

# Does Leader-Follower Regulatory Fit Matter? The Role of Regulatory Fit in Followers’ Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Yuhyung Shin

Min Soo Kim

*Hanyang University*

Jin Nam Choi

*Seoul National University*

Mihee Kim

Won-Kyung Oh

*Hanyang University*

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*Due to increasing organizational demand and competition, employees’ goal-pursuit regulatory processes become pivotal to their work behavior and outcomes. Drawing on interpersonal regulatory fit theory, we proposed that leader prevention focus would moderate the relation between follower prevention focus and maintenance organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), whereas the relation between follower promotion focus and change OCB would be moderated by leader promotion focus. We tested these fit hypotheses using cross-level polynomial regression analyses conducted on 117 leader and 641 followers in South Korean firms. The results showed that followers’ prevention focus was positively associated with their maintenance OCB. This main effect was more pronounced when the leader’s prevention focus was high than when it was low. While we detected a significant main effect of follower promotion focus on change OCB, no fit effect was found for promotion focus. The implications of these findings as well as directions for future research are addressed.*

**Keywords:** *interpersonal regulatory fit; prevention focus; promotion focus; maintenance organizational citizenship behavior; change organizational citizenship behavior*

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*Corresponding author: Jin Nam Choi, College of Business Administration, Seoul National University, Shinlim-dong, San 56-1, Gwanak-gu, Seoul, 151-742, South Korea.*

*E-mail: jnchoi@snu.ac.kr*

The increasing complexity and interdependence of tasks in the workplace require employees to perform beyond their formal job duties. Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), which refers to discretionary, extra-role behavior beyond job descriptions, has been considered a factor that can contribute to organizational effectiveness by maintaining and enhancing the organization's social and psychological context (Borman & Motowildo, 1993; Organ, 1988). For this reason, a number of studies have explored the antecedents and boundary conditions of OCB. In particular, research grounded in person-environment (P-E) fit theory has shown that when employees' own characteristics are congruent with those of their work environment, they tend to display more OCB (Kristof, 1996; Kristof-Brown, Zimmerman, & Johnson, 2005). Drawing on this stream of research, we attend to the role of fit in terms of regulatory focus in predicting employees' OCB. Regulatory focus refers to an individual's strategic orientation with respect to how to regulate his or her behavior to strive for desired outcomes (Higgins, 1997). According to regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997), promotion focus is a strategic orientation that regulates an individual's cognition and behavior toward the achievement of positive outcomes, whereas *prevention focus* pertains to a strategic orientation toward the avoidance of negative outcomes.

We contend that fit in terms of regulatory focus is important to OCB for several reasons. First, the OCB literature suggests that OCB is a goal-driven, adaptive behavior, which is strongly affected by employees' motivation and regulatory processes (Bowler, Halbesleben, & Paul, 2010; Mossholder, Richardson, & Setton, 2011). Thus, an employee's decision to engage in OCB is likely to be influenced by the employee's goal-pursuit strategic orientations as well as the alignment with the manner in which goals are pursued in the environment (Higgins, 2000). Second, prior studies demonstrated that regulatory focus is a proximal predictor of employee work behavior and performance (e.g., Johnson, Shull, & Wallace, 2011; Lanaj, Chang, & Johnson, 2012). For instance, Lanaj et al. (2012) reported that regulatory focus is a proximal mechanism that intervenes between distal antecedents (i.e., personality) and work behavior. Moreover, Lanaj et al.'s meta-analytic results indicated that regulatory focus predicted significant variance in OCB after controlling for personality, motivation, and attitudinal variables. On the basis of these findings, we argue that fit in terms of regulatory focus should be more strongly related to OCB than fit in terms of more distal antecedents. Third, there is empirical evidence that regulatory focus affects the behaviors that individuals display in their interactions with others (De Cremer, Mayer, van Dijke, Schouten, & Bardes, 2009). More specifically, regulatory focus has been found to be pivotal in the context of social interactions between leaders and followers (De Cremer et al., 2009). Thus, the alignment between a leader's regulatory focus and that of a follower should be linked to the follower's prosocial behavior or interpersonally directed OCB.

A growing body of research has suggested that not only followers' own regulatory focus but also leaders' regulatory focus relates to followers' work behaviors and outcomes (e.g., Kruglanski, Pierro, & Higgins, 2007; Wu, McMullen, Neubert, & Yi, 2008). In line with this stream of research, interpersonal regulatory fit theory posits that fit between an individual's regulatory orientation and that of his or her interaction partner influences the individual's approach to goals (Righetti, Finkenauer, & Rusbult, 2011). Despite these potential roles of interpersonal regulatory fit in predicting work behaviors, very little is known about the link between leader-follower regulatory fit and OCB. To fill this gap, we test the relationship between leader-follower regulatory fit and follower OCB by exploring the moderating effect of leader regulatory focus on the relation between follower regulatory focus and OCB.

Another limitation of prior research on interpersonal regulatory fit is the lack of investigation of different forms of OCB. Dewett and Denisi (2007) classified OCB into maintenance and change OCB depending on whether OCB is targeted toward sustaining the status quo or improving the current organizational situation. They proposed strong associations between prevention focus and maintenance OCB and between promotion focus and change OCB. Drawing on these propositions, we attend to the differential relationships between prevention and promotion fit and the two forms of OCB. More specifically, we reason that while individuals' prevention and promotion foci are associated with their relevant form of OCB, these relationships will be more pronounced when they operate in a leadership context that is supportive of their own regulatory focus. As such, our study advances the extant body of research on interpersonal regulatory fit by delineating the differential roles of leader-follower prevention and promotion fit in predicting maintenance and change OCB.

## Theoretical Background and Research

Building upon Dewett and Denisi's (2007) typology, we categorize OCB into maintenance and change OCB. Maintenance OCB encompasses behaviors intended to sustain the status quo and affiliative behaviors purported to support relationships (Van Dyne, Cummings, & McLean Parks, 1995). While the OCB literature has been dominated by maintenance OCB, a growing body of research has highlighted the importance of change OCB in organizations (e.g., Bettencourt, 2004; Choi, 2007). Change OCB refers to constructive efforts to identify and implement changes with regard to work methods, policies, and procedures (Bettencourt, 2004; Choi, 2007). Examples of change OCB are future-oriented, improvement-related actions, such as personal initiative, taking charge, innovative behavior, and voice behavior (Van Dyne et al., 1995). Due to increasing competition and rapid changes in the business environment, employees are required to behave in a more proactive and innovative manner in their workplace (Bettencourt, 2004; Frese, Fay, Hilburger, Leng, & Tag, 1997). Therefore, in the present study, we focus on both maintenance and change OCB as crucial outcomes of leader-follower regulatory fit.

Although very few, prior studies on regulatory focus and maintenance OCB have yielded mixed findings. Scholars have reported a positive association between promotion focus and interpersonally directed maintenance OCB (OCB-I; e.g., Neubert, Kacmar, Carlson, Chonko, & Roberts, 2008; J. Wallace, Johnson, & Frazier, 2009) but a weak or even a negative relationship between prevention focus and OCB-I and organizationally directed maintenance OCB (OCB-O; e.g., Lanaj et al., 2012; Wallace et al., 2009). In contrast, De Cremer et al.'s (2009) findings demonstrated that the relationship between self-sacrificial leadership emphasizing obligations and follower OCB-I was more pronounced for prevention-focused followers. We believe that considering contextual factors of the regulatory focus-OCB relationship can resolve such an inconsistency and provide more elaborate understanding of the links between prevention and promotion foci and different forms of OCB. To this end, we explore the role of leader regulatory focus as a contextual factor that strengthens or weakens the relationships between followers' different regulatory foci and different types of OCB.

Prior studies into the relationship between regulatory focus and OCB have mainly focused on broadly defined OCB, which reflected maintenance OCB rather than change OCB (e.g., Lanaj et al., 2012; J. Wallace et al., 2009). Lanaj et al. (2012) acknowledged the investigation

of broadly defined OCB as one of their study limitations and called for future research that examines regulatory focus and different forms of OCB. In response to this research call, we aim at untangling the complicated dynamics among leader regulatory focus, follower regulatory focus, and different forms of OCB by drawing on P-E fit theory and interpersonal regulatory fit theory.

The basic tenet of regulatory focus theory (Higgins, 1997, 1998) is that people use different self-regulatory systems to attain a goal. That is, when individuals are in a promotion focus, they are concerned with approaching positive outcomes and fulfilling their hopes and aspirations, thereby adopting eagerness strategies, characterized by risk taking, achievement, and advancement. Individuals with a promotion focus tend to pursue development and change and explore creative and novel behaviors (Levontin, Kluger, & Van Dijk, 2004). In contrast, prevention focus has to do with avoiding negative outcomes. Thus, individuals in a prevention focus use vigilance strategies, which refer to avoiding mistakes or errors and following rules (Higgins, 1997). These individuals are concerned with ought, duties, and responsibilities, and they pursue safety, security, and maintenance of routines and status quo (Levontin et al., 2004). The regulatory focus literature suggests that although regulatory focus that employees display in a work context can be affected by the characteristics of the work context, regulatory focus is a chronic and relatively stable disposition (Higgins, 1997, 2000). Moreover, empirical studies demonstrated that promotion and prevention foci are independent of one another, and thus, an individual can display high levels of promotion and prevention foci at the same time (Förster, Higgins, & Bianco, 2003; C. Wallace & Chen, 2006; J. Wallace et al., 2009).

Based on his notion of regulatory focus, Higgins (2000) developed regulatory fit theory, which maintains that an individual's motivational strength or goal commitment increases when the manner of goal pursuit fits the regulatory focus of the individual. For instance, fit occurs when promotion-oriented individuals pursue goals in an eager manner and prevention-oriented individuals pursue goals in a vigilant manner. Empirical research indicated that regulatory fit is positively associated with engagement in and motivation toward goal pursuit and task performance (e.g., Förster, Higgins, & Idson, 1998; Shah, Higgins, & Friedman, 1998).

Departing from the original premise of regulatory fit theory, scholars have recently attended to the role of interpersonal regulatory fit, which refers to fit between a person's regulatory focus and that of his or her interaction partner (Righetti et al., 2011). For instance, Benjamin and Flynn (2006) reported that transformational leadership was associated with greater motivation for individuals in a promotion mode than those in a prevention mode. Similarly, Kruglanski et al.'s (2007) findings showed that followers' turnover intentions decreased when promotion-oriented followers interacted with transformational leaders and when prevention-oriented followers interacted with transactional leaders. Likewise, Stam, van Knippenberg, and Wisse (2010) and Venus, Stam, and van Knippenberg (2013) found that followers demonstrated increased performance when their regulatory focus matched the manner in which their leader communicated a vision. More specifically, promotion-focused followers performed better when their leader emphasized what they wanted to reach. On the contrary, prevention-focused followers exhibited greater performance when their leader stressed avoiding negative outcomes to attain organizational goals. Drawing on these findings, we anticipate the main effect of follower regulatory focus on its relevant form of OCB

and the moderating effect of leader regulatory focus on this relationship. Our hypotheses are explained in detail in the next sections.

## Hypothesis Development

### *Relationship Between Follower Regulatory Focus and OCB*

We draw on interpersonal regulatory fit theory and P-E fit theory as overarching frameworks for our research hypotheses. Interpersonal regulatory focus theory postulates that when individuals' regulatory orientation matches that of their interaction partner, their motivation to achieve goals becomes stronger (Righetti et al., 2011). According to this theory, interaction with others who endorse similar regulatory orientations causes individuals to engage in natural tendencies that "feel right" (Higgins, 2005). That is, when individuals and their interaction partners pursue their goals in the same manner, the individuals feel right about the behavior that they are performing to achieve desired outcomes, which intensifies their motivation to engage in that behavior (Higgins, 2005). In a similar vein, P-E fit theory holds that individuals tend to generate more positive work outcomes when their attributes and preferences fit the characteristics of the work environment (Kristof, 1996). Grounded in these theories, we presume that individuals tend to perform beyond their core tasks primarily in ways that align with their own individual preferences, and this tendency becomes stronger under the condition of interpersonal regulatory fit.

Dewett and Denisi (2007) propose that promotion and prevention foci are differentially associated with change and maintenance OCB. Employees' baseline levels of prevention and promotion foci affect the type of OCB that they primarily display in the workplace (Dewett & Denisi, 2007). Specifically, because prevention-focused individuals are motivated by their obligations and duties and avoid risk taking, they tend to engage in citizenship behaviors that protect the status quo and maintain the current functions of the organization. On the contrary, individuals with a promotion focus are inclined toward risk taking and are driven by their ideals and aspirations (Crowe & Higgins, 1997; Friedman & Förster, 2001; Higgins, 1997), thereby displaying future-oriented and change-oriented behaviors. We therefore formulate the following hypotheses:

*Hypothesis 1:* Followers' prevention focus will be positively related to their maintenance OCB.

*Hypothesis 2:* Followers' promotion focus will be positively related to their change OCB.

### *Relationship Between Leader-Follower Regulatory Fit and OCB*

While we assume that followers' regulatory focus determines the type of OCB they primarily engage in, simply having the preference is not sufficient to generate the respective behaviors, particularly in organizational settings where the expression of the preference relies on the presence of facilitating contextual conditions. One of the primary ways in which people identify a context that is supportive of their own desires, values, and preferences is fit perceptions (Kristof, 1996). As leaders often define the day-to-day context within which an employee operates, regulatory fit with a leader can be a powerful source of motivation to engage in preferred discretionary behaviors (DeCremer et al., 2009; Kruglanski et al., 2007). Therefore, fit with the leader's regulatory focus should serve as a boundary condition that

strengthens the association between follower regulatory focus and its respective form of OCB.

More specifically, maintenance OCB should increase when prevention-oriented employees work with a leader who possesses a similar orientation. When prevention-oriented followers interact with a leader in the same regulatory orientation, their needs for the maintenance and protection of the current interpersonal relationships are likely to be reinforced by the leader (Lockwood, Jordan, & Kunda, 2002), which in turn will lead to more maintenance OCB. At the same time, as their concern for duties and responsibilities is resonated by the prevention-oriented leader, they exhibit more maintenance OCB, such as compliance, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue. Therefore, we predict that fit in terms of prevention focus will enhance the main effect of follower prevention focus on maintenance OCB, whereas misfit will diminish or eliminate such a main effect. That is, as leaders increase in their level of prevention focus, the effect of followers' prevention focus on their maintenance OCB is expected to become more pronounced, which suggests a strong association between follower prevention focus and maintenance OCB for leaders with a high prevention focus but a weak relationship between follower prevention focus and maintenance OCB for leaders with a low prevention focus. Hence, the following is hypothesized:

*Hypothesis 3:* Leader prevention focus will moderate the relation between follower prevention focus and maintenance OCB. Specifically, high leader prevention focus will enhance the effect of follower prevention focus on maintenance OCB, and low leader prevention focus will diminish the effect.

Given that change OCB involves risk taking, promotion-focused employees, who rarely experience fear of risks and failures, tend to perform change OCB (Dewett & Denisi, 2007). However, as proposed by interpersonal regulatory fit theory and P-E fit theory, a leader's promotion focus provides a context that strengthens the main effect of follower promotion focus on change OCB. Individuals with a promotion focus strive to attain positive consequences and are driven by ideals, aspiration, and risk taking. Because they are future oriented and often challenge the status quo, their motivation to engage in change OCB will be intensified when they interact with a promotion-oriented leader. Promotion-oriented leaders encourage followers' change OCB and provide them with more opportunities to engage in such behaviors. We therefore put forth the following hypothesis:

*Hypothesis 4:* Leader promotion focus will moderate the relation between follower promotion focus and change OCB. Specifically, high leader promotion focus will enhance the effect of follower promotion focus on change OCB, and low leader promotion focus will diminish the effect.

## Method

### *Sample and Data Collection Procedure*

Data were collected from leaders and followers from 117 teams in 14 South Korean companies. We targeted approximately 150 companies located in the northeastern region of Seoul and conducted stratified sampling based on firm size and industry characteristics, leading to a final sample of 14 companies that represented the characteristics of the population. The 14 companies varied in terms of size and industry: service (50%), banking and financial service

(21.4%), manufacturing (14.3%), and other (14.3%). The participating companies possessed a team-based structure, and their teams performed various functions (e.g., R&D, sales, marketing). Each team consisted of one formal leader and several followers. The team leader was in charge of decision making with respect to goal setting, task assignment, resource allocation, work scheduling, and human resource management within the team. The team leader was collocated with his or her team members and frequently interacted with them.

We contacted human resource (HR) staff of each company and asked the person to randomly select 10 teams in their company. The HR staff distributed surveys to both the leader and members of the 10 teams, along with a cover letter assuring confidentiality, anonymity, and voluntary participation. Of 140 teams contacted by the HR staff, 117 leaders and 660 followers returned their survey (response rate = 83%). After deleting 19 unmatched responses, the final sample consisted of 117 leaders and 641 followers.

The leaders' average age was 46.1 ( $SD = 5.3$ ), and 14% of the leaders were female. The leaders' average organizational tenure and average tenure in their current team were 17.2 years ( $SD = 7.9$ ) and 3.9 years ( $SD = 4.8$ ), respectively. The followers' average age was 36.2 ( $SD = 7.2$ ), and 32% were female employees. The followers' average organizational tenure and average tenure in current team was 9.0 years ( $SD = 7.5$ ) and 2.7 years ( $SD = 2.8$ ), respectively. The followers performed a variety of organizational functions: planning/strategy/operation (32%), sales (14%), HR management (12%), finance/accounting (6%), R&D (4%), and marketing (4%).

### Measures

Following Brislin's (1986) back-translation procedure, the original survey was first translated into Korean by a bilingual graduate student, who was blind to the research objectives and hypotheses. Another bilingual graduate student independently translated the Korean survey into English. Then, a bilingual management professor compared the original English survey and the back-translated one and found that they were nearly identical except for a few minor discrepancies in the wording of the survey items, which demonstrates the equivalence of the Korean and English versions of the survey. This procedure has been commonly used in prior research (e.g., Gibson, 1999; Joo, Song, Lim, & Yoon, 2012; Liao, Liu, & Loi, 2010).

In the current study, all variables were assessed with multi-item measures using a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 5 = *strongly agree*). The leaders provided data on their own prevention and promotion foci. The followers also reported on the levels of their own prevention and promotion foci as well as the extent to which they engaged in maintenance and change OCB.

*Prevention focus.* Prevention focus was assessed with three items derived from the Work Regulatory Focus (WRF) Scale ( $\alpha = .73$  for leaders,  $.75$  for followers; Neubert et al., 2008). The three items were "Job security is an important factor for me in any job search," "I focus my attention on avoiding failure at work," and "I am very careful to avoid exposing myself to potential losses at work."

*Promotion focus.* Similar to prevention focus, promotion focus was measured with three items from the WRF Scale ( $\alpha = .81$  for leaders,  $.83$  for followers). The three items were "A chance to grow is an important factor for me when looking for a job," "I focus on accomplishing job tasks that will further my advancement," and "My work priorities are impacted by a clear picture of what I aspire to be."

*Maintenance OCB.* Drawing on the OCB literature, we categorized maintenance OCB into OCB-I and OCB-O depending on whether OCB was directed to other organizational members or the organization. Although we had no specific hypotheses that suggested different roles for these forms of OCB, we used separate measurement scales for OCB-I and OCB-O and included them in all subsequent analyses. We adopted six items ( $\alpha = .87$ ) and five items ( $\alpha = .80$ ) from Williams and Anderson's (1991) OCB scale to construct scales of OCB-I and OCB-O, respectively. Sample items of the OCB-I scale were "I help others who have heavy workloads," "I take a personal interest in other employees," and "I spend time to listen to co-workers' problems and worries." The examples of the OCB-O scale included "I adhere to informal rules devised to maintain order," "I do not take undeserved work break," and "I do not spend much time with personal phone conversation."

*Change OCB.* Change OCB was measured with seven items ( $\alpha = .91$ ) drawn from Morrison and Phelps's (1999) and Scott and Bruce's (1994) scales. Sample items were "I frequently come up with new ideas or new work process to perform my task," "I often suggest changes to unproductive rules or policies," and "I often change the way I work to improve efficiency."

*Control variables.* In our all subsequent analyses, we controlled for a number of variables at both individual and team levels. We controlled for the gender (0 = female, 1 = male) and team tenure (i.e., years spent in the current team) of each follower and leader due to potential familiarity effect (Van Vianen, Shen, & Chuang, 2011). Based on empirical findings demonstrating a significant correlation between prevention and promotion foci (e.g., Hamstra, Van Yperen, Wisse, & Sassenberg, 2011; Neubert et al., 2008; J. Wallace et al., 2009), we controlled for the other type of regulatory focus in examining the fit effect of each regulatory focus. For example, when we tested the effect of leader-follower prevention fit, we included the promotion focus of the leader and the follower in our analyses. Additionally, given that followers' self-report of OCB can be affected by social desirability (Organ, 1988), we controlled for their social desirability in all subsequent analyses. Social desirability refers to "the need for social approval and acceptance and the belief that it can be attained by means of culturally acceptable and appropriate behaviors" (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964, p. 109). Because respondents' social desirability is a primary source of common method biases, it is necessary to reduce biases resulting from social desirability (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). Therefore, we measured and controlled for social desirability using Stöber's (2001) Social Desirability Scale-17.

As team-level control variables, team size was operationalized as the number of team members (Choi, Price, & Vinokur, 2003). In addition, drawing on the finding that task type affects regulatory focus (Dimotakis, Davison, & Hollenbeck, 2012; Van Dijk & Kluger, 2011), we controlled for team task type using two dummy variables representing R&D and sales. As mentioned earlier, team leaders' gender and team tenure were also included as team-level control variables.

## Results

Tables 1 and 2 present the means, standard deviations, correlations, and reliability coefficients of individual- and group-level variables, respectively. As shown in Table 1,



**Table 1**  
**Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Individual-Level Variables**

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Gender (follower)	0.67	0.47								
2. Team tenure (follower)	2.73	2.86	.00							
3. Social desirability (follower)	3.75	0.59	.13**	.01						
4. Prevention focus (follower)	4.21	0.60	.14**	.10*	.44**	(.75) <sup>a</sup>				
5. Promotion focus (follower)	3.60	0.64	.02	.03	.40**	.37**	(.83)			
6. OCB-I	3.77	0.61	.16**	.00	.54**	.44**	.33**	(.80)		
7. OCB-O	3.89	0.61	.15**	.05	.56**	.56**	.32**	.57**	(.87)	
8. Change OCB	3.53	0.66	.28**	.10*	.45**	.35**	.41**	.41**	.54**	(.91)

Note: *N* = 641. OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; OCB-I = interpersonally directed maintenance OCB; OCB-O = organizationally directed maintenance OCB.

<sup>a</sup>Reliability coefficients are reported along the diagonal.

\**p* < .05.

\*\**p* < .01.

**Table 2**  
**Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Team-Level Variables**

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender (leader)	0.85	0.35							
2. Team tenure (leader)	3.93	4.82	-.15						
3. Team size	9.12	3.89	.01	.03					
4. Task type—Sales	0.14	0.35	-.47**	.08	.03				
5. Task type—R&D	0.10	0.30	-.10	.09	.08	-.14			
6. Prevention focus (leader)	4.41	0.53	.02	-.08	-.01	-.18	.03	(.73) <sup>a</sup>	
7. Promotion focus (leader)	3.77	0.60	-.07	-.12	.01	-.01	.05	.35**	(.81)

Note: *N* = 117.

<sup>a</sup>Reliability coefficients are reported along the diagonal.

\**p* < .05.

\*\**p* < .01.

followers' social desirability was significantly correlated with their two regulatory foci and OCB, suggesting the necessity to control for social desirability in all data analyses. As reported in Table 2, leaders' gender, team tenure, team size, and the two task-type dummies were not related to their regulatory foci.

Because we found moderate correlations between the two regulatory foci and among the three types of OCB, we conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to assess the discriminant validity of our study measures. Table 3 depicts the results of model fit comparisons. The hypothesized five-factor model yielded an acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 1299.64$ ,  $df = 314$ ,  $p < .01$ , comparative fit index [CFI] = .90, Tucker-Lewis index [TLI] = .87, root mean square error of approximation [RMSEA] = .07; Hu & Bentler, 1999). In addition, the results indicated that alternative four-factor models (combining prevention and promotion foci or OCB-I and OCB-O) and a three-factor model (combining OCB-I, OCB-O, and change

**Table 3**  
**Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis**

Model	$\chi^2$	<i>df</i>	$\Delta\chi^2(\Delta df)$	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Hypothesized five-factor model	1299.64	314	—	.90	.87	.07
Four-factor model (combining prevention and promotion foci)	2205.16	318	905.52(4)	.81	.76	.10
Four-factor model (combining OCB-I and OCB-O)	1685.33	318	385.69(4)	.86	.83	.08
Three-factor model (combining OCB-I, OCB-O, and change OCB)	2777.35	321	1477.71(7)	.74	.69	.11

*Note:*  $N = 641$ . CFI = comparative fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis index; RMSEA = root mean square error of approximation; OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; OCB-I = interpersonally directed maintenance OCB; OCB-O = organizationally directed maintenance OCB.

OCB) exhibited a significantly worse fit to the data than the hypothesized five-factor model, demonstrating the sufficient discriminant validity of the measures of the five study variables reported by followers.

In the present study, as the measures of regulatory focus and OCB were all obtained from employees' self-report, common method variance might have affected the results of our analyses. To resolve this issue, we controlled for the single unmeasured latent factor in CFA (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The results of the CFA yielded an acceptable fit to the data ( $\chi^2 = 1084.21$ ,  $df = 287$ ,  $p < .01$ , CFI = .92, TLI = .89, RMSEA = .07). Furthermore, when the unmeasured latent factor was included in the model, intercorrelations among the latent factors remained almost identical. These findings suggest that common method bias variance was not a serious threat in our study.

### *Hypothesis Testing*

As analytic tools for testing our propositions, we adopted polynomial regression procedures and three-dimensional response surface plot analysis since the use of difference scores has often been criticized for its methodological problems in testing congruence effects (Cronbach & Furby, 1970; Edwards & Parry, 1993). Polynomial regression equations contain higher-order terms of the person (P) component and the environment (E) component, such as the squares of the two components and their product, which are useful to examine the effect of P-E fit on outcome variables (Edwards, 1994; Edwards & Parry, 1993). Given that non-independence within a group can bias standard error estimates and lead to inflated relationships among variables (Bliese, 2000), we incorporated our polynomial regression models with hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), as recommended by Jansen and Kristof-Brown (2005). HLM allows the investigation of relationships at different levels while maintaining the appropriate levels of analysis (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992; Hoffmann, 1997). In our HLM analysis, Level 1 consists of individual-level predictors, such as the follower's regulatory focus and individual-level control variables (i.e., the follower's gender, team tenure, social desirability, and opposite regulatory focus). Level 2 comprises team-level variables, such as the team leader's regulatory focus and team-level control variables (i.e., the leader's gender, team tenure, and opposite regulatory focus, team size, and two task-type dummies).

We tested our hypotheses by regressing each type of OCB on the set of control variables and five polynomial terms: follower regulatory focus (F), leader regulatory focus (L), follower regulatory focus squared (F<sup>2</sup>), the product of follower regulatory focus and leader regulatory focus (F\*L), and leader regulatory focus squared (L<sup>2</sup>). To reduce multicollinearity and facilitate the interpretation of the results, we used scale-centered F and L prior to calculating the second-order terms. We performed this polynomial regression analysis for prevention and promotion foci, respectively. The resulting set of HLM equations were specified as follows.

The Level 1 equation is

$$Y_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{Follower's gender})_{ij} + \beta_{2j}(\text{Follower's team tenure})_{ij} + \beta_{3j}(\text{Follower's social desirability})_{ij} + \beta_{4j}(\text{Follower's opposite regulatory focus})_{ij} + \beta_{5j}(F)_{ij} + \beta_{6j}(F^2)_{ij} + e_{ij}.$$

The Level 2 equation is

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{Leader's gender})_j + \gamma_{02}(\text{Leader's team tenure})_j + \gamma_{03}(\text{Team size})_j + \gamma_{04}(\text{Task type—Sales})_j + \gamma_{05}(\text{Task type—R\&D})_j + \gamma_{06}(\text{Leader's opposite regulatory focus})_j + \gamma_{07}(L)_j + \gamma_{08}(L^2)_j + u_{0j}.$$

$$\beta_{1j} = \gamma_{10}$$

$$\beta_{2j} = \gamma_{20}$$

$$\beta_{3j} = \gamma_{30}$$

$$\beta_{4j} = \gamma_{40}$$

$$\beta_{5j} = \gamma_{50} + \gamma_{51}(L)_j + u_{5j}$$

$$\beta_{6j} = \gamma_{60}$$

The mixed model equation of the above two equations was specified as follows:

$$Y_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{Leader's gender})_j + \gamma_{02}(\text{Leader's team tenure})_j + \gamma_{03}(\text{Team size})_j + \gamma_{04}(\text{Task type—Sales})_j + \gamma_{05}(\text{Task type—R\&D})_j + \gamma_{06}(\text{Leader's opposite regulatory focus})_j + \gamma_{07}(L)_j + \gamma_{08}(L^2)_j + \gamma_{10}(\text{Follower's gender})_j + \gamma_{20}(\text{Follower's team tenure})_j + \gamma_{30}(\text{Follower's social desirability})_j + \gamma_{40}(\text{Follower's opposite regulatory focus})_j + \gamma_{50}(F)_j + \gamma_{51}(F*L)_j + \gamma_{60}(F^2)_j + u_{0j} + u_{5j}(F)_j + e_{ij}. \tag{1}$$

Below is the polynomial regression equation that Edwards and Parry (1993) proposed:

$$Z = b_0 + b_1X + b_2Y + b_3X^2 + b_4(X*Y) + b_5Y^2 + e. \tag{2}$$

By comparing Equations 1 and 2, we found that the mixed-model equation (Equation 1) matched Edwards and Parry's (1993) equation (Equation 2). That is,  $b_3$ ,  $b_4$ , and  $b_5$  in Equation 2 corresponded to  $\gamma_{08}$ ,  $\gamma_{51}$ , and  $\gamma_{60}$  in Equation 1, respectively. According to Edwards and Parry, when higher-order terms (i.e., F<sup>2</sup>, F\*L, and L<sup>2</sup>) are not significant, only a linear or additive relationship exists among F, L, and the dependent variable. However, if any of the higher-order terms is significant, the effect of fit between F and L on the dependent variable can be depicted on a three-dimensional graph by drawing response surface plots. In order for a fit effect to be observed, there should be a downward curvature along the line of misfit (F = -L line) in a three-dimensional graph (Edwards & Cable, 2009). In other words, the level

**Table 4**  
**Results of Cross-Level Polynomial Regression Analysis for Leader-Follower Prevention Fit**

Variable	OCB-I			OCB-O			Change OCB		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	3.60**	3.33**	3.41**	3.51**	3.05**	3.22**	3.09**	2.90**	3.09**
Gender (follower)	.14**	.12**	.11*	.08	.08	.07	.35**	.34**	.34**
Team tenure (follower)	.00	.00	.00	.01	.00	.00	.03**	.03**	.03**
Social desirability (follower)	.46**	.38**	.38**	.46**	.33**	.33**	.28**	.24**	.24**
Gender (leader)	-.02	-.07	-.11	.21*	.14	.14	.03	.00	.00
Team tenure (leader)	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Team size	.00	.00	.00	.01	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Task type—sales	-.16	-.01	.00	-.07	.10	.11	.04	.13	.13
Task Type—R&D	.08	.16	.15	.07	.09	.09	.03	.05	.03
FPM	.16**	.10**	.10**	.17**	.04	.06	.34**	.30**	.29**
LPM	.00	.00	.00	.02	.00	.00	-.05	-.05	-.05
FPV		.27**	.10		.46**	.17		.16**	-.14
LPV		.01	.18		.04	.01		.04	.01
FPV <sup>2</sup>			-.05			.03			.04
FPV*LPV			.19*			.15*			.15
LPV <sup>2</sup>			-.14			-.05			-.05

*Note:* OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; OCB-I = interpersonally directed maintenance OCB; OCB-O = organizationally directed maintenance OCB; FPV = follower prevention focus; LPV = leader prevention focus; FPM = follower promotion focus; LPM = leader promotion focus.

\* $p < .05$ .

\*\* $p < .01$ .

of OCB should be higher when there is a fit between a leader's regulatory focus and that of a follower ( $F = L$  line) than when there is a misfit.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 predicted the main effects of follower prevention focus on maintenance OCB and of follower promotion focus on change OCB, respectively. While we did not hypothesize any differential relationships between leader-follower prevention fit and specific forms of maintenance OCB (i.e., OCB-I and OCB-O), we repeated the aforementioned cross-level polynomial regression analysis for both OCB-I and OCB-O. Table 4 depicts the fixed-effect estimates of the fit parameters. The effects of the control variables on the dependent variables are presented in Model 1 of Table 4. Models 2 and 3 report the main effects of  $F$  and  $L$  and the effects of  $F^2$ ,  $F*L$ , and  $L^2$ , respectively. As depicted in Model 2 of Table 4, followers' prevention focus was positively associated with their OCB-I ( $\beta = .27, p < .01$ ) and OCB-O ( $\beta = .46, p < .01$ ). Likewise, Model 2 of Table 5 shows a significant main effect of follower promotion focus on change OCB ( $\beta = .30, p < .01$ ). Thus, Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported.

Hypothesis 3 proposed the moderating effect of leader prevention focus on the relation between follower prevention focus and maintenance OCB. As presented in Model 3 of Table 4, the product term of leader prevention focus and follower prevention focus significantly predicted followers' OCB-I ( $\gamma_{51} = .19, p < .05$ ), after controlling for the promotion focus of the

**Table 5**  
**Results of Cross-Level Polynomial Regression Analysis for Leader-Follower Promotion Fit**

Variable	OCB-I			OCB-O			Change OCB		
	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Constant	3.37**	3.33**	3.37**	3.10**	3.05**	3.05**	2.99**	2.90**	2.89**
Gender (follower)	.12*	.12*	.12*	.07	.08	.07	.33**	.34**	.33**
Team tenure (follower)	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.03**	.03**	.03**
Social desirability (follower)	.43**	.38**	.38**	.36**	.33**	.33**	.34**	.24**	.23**
Gender (leader)	-.09	-.07	-.03	.10	.14	.14	-.04	.00	-.01
Team tenure (leader)	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Team size	.00	.00	-.01	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00	.00
Task type—sales	-.05	-.01	.00	.09	.10	.10	.12	.13	.11
Task type—R&D	.10	.16	.09	.08	.09	.09	.06	.05	.02
FPV	.30**	.27**	.27**	.46**	.46**	.46**	.25**	.16**	.16**
LPV	.03	.01	.00	.04	.04	.01	.02	.04	.04
FPM		.10*	-.01		.04	.02		.30**	.31**
LPM		.00	-.09		.00	-.02		-.05	-.08
FPM <sup>2</sup>			.00			.03			.03
FPM*LPM			.14*			-.03			-.06
LPM <sup>2</sup>			.02			.05			.06

Note: OCB = organizational citizenship behavior; OCB-I = interpersonally directed maintenance OCB; OCB-O = organizationally directed maintenance OCB; FPV = follower prevention focus; LPV = leader prevention focus; FPM = follower promotion focus; LPM = leader promotion focus.

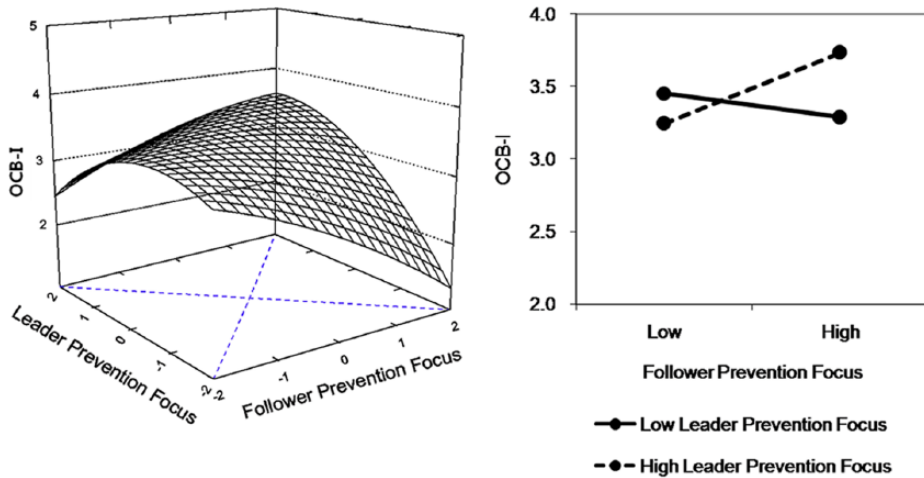
\* $p < .05$ .

\*\* $p < .01$ .

leader and the follower. To facilitate interpretation of the findings of the cross-level polynomial regression, we plotted the relationship among leader prevention focus, follower prevention focus, and OCB-I in a three-dimensional graph. The resulting response surface (Figure 1) shows that followers' OCB-I is highest along the line of perfect fit ( $F = L$  line). As the scores of the leader and the follower deviate from the line of perfect fit, the follower's OCB-I decreases. In general, the convex curvature along the line of misfit indicates that fit is associated with a higher level of outcomes than misfit. When a follower's prevention focus is aligned with that of his or her leader, OCB-I is higher than when there is deviation from the fit line.

Because only the interaction term, but not the other quadratic terms, was significant, we further depicted the interaction pattern based on Aiken and West's (1991) procedure. Specifically, we plotted the relationship between follower prevention focus and OCB-I for scores of leader prevention focus one standard deviation above and below the mean. The resulting two-dimensional interaction plot is presented next to the corresponding three-dimensional response surface as shown in Figure 1. There was a positive relationship between follower prevention focus and OCB-I when leader prevention focus was high, whereas a negative relationship was observed between the two variables when leader prevention focus

**Figure 1**  
**Graphs for the Relationship Between Leader-Follower Prevention Fit and OCB-I**



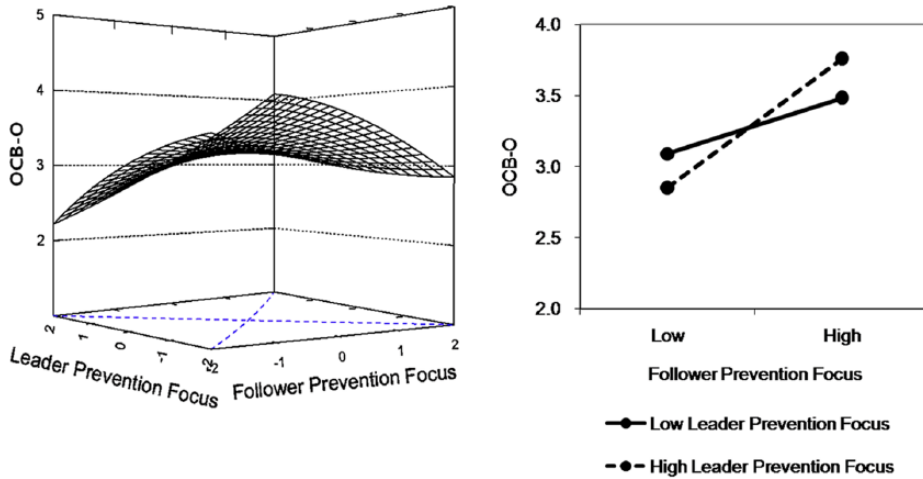
Note: OCB-I = interpersonally directed maintenance organizational citizenship behavior.

was low. We further performed simple slopes tests for high levels of leader prevention focus (Preacher, Curran, & Bauer, 2006) and found that the regression slope for high leader prevention focus was positive and significantly different from zero ( $\beta = .34, p < .05$ ), which indicates the significant main effect of follower prevention focus on OCB-I when leaders' prevention focus was high.

In addition, we explored the relationship between leader-follower prevention fit and OCB-O by using the same procedure. As reported in Table 4, while the quadratic terms were not significant, we detected a significant interaction effect between leader prevention focus and follower prevention focus on OCB-O ( $\gamma_{51} = .15, p < .05$ ). The three-dimensional graph for this relationship presented in Figure 2 indicates that OCB-O is highest along the line of perfect fit and decreases as the values of leader and follower prevention focus deviate from the line of perfect fit. Furthermore, the interaction pattern delineated in the two-dimensional plot in Figure 2 shows that the association between follower prevention focus and OCB-O is more pronounced when leader prevention focus is high than when it is low. Furthermore, the simple slopes tests for multilevel modeling (Preacher et al., 2006) revealed the significant main effect of follower prevention focus on OCB-O when leader prevention focus was high ( $\beta = .58, p < .001$ ). These findings altogether lend support to Hypothesis 3.

Hypothesis 4 postulated the moderation of leader promotion focus on the relation between follower promotion focus and change OCB. This hypothesis was also tested by carrying out the cross-level polynomial regression analysis. As reported in Table 5, none of the higher-order terms was significant for change OCB ( $\gamma_{60} = .03, ns; \gamma_{08} = .06, ns; \gamma_{51} = -.06, ns$ ). Instead, followers' change OCB was significantly predicted by their own promotion focus ( $\gamma_{50} = .31, p < .01$ ). This linear effect of follower promotion focus on change OCB is depicted

**Figure 2**  
**Graphs for the Relationship Between Leader-Follower Prevention Fit and OCB-O**



Note: OCB-O = organizationally directed maintenance organizational citizenship behavior.

in Figure 3, which demonstrates a consistent main effect of follower promotion focus regardless the level of leader promotion focus.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was rejected.

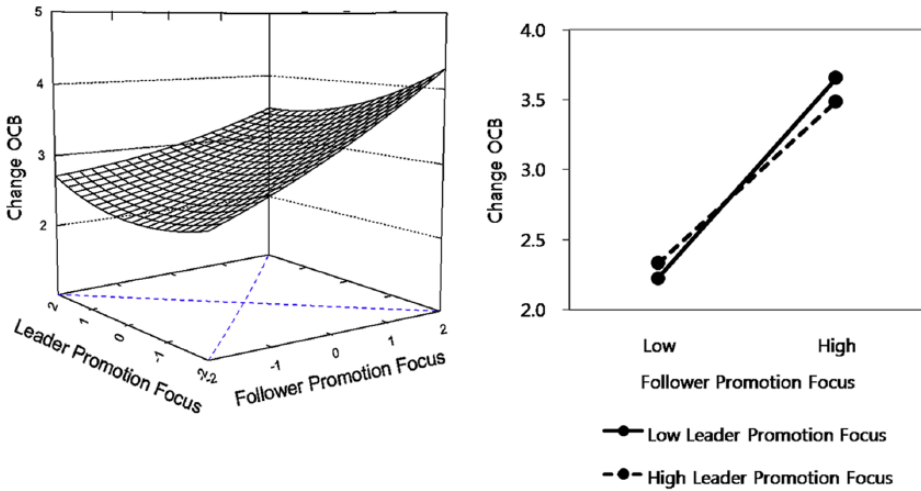
Although not hypothesized, the results of Model 3 in Table 5 indicated that the product term of leader promotion focus and follower promotion focus significantly predicted followers' OCB-I ( $\gamma_{41} = .14, p < .05$ ). We plotted this relationship in Figure 4 and found that there was a positive relationship between follower promotion focus and OCB-I for high leader promotion focus and a negative relationship between the two variables for low leader promotion focus. Additionally, the results of the simple slopes tests demonstrated that the main effect of follower promotion focus on OCB-I was significant when leader promotion focus was high ( $\beta = .30, p < .01$ ).

## Discussion

### *Implications for Theory and Research*

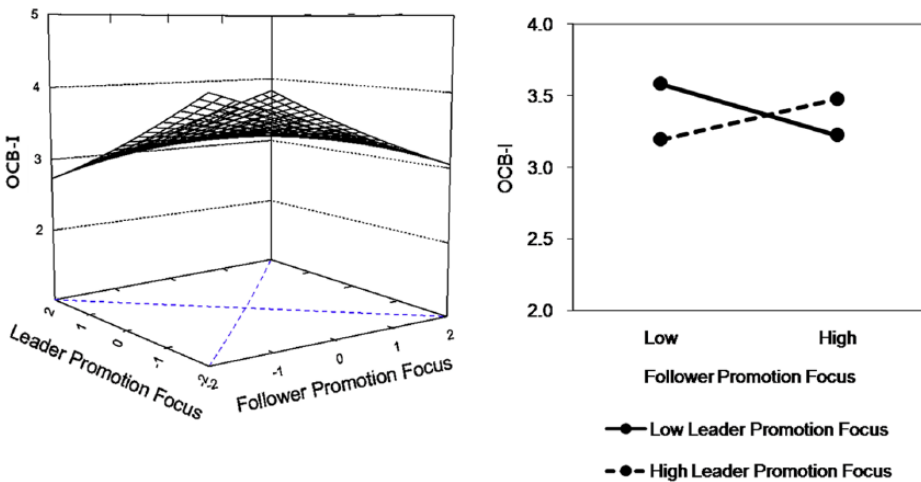
Although scholars contend that regulatory focus can serve as a proximal antecedent of OCB (Lanaj et al., 2012), empirical findings regarding the relationship between different regulatory foci and OCB have been quite inconsistent. That is, contrary to Dewett and Denisi's (2007) proposition that individuals' prevention focus has a positive relationship with their maintenance OCB, recent regulatory focus research has reported a weak or negative relationship between prevention focus and maintenance OCB (e.g., Lanaj et al., 2012; J. Wallace et al., 2009). Our study resolves such a controversy by validating Dewett and Denisi's propositions and taking a contextual factor into account that moderates the relation

**Figure 3**  
**Graphs for the Relationship Between Leader-Follower Promotion Fit and Change OCB**



Note: OCB = organizational citizenship behavior.

**Figure 4**  
**Graphs for the Relationship Between Leader-Follower Promotion Fit and OCB-I**



Note: OCB-I = interpersonally directed maintenance organizational citizenship behavior.



between regulatory focus and OCB. Furthermore, unlike prior research on interpersonal regulatory focus, our study elucidates the differential role of fit at different levels of regulatory focus in predicting OCB by using cross-level polynomial regression analyses.

The present findings indicated that followers' prevention focus was positively associated with their OCB-I only when leaders' prevention focus was high. By contrast, followers' prevention focus became a negative predictor of OCB-I when leaders' prevention focus was low. This implies that the leaders' low level of prevention focus may inhibit the followers' willingness to rely on their prevention orientation, thereby leading to decreased OCB-I. While followers' prevention focus was generally positively associated with their OCB-O, this relationship was more pronounced when the followers interacted with a prevention-focused leader. This pattern is consistent with De Cremer et al.'s (2009) finding, which indicated that self-sacrificial leadership that emphasized ought and duties led to increased prosocial behavior for prevention-oriented followers. Our findings, coupled with De Cremer et al.'s, highlight the importance of the leadership context in encouraging prevention-oriented followers to engage in discretionary behavior purported to maintain the current relationships and functions of the organization. Thus, the understanding of the relationship between prevention focus and OCB is incomplete without considering the leadership context. Our study contributes to the regulatory focus literature by providing finer-grained understandings of the dynamics among leader regulatory focus, follower regulatory focus, and different forms of OCB.

In support of interpersonal regulatory fit theory and P-E fit theory, our findings demonstrate a significant congruence effect for maintenance OCB. While we could not find a fit effect for change OCB, higher maintenance OCB was observed when there was a fit between leader prevention focus and follower prevention focus than when there was a misfit. Such a congruence effect was further validated by the simple slopes tests, which indicated the significant main effect of follower prevention focus on maintenance OCB for high levels of leader prevention focus. Taken together, these findings suggest that individuals' tendency to engage in maintenance OCB becomes stronger when their prevention focus matches that of the leader. When fit is achieved at a high level of prevention focus, individuals feel right about the discretionary behaviors they are performing, thereby displaying more maintenance OCB. In contrast, misfit tends to weaken the association between prevention focus and maintenance OCB by making individuals feel wrong about their preferred behaviors and adjusting their behaviors to the regulatory orientation of the leader. Therefore, it can be concluded that fit perceptions are crucial in employees' decision to perform discretionary behaviors purported to maintain the current task and interpersonal functions of the organization.

While both prevention and promotion foci of a leader had a significant moderating effect on follower OCB-I, the pattern of interaction turned out to differ between prevention and promotion foci. As shown in the two- and three-dimensional graphs, leader-follower fit at high levels of prevention focus was associated with greater OCB-I, whereas fit at low levels of promotion focus was related to higher OCB-I. These results are quite surprising, given the positive relationship between followers' prevention and promotion foci ( $r = .37, p < .01$ ). Such a significant association between the two regulatory foci might be due to their common function in work behaviors, which alerts individuals and regulates their actions to achieve their goals. However, as demonstrated in our study, when the common variance in the two regulatory foci is partialled out, they may affect OCB-I in opposite directions, which is in line

with prior findings indicating competing roles of prevention and promotion foci (C. Wallace & Chen, 2006). The differential relationships between fit at different levels of prevention and promotion foci and OCB-I can be further explained by the resource allocation framework (Gopher, 1986), which suggests a competing, complementary relationship between the two regulatory foci. When both the leader and the follower exhibit a low level of promotion focus, their attention and efforts tend to be rather directed toward the maintenance of the current organizational functions, which can cause fit at low levels of promotion focus to generate more OCB-I. Yet, such a potential compensatory relationship between the two regulatory foci based on the resource allocation framework warrants more empirical investigations in future research.

Although we found the significant main effect of follower promotion focus on change OCB, we failed to detect the congruence effect for change OCB. Our findings suggest that alignment with the leader's promotion focus is not beneficial to followers' change OCB. Promotion fit and ensuing interpersonal benefits may not improve change OCB because change OCB requires dissatisfaction with the current situation as well as less identification with the team but more differentiation from others (Janssen & Huang, 2008), which might be a reason that diversity but not fit has been consistently identified as a source of creativity. Another explanation for the lack of fit effect for change OCB is that change OCB is usually motivated by need for change (Seppälä, Lipponen, Bardi, & Pirttilä-Backman, 2011). Thus, when there is a strong degree of fit between a leader's promotion focus and that of a follower, the follower is unlikely to feel the necessity of changing the current situation, which is often driven by dissatisfaction with the status quo or willingness to challenge the current relationships and functions (Choi, 2007). In contrast, when a promotion-focused follower interacts with a leader who possesses a low level of promotion focus, the follower is likely to experience greater need for change, thereby engaging in increased change OCB. Hence, misfit rather than fit can serve as a context supportive of change OCB. This post hoc interpretation regarding the potential benefit of misfit toward change OCB needs to be empirically validated in future research.

All in all, fit effects appeared to be stronger for prevention focus than for promotion focus. Figures 1 and 2 clearly demonstrate that fit in terms of prevention focus is associated with higher maintenance OCB than misfit. This might be due to the fear of deviation from the authority or norm often found in prevention-oriented individuals (Higgins, 1997). Because prevention-focused employees are heavily concerned about deviating from their leader's instructions or expectations, they tend to be sensitive and responsive to alignment with their leader, which results in stronger fit effects for prevention focus. In sum, the present study expands the literature on regulatory focus and OCB significantly by uncovering the role of leader-follower regulatory fit in accounting for different forms of OCB and disentangling the complex dynamics between fit at different levels of prevention and promotion foci and regulatory misfit.

### *Implications for Practice*

The present study has several practical implications for leaders in organizations. The current findings clearly indicate that leaders should pay attention to followers' regulatory focus as a way to promote their OCB. In particular, leaders need to be aware that prevention and promotion foci play differential roles in different types of OCB. Fostering a

leadership context supportive of followers' prevention focus can be a way to encourage their maintenance OCB. Leaders can achieve prevention fit by emphasizing responsibilities and duties and guiding followers not to make mistakes or errors. Employing goal-setting techniques and providing frequent feedback and coaching for their followers could also help leaders and followers increase prevention fit (Zhang, Wang, & Shi, 2012).

Interestingly, the present findings indicate that leaders can enhance OCB-I by achieving promotion fit. However, given that fit at lower levels of promotion focus was associated with higher OCB-I, emphasizing promotion focus as a core team task strategy might not be an effective way to enhance OCB-I. Instead, leaders may need to consider achieving regulatory fit at high levels of prevention focus and low levels of promotion focus at the same time to maximize maintenance OCB-I. Frequent communication and interactions between the leader and the follower can increase such an alignment.

Leaders who seek to boost change OCB should attend to followers' promotion focus instead of leader-follower regulatory fit. Selecting employees who have a promotion focus could be an avenue to elevate the overall level of change OCB in the organization. In addition, assigning employees tasks that require a high degree of promotion focus or cultivating an organizational culture that fosters promotive strategic orientations could help enhance followers' promotion focus in the long run (Brockner & Higgins, 2001).

### *Limitations and Directions for Future Research*

In spite of its theoretical and practical implications, this study has some limitations. First, in this study, OCB was measured by employees' self-report. Although we controlled for respondent's social desirability in all data analyses, there is still some possibility that the participant ratings of OCB were affected by rater biases. Future research could address this issue by using third-party ratings of OCB collected from supervisors or peers. Moreover, given the dearth of research on interpersonal regulatory fit and work outcomes, future researchers may need to explore the differential roles of prevention and promotion fit in more diverse work outcomes, such as in-role performance, creativity, and deviant behavior.

Second, the data for this study were collected from employees in Korean firms. Because East Asian cultures are characterized by a high degree of power distance (Hofstede, 1980), leaders' influence on the behavior of his or her followers might have turned out to be strong in our sample (Zhang et al., 2012). Furthermore, conformity to others or interpersonal similarity are deemed more important in collectivistic societies than in individualistic ones (Hofstede, 1980), which might have resulted in the strong effect of leader-follower prevention fit in the Korean sample. For this reason, we recommend future researchers to replicate the effect of leader-follower regulatory fit observed in the present study in different cultures.

Third, we did not test the intermediary mechanisms that may operate between leader-follower regulatory fit and OCB (e.g., feeling right, vigilance and aspiration motivation, normative and affective commitment). In addition, there might be some moderators (e.g., task characteristics, team structure) that affect the relationship between leader-follower regulatory fit and OCB (Dimotakis et al., 2012). Thus, to enrich our understanding of the relationships between different types of interpersonal regulatory fit and OCB, future work could be directed at elucidating these potential mediating and moderating processes involving leader-follower regulatory fit.

Finally, although the present study provides some insight into the relative importance of fit over misfit in producing maintenance OCB, the relationship between regulatory misfit and work outcomes still remains unclear. Followers might display different levels of OCB depending on whether their prevention (or promotion) focus is higher or lower than that of the leader. Furthermore, as noted earlier, the effect of fit or misfit might operate differentially for prevention- and promotion-focused employees. Therefore, the regulatory fit research can benefit from examining the relationship between fit and misfit at different levels of prevention and promotion foci and different forms of OCB.

In conclusion, the current study contributes to the extant body of research on interpersonal regulatory fit by demonstrating that leader-follower regulatory fit is a meaningful predictor of followers' maintenance OCB but not change OCB. Based on the present findings, organizational leaders can recognize the significant roles of regulatory focus and interpersonal regulatory fit in promoting employees' OCB. More follow-up studies are called for to unravel the complicated dynamics involving regulatory fit between different interaction partners (e.g., work group members or immediate supervisors) and across different organizational levels.

## Note

1. We also explored the possibility that fit between a leader's prevention (or promotion) focus and the aggregated prevention (or promotion) focus of followers affects team-level organizational citizenship behavior. The results of polynomial regression analyses at the team level revealed no significant fit effect.

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