Manager sense of envy and employee overqualification: The moderating role of job outcomes

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Abstract

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Keywords

employee turnover, job satisfaction, motivation, overqualification, performance appraisal.

Introduction

Employee overqualification refers to a situation in which an employee's skills, education, experience, and other qualifications exceed the job's established requirements (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). A mismatch between worker qualifications and job demands is becoming

more common all over the world. According to one estimate, 48 percent of graduates in the United States worked in jobs that did not necessitate their degrees (Alam, 2021). According to Mosteanu, (2019), these figures are even higher in developing economies such as UAE, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. In the UAE, for example, 34 percent of the labor force is estimated to be overqualified for their jobs, with another 38 percent working in jobs that are significantly different from their field of formal education, potentially leading to feelings of overqualification. Overqualification and its implications for employee attitudes and behaviors have sparked increased research interest in the literature over the last decade (Kracke, Reichelt, & Vicari, 2018). Overqualification has been linked to negative outcomes such as less positive job attitudes and well-being (Lee et al., 2021), higher levels of career stress (Gkorezis et al., 2019), and a higher likelihood of leaving one's job (Erdogan et al., 2020).

On the other hand, there is a growing body of evidence suggesting that under the right conditions, overqualified individuals can make positive contributions to the organizational performance and creativity (Erdogan, Bauer, & Karaeminogullari, 2017). The initial idea of overqualified employees is that, despite their overall value to companies, their effectiveness and job prospects are frequently disrupted. As a result, throughout the last decade, academics have focused on determining the circumstances in which perceived overqualification poses a reduced threat to well-being and retention. Emotional intelligence (Chambel et al., 2021), perceived organizational support (Skowronski, 2019), and leader-member interchange quality have all been found as individual-level mediators of overqualification (Ye, Li, & Tan, 2017).

Surprisingly, these research, as well as the literature in general, have tended to treat managers as natural supporters and retainers of overqualified employees. As a result, the literature of overqualification has mostly focused on finding particular tactics that leaders may employ to capitalize on the possible benefits of overqualified employees. Managers differ in their chance of providing employees with an atmosphere where they can take on extra duties, receive job-related support, and prepare for a potential position, which

is an unexplored but significant potential. Managerial feelings of envy, for example, are one such potential barrier, according to Liu, Zhu, and Lam (2020). Indeed, the notion that individuals who feel overqualified will face considerable obstacles in recruiting and progression as a result of superiors who are envious is a widely held but unexamined hypothesis (Howard et al., 2022).

To explain individual-level diversity in employee reactions to overqualification, the overqualification literature has tended to focus on employees' own feelings or views. Managerial considerations, such as the manager's personal sense of envy and status within the firm, may also play a significant role, and might possibly explain why overqualified employees struggle in their jobs.

In this study, we investigate the association between overqualification and job-related outcomes (employee turnover, job satisfaction and performance appraisal). Both internal and external dimensions of job success are apprehended by these terms. Employees who believe they are overqualified believe they are capable of performing a job with higher expectations. Organizational success, on the other hand, is not only a result of one's skills and abilities. Supervisors, on the other hand, play a critical role in setting the atmosphere in which career advancement occurs (Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019). As a result, we anticipate that the nature of the association between perceived overqualification and intrinsic and extrinsic career success will differ by management and will be impacted by envy. Many employees deal with negative emotions on a regular basis. Much of the antagonism and unpleasant feelings related with employee envy and jealousy stem from competition for rewards, promotion, opportunities, and recognition (Andiappan & Dufour, 2020). As a result, we estimate that when superiors encounter high emotions of envy and jealousy, employees who may pose a danger to their position due to superior talents relative to their occupations will be less likely to find a workplace that supports their career development and advancement. As a result, we hypothesize that the association between overqualification and job outcomes will be modified by the level of envy and jealousy felt by their bosses. Our research adds to the body of knowledge in

different ways. To begin, we add to the overqualification literature by looking at managers' jealousy as a cross-level moderator of overqualification in connection to professional success metrics. Based on the belief that social interactions are significant sources of career progression assistance in businesses, we extend the literature on overqualification by moving the focus from individual level moderators to a manager-level moderator (Hall, 1996). Furthermore, we add to the literature on overqualification by examining performance appraisal as a result of overqualification. Job satisfaction (Chen, Zou & Pan, 2017) and turnover (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021) have been studied in the past, but the extent to which overqualification is linked to performance appraisal has yet to be investigated. Performance appraisal is a key determinant of professional advancement and a prerequisite for receiving career-related assistance (Mosteanu, 2019). Finally, our research adds to the body of knowledge on workplace jealousy. Despite the fact that much has been written about the effects of workplace jealousy on one's own sake and emotions (Howard et al., 2022), less has been written about how managers' envy impacts their subordinates.

Theoretical Background

Overqualification and job outcomes

A growing body of evidence suggests that employment attitudes, well-being, and employee attitude are all influenced by overqualification (Zhang, Wang & Li, 2021). Overqualification is seen as a form of mismatch between people and jobs (Chambel et al., 2021). Relative deprivation is a feeling of injustice experienced by employees who believe they are overqualified for their work (Skowronski, 2019). According to the theory of relative deprivation, when people believe they are entitled to something, they see it as desirable, but when they do not get it, they feel deprived. Employees who feel overqualified, on the other hand, have frustrated expectations and believe they are entitled to a decent career than the one they have, resulting in lower motivation and

engagement (Kunst & Obaidi, 2020). According to the researchers, it is vital to explore the relationship between overqualification and career success in addition to understanding the attitudinal and behavioral implications of overqualification (Maynard et al., 2015). Early academics looking into the consequences of overqualification on career outcomes had a more upbeat approach, suggesting that working in an overqualified position could be a stepping stone to a higher job within the same business (Russell et al., 2016). Overqualified employees were less likely to believe that they had good career prospects within their organizations (Middeldorp, 2014), and less likely to believe that they were learning things that would be useful for future promotions (Wu, Luksyte, & Parker, 2015), according to additional research testing this prediction. As a result, there is an increasing requirement to look into overqualified personnel' career advancement and sustainability. We focus on three metrics of job success as possible outcomes of overqualification in our research. The degree to which people believe they are effective in accomplishing their objectives is referred to as job satisfaction. It is recognized as the most important indication of long-term career success (Judge et al., 2017). Employees' future upward progress is influenced by their performance appraisal (Iqbal, Akbar, & Budhwar, 2015). This is a biased estimate of an employee's success in the workplace, but it is based on the ratings of organizational decision-makers (Idowu, 2017). Finally, job turnover—or the possibility that an individual would leave the company—is an important career consequence because individuals who have their professional ambitions denied are more willing to quit (Dahling & Librizzi, 2015). Indeed, in studies of professional success, inter-organizational progression is viewed as a significant result (Quintanilla & Wahl, 2018). As a result, past research has found that overqualification is negatively associated to job satisfaction and the chance of staying in the company (Arvan et al., 2019), but no previous findings have looked at performance appraisal as a result. Scholars have hypothesized that the relationship between overqualification and organizational performance is dependent on factors such as executive support and an organizational context that encourages upward career opportunity (Zheng & Wang, 2017). Furthermore, Papadopoulou (2019) stressed the necessity of meeting overqualified

individuals' career-related demands as a key to their progression and stability. While leaders are not the only ones who can help, they have a special role to play in setting the working circumstances and support that lead to better career outcomes. Leaders can help their subordinates achieve better job outcomes by engaging in social interaction with them and providing them with professional development experiences and (Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019). As a result, we propose that managers' desire in offering help to their subordinates will determine the job-related outcomes and success of their subordinates. To this purpose, we include manager envy as a significant variable in the current study's analysis of the impacts of overqualification on job-related metrics.

The moderating role of manager envy

In the workplace, envy is a common occurrence. Envy is an uncomfortable, painful, and bad emotion that results from unfavorable social comparisons (Sterling, van de Ven, & Smith, 2016). When peers believe that they lack his or her superior quality, achievement, or possession, they either covet or wish that he or she would lose them (Liu, Geng, & Yao, 2021). Prior workplace envy research (e.g., Andiappan, & Dufour, 2020; Ghadi, 2018) has primarily concentrated on the perspective of enviers, ignoring the perspective of envied targets (Khan & Noor, 2020). Envious people are more prone to perceive insecurity and the prospect of job loss (Ricci & Scafarto, 2015). According to ARLI, Aydemir, & Celik (2019), any manager in any organization at any time is at risk of losing his or her job. As a result, many definitions of the construct include the subjective feeling of jealousy as a key component (Lee & Duffy, 2019). Job envy, according to research, is a big challenge that irritates need fulfilment and puts one's identity, position, and livelihood at jeopardy (Maher & Youssef, 2016). It appears to be negatively associated to job views, organizational trust, and emotional wellbeing, according to conceptual research (Arshadi, Eslami, & Neisi, 2019). Job preservation motive has been discovered as a crucial predictor of how people act when faced with instability in the workplace, according to research (Ricci & Scafarto, 2015). Individuals who are envious will be encouraged to act

in ways that will keep them from losing their jobs, such as establishing their self-worth and refraining from activities that may imperil their position, according to this theory. Depending on the behavior's aim, the job preservation motive presents itself in various ways. Envious employees, for instance, may use techniques to show their value to the company by putting out efforts (i.e., task performance) that will be easily seen by higher levels of management (Andiappan, & Dufour, 2020). To conclude, we assume that when employees report to a manager with high levels of workplace envy, the impacts of overqualification on their attitudes toward their own professional achievement will be more unfavorable.

According to research, there is a negative association between overqualification and employment career development (Ghadi, 2018), as the sense that one is overqualified for their job is likely to link to the sense that one is deprived of the career that they are entitled to (Hilal, 2022). We believe that managers can alleviate these feelings by fostering an environment that encourages people to pursue their career aspirations. The experienced context, on the other hand, is less likely to provide these possibilities and encourage overqualified personnel, especially if these workers report to managers who are anxious about their own positions. Consequently, we assume the following:

Hypothesis 1: Envious managers will moderate the association between the employee's overqualification and job satisfaction, such that the association will be negative when envy is high.

Furthermore, envious managers should determine the nature of the relationship between overqualification and performance appraisal. An evaluation of a person's development potential is reflected in a performance appraisal (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). The performance appraisal is mainly implemented by line managers (Gkorezis et al., 2019), and their evaluations are regarded to be particularly important to an employee's progression within a company (Ye, Li, & Tan, 2017). Performance appraisal is a subjective way of examining both an employee's task and more social influence such as influence tactics employed by employees (Iqbal, Akbar, & Budhwar, 2015), as well as stereotypes

and cognitive biases held by managers (Idowu, 017). In other words, performance appraisal is a perceptual and political process rather than an objective assessment of an employee's suitability for a higher position.

We expect that the relationship between overqualification and performance appraisal will be positive when managers perceive low levels of envy. Managers are positioned to conduct performance appraisals that are linked with the employee's credentials and preparation for a higher-level role or to improve their performance in the absence of a job preservation incentive. Perceived overqualification should be positively related to performance appraisal because individuals who feel overqualified for their current positions can get a good fit at a higher-level position with extra duties. We anticipate a negative relationship between overqualification and performance appraisal in the case of envious superiors. Rusu, Avasilcăi, and Huțu (2016) relate performance appraisal to actual raises and provides advice for professional development. We predict envious managers to be less willing to encourage, advance, and endorse the careers of people who could be potential competitors. As a result, for envious managers, we expect a negative relationship between overqualification and performance appraisal.

Hypothesis 2*:* Envious managers will moderate the association between performance appraisal and overqualification and, such that the association will be positive when envy level is low, and negative when the level of envy is high.

Finally, we believe that the association between overqualification and employee turnover will be moderated by envious superiors. Indeed, increased turnover intentions and actual voluntary turnover have been linked to overqualification (Chen, Feng, & Liu, 2020; Khakwani, 2016; Dahling & Librizzi, 2015). The favorable connections between overqualification, disengagement, and job seeking behaviors were supported by Biaobin et al., (2021). A typical reaction to sentiments of overqualification is a reason to change one's employment, as overqualification causes feelings of inequity. Chen, Feng,

and Liu (2020), on the other hand, emphasized the necessity of identifying boundary conditions and established psychological empowerment as a moderator at the individual level. We claim that envious manager is a key manager-level contextual variable impacting the link between overqualification and turnover, based on a position survival drive. Supportive and good managers may provide overqualified employees with career support that extends beyond the employment agreement, enabling their access to job and organizational related resources, and donating to their professional success, reducing exit behaviors (Ballesteros Leiva, St-onge, & Arcand, 2021).). On the other hand, reporting to a superior who is envious of you should result in a lack of development prospects, career assistance, and sponsorship for you. According to the employment survival incentive, envious superiors are more likely to avoid assisting overqualified subordinates who could jeopardize their positions. As a result, when the level of envy is high, overqualification will be more favorably associated to turnover.

Hypothesis 3: Envious superiors will moderate the association between turnover and overqualification, such that the association will be positive when level of envy is high.

Method

We gathered information from staff and management at five-star hotels in the UAE. We enlisted the help of a market research firm to compile the data, resulting in a population of 450 employees with multiple roles and 185 managers. Web-based surveys were used to gather information (due to COVID-19 pandemic and for faster results). We collected data from managers at T1 and T4, as well as workers at T2 and T3, throughout the course of five periods. Each phase was separated by two weeks. Finally, we received voluntary turnover statistics from firm data at T5, eight months after T4. Our evaluation strategy was designed to reduce the influence of common method bias (Aguirre-Urreta, & Hu, 2019), as well as to be consistent with the sequencing of the links within our approach, with analyses performed at later time frames. The amount of jealousy as seen by

managers was measured in T1 because we assumed it to be the setting in which workers encounter and respond to their perceptions of overqualification. We picked an 8-month gap for analyzing voluntary turnover because we considered that it was long enough to provide employees enough time to leave the hotel while still being short enough to assess the effects of research hypotheses. In T1, we collected 68 surveys from managerial level, 174 from workers in T2, 179 from workers in T3, 65 supervisors and managers completed performance appraisals for 291 employees in T4, and voluntary turnover statistics for all individuals was supplied in T5. A total of 211 employees and 111 managers were included in the sample utilized to validate our hypothesis. The employee sample was 48% female, with an average age of 38 years (SD = 9.31) and 12 years of work experience (SD = 9.17). Employees possessed undergraduate degrees in 72 percent of cases, post-graduate degrees in 18 percent of cases, and associate or high school diplomas in ten percent of cases.

Measures

Questionnaires were administered in English, and utilized response options ranging between 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree.

Envious superiors

At Phase 1, superiors described their level of envy by means of a five-item scale by Wang & Sung (2016). We utilized a Likert as opposed to a agree/disagree to test the degree to which one's feel jealous toward overqualified staff, as opposed to disagree with job envy. This strategy is based on envy of workplace researchers' recommendations to take a cognitive rather than an emotive approach (Sterling, van de Ven, & Smith, 2016). "I am joules of overqualified subordinate" (reverse coded, =.87) was one example item.

Overqualification

At Phase 2, workers gave scores of their particular overqualification by means of the nine-item scale of Idowu (2017). A sample item was "My position needs less qualification than I possess" (α = .88).

Job satisfaction

At Phase 3, workers gave scores on their level of job satisfaction by means of ARLI, Aydemir, & Celik (2019) five-item measures. A sample item was "I am satisfied with my current job" (α = .86).

Performance Appraisal

At Phase 4, superiors gave scores on their performance appraisal for their subordinates by means of Rusu, Avasilcăi, & Huțu (2016) three-item measure. A sample item was "I think that this worker has great potential" (α = .91).

Employee turnover

At Phase 4, eight months after finishing the study, we gathered statistical data from the hotels about if each employee quit his job selectively or not (1 = Selectively quit the job,

0 = retained in the job). Based on the statistical data, we found that 9% quit their jobs on their own. We excluded the workers who were terminated or retired from the data.

Control variables

We used level of education and experience as possible controls due to their association with overqualification and consequences. Since using them have not added any change, we decided to report the finding with no controls.

Data analyses

Given our interest in inter-level correlations, we used Mplus Version 8.3 and linear regression to test our hypotheses. We evaluated a multilevel logit model for Hypothesis 3 because employee turnover was observed as numeric (0 = retain vs. 1 = quit).

We calculated the influence of group-level envious managers on the random slope for overqualification in respect to the primary result to investigate the hypothesized cross-level relations involving manager level of envy as the between-level moderator (i.e., employee turnover, job satisfaction and, performance appraisal).

When a substantial between-group relationship exists but is not stated in the model, a considerable yet misleading cross-level association may develop (Ott & Longnecker, 2015). In other words, if the former is not stated in the model, a substantial relationship between average overqualification and degree of envy (i.e., between-group relationship) could result in a significant cross-level interaction. We group-mean centered employee-level overqualification and added the relationship of management level of envy and average overqualification into the model to avoid confusing the cross-level and between-group causal relationships (Recchia, 2010). This method yields an unbiased cross-level correlation estimate. Moreover, in the presence of the group-level correlation analysis, grand-mean centering group-level predictors aids in the interpretation of the group-level main effects, and grand-mean centering group-level factors allows one to interpret the effect of a group-level determinant when all other group-level determinants are at their means. We calculated simple slopes at 1 SD above and below the mean of manager level of envy for significant cross-level and group-level interactions. We also used Hayes's (2012) online tool to assess the significance for substantial relations. Finally, intra class correlations (ICCs) were calculated using random-intercept null models with only the outcomes as input. Job satisfaction, performance appraisal, and staff turnover all had ICCs of 0.01, 0.06, and 0.43, accordingly. Because the variable is numeric and cannot be easily converted to a proportional scale, the ICC for employee turnover is on the operational scale; however, results from Martin et al., (2016) simulation indicate that a numeric ICC of 0.43 is roughly equivalent to a linear ICC of 0.10.

Results

Table 1 shows the means, SDs, and correlations among the variables. Overqualification was found to be negatively associated with job satisfaction ($r = -0.19$, $p < .05$) and

positively associated with employee turnover ($r = .17$, $p < .05$), the latter of which should be interpreted cautiously given the low turnover rate (10%) and the fact that a point-biserial correlation is not estimated using a significant change (Craig et al., 2013).

Insert Table 1 Here

No significant associations were detected between performance appraisal and overqualification. For Hypothesis 1, we anticipated that manager level of envy would moderate the relation between job satisfaction and overqualification, such that the relationship would be negative when manager level of envy is high.

This hypothesis was not supported because the cross-level relation was not significant ($\gamma = -.27$, $p > .05$) (Table 2). Nevertheless, the group-level relationship between group-mean overqualification and manager level of envy with regard to group-level job satisfaction was significant ($\gamma = -.48$, $p < .01$). As a verification, we expected the group-level relationship in a model deprived of the cross-level relationship, random slope, or group-mean-centered overqualification identified, as group-mean aligning the predictor variable and presenting its group mean at the concerning level could bias between-level factor assessments (Nezlek, 2012). The group level relations continued significant and reserved the unchanged form.

Insert Table 2 Here

A simple slope examination of the group level relations specified that the relationship among the average degree of job satisfaction and its group's average degree of overqualification is negative when the group's manager has high level of envy (simple slope = -1.09, $p < .01$), while the relationship is insignificant while the group's manager has low level of envy (simple slope = $-.25$, $p > .05$).

Investigations of significance examination exhibited that simple slopes are significant and negative when manager level of envy is higher than 1.76 on the 1–5 agreement measure,

which is comparable to 0.78 points under the sample mean. Particularly, when their shared manager feels higher level of envy, groups of workers with greater levels of overqualification tend to feel less satisfied with their job. Succinctly, even though Hypothesis 1 as not supported, we found a relation of the estimated form at the group level of investigation, indicating that overqualification at the collective stage could be significant.

In Hypothesis 2, we estimated that manager level of envy would moderate the relationship among performance appraisal and overqualification, such that the suggestion would be negative when manager degree of envy is high. We could not find support for this hypothesis because the cross-level relation was not consequential ($\gamma = -.18$, $p > .05$).

In Hypothesis 3, we assumed that manager level of envy would moderate the connection between employee turnover and overqualification and, such that the relation could be positive when manager degree of envy is high. This hypothesis was supported because the cross-level relation was significant ($\gamma = 4.73$, $p < .05$) (see Table 2), and a simple slopes examination showed that the link between employee turnover and overqualification was significant and positive when manager level of envy was high (simple slope = 5.46, $p < .05$) however was insignificant when manager level of envy was low (simple slope = −1.46, $p > .05$). A follow-up number of consequence examination showed that simple slopes are significant ($p < .05$) and positive when manager level of envy is more than 2.14 on the 1–5 measure, which is comparable to 0.39 points under the sample mean. Consequently, Hypothesis 3 was supported.

Discussion

In our study, we created and tested a model that included manager envy as a mediator of the association between employee overqualification and job-related variables. Despite the likelihood that these individuals may give benefits to firms in the form of greater job performance or citizenship activities, overqualification has been linked to a range of

undesirable behavioral and attitudinal effects for individuals (Maynard & Parfyonova, 2013). To date, the researchers have identified several moderators of the association among overqualification and consequences, with a focus on work values such as growth orientation (Luksyte et al., 2022) and aspects of the workplace environment that superiors can directly impact, such as empowerment (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). We argued that managers' own sense of envy within the company would play a key role in how subordinates reporting to them respond to their perception of overqualification, stimulating the assumption that managers are always encouraged to provide a work environment that will support employees cope with or leverage their extra skills. We hypothesized that superiors with a high level of envy will produce a less desirable atmosphere for employees who felt overqualified, based on the job protection incentive (Wang, Lu, & Wang, 2019). These managers are supposed to behave in ways that would help them keep their jobs, thus they may reject helping people who could pose a threat or a substitute for them. Previous research has linked job instability to a reluctance to share experience with others (Lee et al., 2021), and it has been used to predict a reluctance to mentor others (Schreurs et al., 2020). Based on this logic, we hypothesized the association between overqualification and job results to be influenced by the degree to which managers are envious in their employment. Our findings, which were based on data obtained in five phases from various sources, gave only partial support for our ideas, and the nature of relationships varied depending on the outcome of focus.

In terms of turnover as a result, the most distinct pattern of findings appeared. Only when managers felt envious were employee impressions of overqualification positively connected to turnover, whereas the association was minor for superiors who felt less jealous in their positions. Workers who believed they are overqualified tend to quit when working with envious superiors. We did not explore a cross-level relation for job satisfaction as a consequent. This might be not surprising, because the ICC for job satisfaction was 3%, which proposes that just 3% of the difference in employee job satisfaction was at the superior/group level. It sounds that employee job satisfaction

could be mainly specified by individual-level aspects such as behavior (Judge et al., 2017). However, we discovered a between-group relation that was in the estimated route. Particular, the group-level overqualification average was negatively linked to the job satisfaction average of group members when manager level of envy was high. These surprising findings propose the significance of investigating overqualification at several levels of examination because the predicted correlation appeared at the group level.

The existing study has mostly focused on the individual-level consequences of overqualification perception. Our findings showed that the group average of overqualification may have ramifications for group outcomes when utilizing an additive technique to aggregation (Kopelman, Prottas, & Falk, 2010). Even though higher overqualification did not always result in lower job satisfaction for employees reporting to envious managers at the individual level, working in a group with a higher average level of overqualification resulted in overall lower satisfaction with one's job job when supervised by an envious manager, according to our findings. This result shows that some of the consequences of overqualification on employment behavior may manifest at the group level, with groups with higher levels of overqualification being more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs. Through methods proposed by social information processing theory, the availability of a larger number of overqualified personnel in a group may impair everyone's sense of achievement in their professions due to exposure to a significant amount of staff who feel neglected and undervalued (Sumner & Ramirez, 2017).

The social environment may shape individual attitudes and behaviors, such as perceived overqualification and job satisfaction. Emotional contagion, through its effect on worker and work group feelings, decisions, and performances, has been shown in both organizational and psychological research to have substantial ripple effects in groups (Vijayalakshmi & Bhattacharyya, 2012), and groups are more likely to join to uncomfortable occasions and moods than they are toward comfortable ones (Salanova et al., 2014). Therefore, it is possible that the negative encountered by overqualified

individuals, particularly those working under a superior with a high level of envy, is amplified as they discuss their worries with their coworkers, resulting in poorer group job satisfaction.

One surprising finding of our investigation was the absent of any influences for superior performance appraisal. We noticed that the staff with high level of education received good performance appraisal, while the staff with longer experience received less scores in their performance appraisal. Therefore, the association between overqualification and performance appraisal was negative, but insignificant. These findings propose that the association between performance appraisal and overqualification could benefit from more investigation.

It is reasonable that other variances of individual level define association among performance appraisal and overqualification. Personnel with political knowledge, for instance, may assuage superiors' concerns about workers who think overqualified (Erdogan et al., 2020). On the other hand, envious superiors may evaluate overqualified workers unfairly.

Theoretical contributions

Our findings have implications for the prior work on overqualification and workplace envy. Employee overqualification studies have tended to emphasis on individual characteristics or workplace environment perceptions as likelihood influences that impact the extent to which feeling of overqualification affects results. We believe that no previous researches investigates the managerial level effect. By focusing on the moderators at superiors' level, we detect the probability of how superiors feeling could affect the subordinate reaction to overqualification and why they could not be successful and satisfies at work. In addition, our findings contribute to overqualification research by examining the different ranges of analysis where the influences of overqualification could arise. Job satisfaction had a larger link with overqualification at the collective level

than at the individual level, and the moderating influence of superior degree of envy was only visible at the collective level. Individuals who believed that they are overqualified were less pleased with their jobs, and these adverse effects only appeared when their superiors were envious. Our findings correspond to Howard et al (2022) finding that employee behaviors to sentiments of overqualification were dependent on the level of overqualification among peers. According to our results, when a group of overqualified reports to an envious superior, the whole group's job happiness suffers. Some of the impacts of overqualification may manifest at the group level. We further contribute to the existing literature on workplace envy by looking at the cross-level impacts of envious superior on subordinates. Despite the fact that the crossover impacts of workplace envy have been studied in connection to family members' consequences like emotional relationships (Andiappan & Dufour, 2020), we are uninformed of previous studies evaluating how envious superiors impact their subordinates.

Using a job preservation approach to envy at work (ARLI, Aydemir, & Celik, 2019), we hypothesized that superiors with a higher level of envy would act in ways that would maximize their job security, resulting in less support for workers, especially those who believe they are overqualified for their employment. The study of how envious superiors handle their subordinates is a significant addition to the literature on envy in the workplace. Envy's negative impacts in the workplace are not always restricted to employees' behavior on the job. In the case of superiors who act as a connecting pin, the negative impacts of envy may manifest in the type of work environment in which their direct subordinates operate.

Practical implications

The result that superior envy moderates the association between overqualification, job satisfaction, and performance appraisal has ramifications for managers in the field. These data show that the widely held belief that manager envy acts as a hiring barrier for overqualified individuals may be correct (Sikora et al., 2016). To clarify, most popular researchers discuss jealousy as a hiring obstacle, whereas our study focused on

individuals who felt overqualified after joining a firm. Nonetheless, our findings are instructive in that personnel overqualification had a more detrimental impact on employee job performance when reporting to superiors with high levels of envy. Organizations must guarantee that supervisory supervisors are not envious of these personnel in order to maintain a welcoming environment and profit from their credentials and knowledge. Managers who are are less confident of their own credentials and talents are less likely to act in ways that would help their employees advance in their careers, which should impact overqualified employees the most, given their own belief that they are entitled to a better job. Good management of personnel with surplus talents and qualifications may be contingent on managers' ability and desire to invest energy and resources in supporting, assisting, and growing them, which is unlikely to happen when superiors are fearful of losing their jobs.

Strengths, limitations, and future research directions

Our research has a variety of advantages. We used a time-lag and multiple-source study design, which allowed us to reduce the impact of several prevalent hazards. Our inquiry is multi-leveled, and it assisted in identifying the many levels of studies in which the linkages occurred. We were able to maintain consistency in hr practices and corporate culture by focusing on a single company that operated in different industries, while maintaining diversity in views of overqualification and jealous superiors.

The small sample size of our research is one of its major flaws. Subject erosion occurred as a result of the frameworks, resulting in a small sample size. While the findings supported some predictions, the generalizability of the outcomes may be improved with a bigger sample size. Exploring the mediators of the associations we discovered would be beneficial in future research. Examining why jealous superiors served as a moderator would be a natural continuation of this research. Employees who think that they are overqualified, for example, may have less career success while reporting to envious superiors because they have less access to support and information (Erdogan & Bauer, 2021). Employee job performance is predicted by the type and level of support received

(Bagdadli & Gianecchini, 2019), which may help to elucidate the characteristics of the link between perceived overqualification and job-related results. More research into the association amongst overqualification and performance appraisal is needed. The association between these two variables was found to be insignificant in our research. We did not account for employee jealousy at work, which could have influenced our findings. In particular, because workplace envy is a joint perspective among staff and management, and superior estimates of level of envy serve as a benchmark for employee perceptions, employee perceptions of envy may be a more important moderator.

Conclusion

Our investigation validates that the associations between overqualification and both employee job satisfaction and performance appraisal were contingent on superiors' level of envy. The findings suggest that group-level implications on how overqualification influences employees should be investigated. Overqualification as a result of reporting to envious supervisors had a detrimental impact on the perceived performance and achievement of individuals who were overqualified. The findings also emphasize the relevance of looking into overqualification at many levels of analysis, as well as the need to look into manager -level moderators.

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TABLE 1

Correlations among variables

Variables	Means	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Overqualification (T2)	3.08	0.79							
Employee Turnover (T3)	2.98	0.78	−0.19*						
Job Satisfaction (T4)	3.73	1.04	−0.16	0.13					
Performance Appraisal (T5)	0.06	0.28	0.17*	−0.02	0.03				
Education (T2)	2.88	0.92	0.22*	0.18	0.21*	−0.09			
Organizational tenure (T2)	108.24	89.57	0.02	0.01	−0.42**	0.07	−0.12		
Manager level of envy (T1)	3.06	0.91		0.12	−0.09	0.09	−0.12	−0.14	
Group-level overqualification (T2)	2.9	0.69		−0.67**	0.11	−0.01	0.12	−0.44*	−0.19

**p < .05*
***p < .01*
Note: Alphas are shown on the diagonal.
T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2; T3 = Time 3, T4 = Time 4, T5 = Time 5

TABLE 2

Results of hypothesis testing

	H1		***H2***		***H3***	
Variable	**Estimate**	**SE**	**Estimate**	**SE**	**Estimate**	**SE**
Threshold	3.08**	0.09	3.88**	0.14	−3.98**	1.24
Manager level of envy	0.03	0.14	−0.07	0.13	0.49	0.88
Group-level overqualification	−0.73**	0.09	0.12	0.17	−0.07	1.14
Manager level of envy X Group-level overqualification	−0.48**	0.17	0.04	0.23	1.68	1.17
Overqualification	−0.44	0.18	−0.42	0.59	2.63**	0.72
Manager level of envy X Overqualification	−0.27	0.27	−0.18	0.67	4.73*	2.32
Residual variance	0.58**	0.17	0.88**	0.27	0.10	0.10
Intercept variance	0.03	0.04	0.08	0.17	5.33	4.12
Slope variance	0.29	0.28	0.04	0.31	0.05	0.04
Pseudo-*R*2	0.41		0.04			

*$p < .05$

**$p < .01$