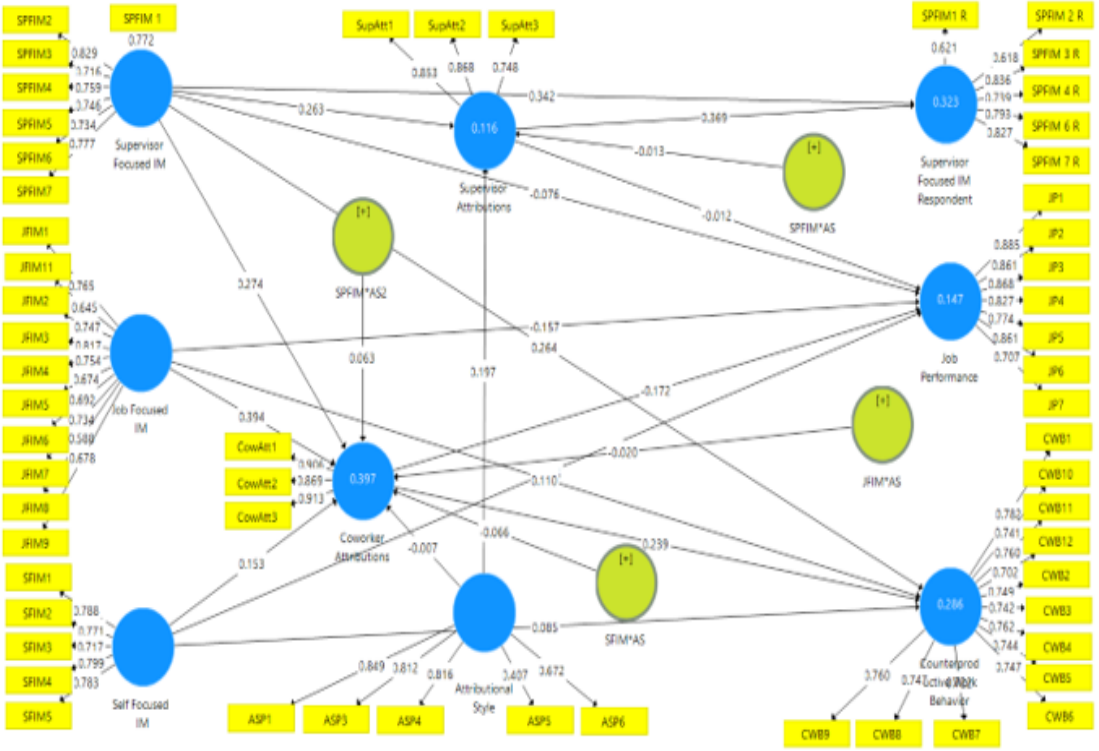

FIGURE 5.1: Measurement Model

Appendix-D

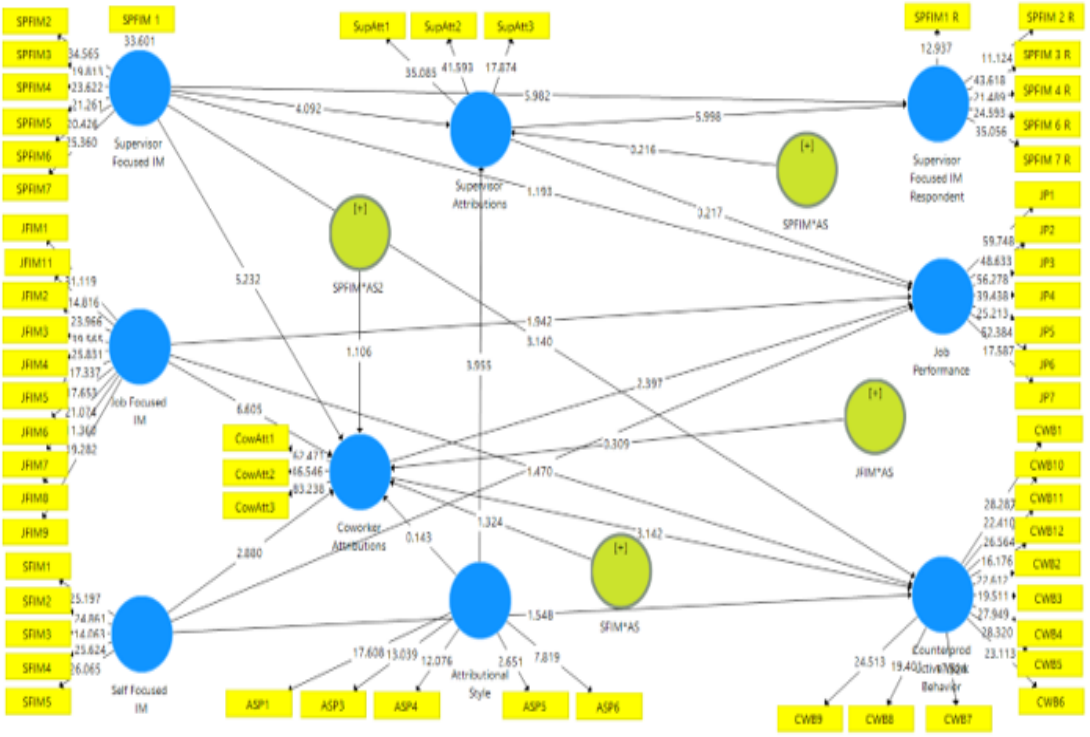

FIGURE 5.2: Structural Model