

*The Relationship of Mother-in-Law and Daughter-in-Law  
between Organizational Climate and Organizational Citizenship Behavior :  
A Case Study for Career Women*

Neng-Huei Lee, National Quemoy University, Taiwan  
Chia-Jhen Chang, National Quemoy University, Taiwan

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**Abstract**

By 2060, Taiwan is expected to become a super-aged society with approximately 40% of its population classified as elderly citizens, and the labor shortage is expected to reach 1.96 million people. Although the labor shortage can be improved through industrial transformation and technological development, adding new sources of labor is the most direct solution. The proportion of female students in higher education in Taiwan is the second highest in Asia. However, its labor force participation rate is ranked at the 10<sup>th</sup> place. Therefore, “the rise of female power,” or married women in particular, will be a key labor source to solving Taiwan’s future labor shortage as a result of population aging.

This study aims to explore the association between organizational climate, mother-in-law relationship, and organizational citizenship behavior. Mother-in-law relationship was used as the moderator of the relationship between organizational climate and organizational citizenship behavior. The participants comprised working women in the Kinmen region, who had various roles such as that of a wife, mother, daughter-in-law, worker, and the self. The quantitative research method was used to conduct a questionnaire survey involving convenience sampling. The main findings of this study show that mother-in-law–daughter-in-law relationship positively and significantly moderates the relationship between organizational climate and organizational citizenship behavior and that mother-in-law relationship positively and significantly influences organizational citizenship behavior.

Keyword: organizational climate, mother-in-law relations, organizational citizenship behavior, career women.

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## **Introduction**

In Taiwan, the employment of women began in the 1960s, when the country's economy started to take off and the labor market was confronted with severe labor shortage. In recent 5 years, the labor force participation rate of women in Taiwan increased from 49.89% to 50.64% and the percentage of career women who had a spouse/partner also increased from 49.03% to 49.78%. Married career women may, either because of the economic independence offered by their job, or the pressure to make a living, or both, wish to stay and work hard in their original organization. As a result, they tend to display behavior beneficial to their organizations spontaneously.

Litwin and Stringer (1968) argued that an enterprise's organizational climate was an important factor that had influence on employees' organizational behaviors; relevant literature also pointed out that there was a significant correlation between organizational performance and organizational climate. An organization's cohesion can be improved and employees' desire to work will be increased if the organization's employees perceive a better organizational climate. Moreover, work environment as an external condition that challenges an organization's employees can affect employees' workgroup structure and acquisition of resources (Robbins, 2001).

Compared to the main island of Taiwan, Kinmen is a place where conservative and traditional thoughts and the mindset of that men are superior to women are more prevalent. For example, the custom of presenting offerings to the ancestors at winter solstice is a symbol of filial piety in Chinese traditional culture. In Kinmen, this practice requires members of a clan to take turns to assume the role of Leader; the whole clan is expected but only males are eligible to attend the Leader's feast (Xie J.P., and Huang Y.Z., 2001). Funerals are attended by males most of the time except for the family of the bereft. Women, on the other hand, are mainly engaged in the preparation of traditional genuflection rituals. Married career women have to balance their work and family and assume their roles in ideological gender division of labor. In the society of Chinese, most married women have to move to and live in their husband's family. In addition to adapting to the new environment, they are also confronted with more significant changes than their males counterpart. For them, the role of mother is the most important responsibility (Lee S.H., 2015).

In light of this, this study was focusing on the viewpoints of married career women in Kinmen area. It was to find out whether organizational climate and mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship would give rise to organizational citizenship behavior differences, or induce organizational citizenship behavior among married career women, and to explore their causal relation. It is hoped that the study results will be of investigative value and capable of providing information on business practice aspect for the reference of government sectors.

## Literature review

The term organizational climate was invented by Kurt Lewin(1936), who used it to describe the interaction between people and their environment from the perspective of psychology through formal geometry, in other words, organizational climate is the result of the interaction between individuals and their environment. Litwin and Stringer (1968) deemed organizational climate as a lasting characteristic of organizational internal environment, organizational strategy and procedures that can affect the motivations and behaviors of the members of an organization. They proposed that organizational climate had 9 aspects, i.e. structure, responsibility, rewards, risks, social relationship, support, criteria, conflicts, and identification. Litwin and Stringer (1968) defined organizational climate as “a group of measurable characteristics that members could perceive directly or indirectly in the work environment and the characteristics can influence the motivations and behaviors of the members of an organization. The definition was adopted in this study. Hsu S.W., and Lin L.L., and Chang H.H. (2010) in their study on the transformational leadership, service climate and service-oriented citizenship behaviors of air stewardesses on international flights showed that there was a significant positive correlation between organizational climate and service-oriented citizenship behaviors and suggested that follow-up studies should focus on psychological environment as well as social, organizational, and situational factors that influence behaviors.

The concept of organizational citizenship behavior was originated from Barnard(1938), who proposed that organizations were in need of cooperative behaviors of their members. Such behaviors were spontaneous and capable of bringing about efficiency to the organizations. Near, and Organ (1983, 1990) named extra role behaviors as organizational citizenship behavior(OCB), i.e. employees' spontaneous individual behaviors that were neither included in their job descriptions nor specifically and directly covered by their normal remuneration; such behaviors were helpful for improving the effectiveness of organizational functions. Some studies pointed out that organizational citizenship behavior could be a cost to individuals(Bergeron, 2007; Bolino and Turnley, 2005) ; Wang S.Y. (2011) carried out a study on the relationship between organizational climate, work satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviors, the results showed the better the overall organizational climate of a school, the higher the organizational citizenship behaviors.

Su F.Y., and Hsu M.R.(2003) grouped family member relationship into 8 categories, i.e. husband-wife relationship, parent-child relationship, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship, grandparent-grandchild relationship, sibling relationship, relative relationship, in-laws relationship, sister-in-law relationship. The relationship between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law was established via a third party, who was the son of mother-in-law and the husband of daughter-in-law. As a new relationship formed after the arrival of the daughter-in-law, it lacks connate connection and requires prolonged and continuous interaction for gradual identification of a mode in which the mother-in-law and the daughter-in-law can get along. In traditional Southern Fukien community, the number of genuflection rituals is more than that in Taiwan. The authority of preparing for and leading these rituals is transferred from mother-in-law to daughter-in-law upon the arrival of the latter. Chen Y.J. (2007) found in her study on the dependence of married women in their primary families and husband's support to a harmonious mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship that

submission to authority and filial obedience were the most critical factors that determined mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship. It was revealed by Pan H.S. (2008) in her study on the relationship between medical personnel's organizational citizenship behavior and their work pressure, work-family conflicts that emotional competence had positive regulatory effects on organizational citizenship behaviors with respect to work pressure and work-family conflicts.

The above-mentioned literature suggested that employees in an organization that had good organizational climate tended to display positive and proactive work attitude as a feedback to their organization. Compared to unmarried people, those married are more readily to display organizational citizenship behaviors. In the light of this, in this case study on career women in Kinmen area, the following hypotheses were proposed:

Hypothesis1: There is a positive correlation between career women's organizational climate and their organizational citizenship behaviors.

Hypothesis2: The situation of mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship of career women has regulatory effects on their organizational climate and organizational citizenship behaviors.

### **Model structure and methodology of the study**

An architecture as shown in Fig. 1 has been established for this study by literature review. The subjects in this study were career women, defined as "women receiving remuneration for their employment", i.e. women who received salary for their job, in 5 towns(Jincheng, Jinhu, Jinsha, Jinning, and Lieyu) in Kinmen area, who held a professional and regular job in their organization, which had made commitments and promises on career development to them(Lee S.L., 2001). Career women in this study referred to married career women who had attained 15 years old or above, bred at least 1 (inclusive) child(ren), held a full-time job that had an official title, and received remuneration for their job. These subjects played 5 roles simultaneously, i.e. wife, mother, daughter-in-law, worker, ego(Zheng R.J., and Chen J.M., 1994).

In order to have uniformly distributed samples and improved evaluation accuracy, a stratified convenience sampling was carried out for proportionally collecting 358 valid samples for subsequent comparison and analysis of the resulted stratified information. (Krejcie and Morgan, 1970).

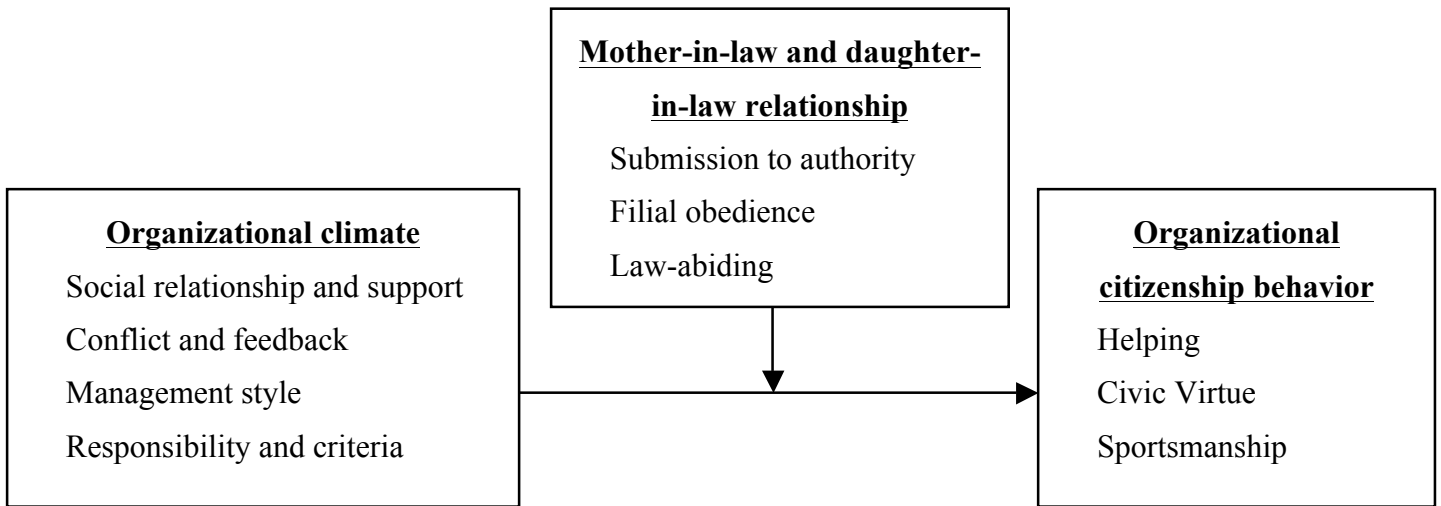


Fig. 1 Architecture of the study

A questionnaire was adopted as instrument in the study for data analysis. The questionnaire was developed based on existing scales in domestic and foreign journals or theses and designed to be consisting of 3 scales, i.e. organizational climate scale, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship scale, and organizational citizenship behavior scale.

- 一、 The organizational climate scale was based on the scale developed by Litwin and Stringer, and modifications were made in reference with the organizational climate scale developed by Liao S.K.(2004) in his study on dispatched employees. It consisted of 22 questions covering 4 aspects and demonstrated a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of 0.825.
- 二、 The mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relationship scale was made in reference with the scale developed by Chen Y.J.(2007). Its role specification scale consisted of 22 questions covering 4 aspects and demonstrated a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of 0.90.
- 三、 The organizational citizenship behavior scale was based on the scale developed by Bolino and Turnley(2005). It consisted of 15 questions covering 3 aspects, i.e. Helping, Civic Virtue, and Sportsmanship; during the development of the scale, reference was made to the scale prepared by Pan H.S.(2008) in her study on police and medical personnel in Pingtung Area. The scale demonstrated a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient of 0.928. Subjects' answers were graded against a 5-point scale from "extremely disagree" to "extremely agree".

In the study, subjects' answers to the questionnaire were graded against the scales and subjected to confidence and validity analyses. The results showed all scales used had a Cronbach's  $\alpha$  value above 0.80. Therefore the scales used are acceptable in terms of confidence level.

## **Conclusion**

A significant positive correlation was found between organizational climate and career women's organizational citizenship behaviors: career women when perceiving higher organizational climate were more readily to display organizational citizenship behaviors not covered in their remuneration; occupational category had significant influence on organizational citizenship. For example, non-permanent staff such as temporary agency workers, agency teachers, and other people who perceived them as temporary workers tended to only fulfill the tasks assigned to them by the organization and were reluctant to display organizational citizenship behaviors beyond the coverage of their salary. For teachers and other public service personnel who had 15 days of furlough in addition to the winter and summer vacations, their mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relation had significant positively regulating effect on organizational climate and organizational citizenship behaviors. That is to say, career women who are under less work restriction can meet their mother-in-law and family's expectations by virtue of their vacations and furloughs, and this can induce the generation of organizational citizenship behavior;. For career women who have a permanent position, their mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relation has significant positive influence on their organizational citizenship behaviors. This means that permanent staff in public sector, regular teachers, supervisors in publicly-operated enterprises and privately-run enterprises may, because of their better identification with the organization they work for, be more willingly to display organizational citizenship behaviors that are not covered in their salary to serve their organization.

An organization may, by building appropriate organizational climate, improve its employees' perception of the organizational environment as well as their identification and consensus with the organization, thereby promoting spontaneous organizational citizenship behaviors of its employees. An employee's emotion may have impact on her work-family conflict and organizational citizenship behaviors. That is to say, if an employee brings her unfinished job and intends to use her family time for organizational citizenship behaviors, the employee's mother-in-law and daughter-in-law relation would become crucial in her fulfillment of organizational citizenship behaviors. When the employee's relation with her mother-in-law is good, her mother-in-law will support or even give a helping hand to her. In such cases, the career women can try her best to do her job without family worries, and as a result can improve its organizational citizenship behaviors.

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Contact email: [kiwichang26@gmail.com](mailto:kiwichang26@gmail.com)