

Agree or Disagree? An Insidious Obstacle to Knowledge Contribution: The Role of Team Status Disagreement¹⁾

팀의 지식 공헌을 가로막는 조용한 장벽: 팀원의 위상(지위) 불일치를 중심으로

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〈 ABSTRACT 〉

Research on social hierarchy is a growing research topic in the studies of management and organization. Despite the abundance of studies demonstrating the relevance of social hierarchy in teams, little understanding exists for status disagreement among team members, specifically how status disagreement reduces team members' contributions to influence team performance. This conceptual study argues that team status disagreement negatively impacts team performance through reduced team member's knowledge contribution, including reduced team knowledge sharing and increased knowledge hiding. In addition, we propose that team skill differentiation aggravates the negative effect of status disagreement, such that when team skill differentiation is high, teams under high status disagreement are more likely to experience detracted team performance. This research mainly discusses status disagreement and its effect on team knowledge contributions by reviewing previous literature and developing several propositions, suggests theoretical contributions and practical implications, and presents an agenda for future research.

Key Words: Knowledge sharing, Knowledge hiding, Social hierarchy, Team performance

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1. Introduction

Research on the dynamics of hierarchical relations among organizational members is growing within the management field (Bunderson et al., 2016; De Cremer, 2002; Greer et al., 2018; Magee & Galinsky, 2008) because status hierarchy that emerges spontaneously is inevitable and ubiquitous in any group or organization (Greer et al., 2011). Scholars have generally assumed that status hierarchy within teams is built consensually with the shared perceptions of team members (for exceptions, see Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Gardner, 2010; Kilduff et al., 2016). However, status disagreement among team members occurs more frequently than typically thought because the status conferral process is ambiguous and inherently subjective, and it tends to be influenced by self-serving bias. According to Kilduff et al. (2016), team status disagreement refers to discordance of whose status level is higher versus lower. The authors have demonstrated that status disagreement frequently matters in any team and that status disagreements of team members reduce their contributions to a team, hindering team performance. Despite the key role of status disagreement on team performance and its effectiveness, we have a limited understanding of how exactly team members in high status disagreement teams reduce their contributions and respond to conflicts from divergent perceptions among team members. Identifying strategies employees usually use for reducing their contributions when they are under the conditions of status disagreement is important in understanding how organizations can mitigate the effects of reduced team contributions in high status disagreement situations and increasing awareness

of team dynamics.

Team members can reduce their contributions or respond to conflicts or unfavorable environments in multiple ways. Specifically, some team members intentionally enact overt counterproductive work behaviors (CWB) such as personal aggression (e.g., workplace bullying) and production deviance (e.g., tardiness). On the other hand, others engage in covert behaviors such as withholding information (Pfeffer, 1981; Robinson & Bennett, 1995) and gossiping (Beersma & Van Kleef, 2012). For example, employees may intentionally refrain from participating in group meetings and reduce their contributions to show dissatisfaction and non-compliance in work environments, whereas others might participate in group meetings but not actively and supportively. When status disagreement exists within a team, team members are likely to refrain from engaging in obvious forms of counterproductive work behaviors (Bendersky & Hays, 2012; Van Bunderen et al., 2017) because overt counterproductive work behaviors due to team status disagreement may not be justified in the eyes of other team members. Since the relative status levels or status itself is a sensitive topic among employees, and the comparison of the level of status is based on subjective assessments (Greer et al., 2017), team members find them difficult to evaluate the exact level of status, identify other team members' perceptions of status, and discuss the relative status level with each other. In addition, the current status level of a team member can be harmed if other members detect obvious deviant behaviors in this team member. Thus, overt forms of deviant behaviors to reduce contributions are less common among employees under status disagreement.

Therefore, team members in the conditions of high status disagreement are likely to choose covert ways to

reduce their team contributions, which have low risks of being detected, and hence are not easily punishable. Individuals in a team usually do not feel they are taking a high risk by withholding or hiding their knowledge because valuable knowledge is almost implicit, and other team members might find it hard to judge and evaluate a team member's real knowledge contribution to a team accurately (Lin & Huang, 2009). In other words, less knowledge contribution is hard to detect and punish by team members or a supervisor. The lower sharing and higher hiding of knowledge from team members can be an effective tool or strategy to reduce contributions intentionally because these behaviors are covert, efficient, low risk, and not easily punishable by other team members. Thus, this research suggests that the key to understanding the negative effects of status disagreement on team contribution is knowledge contribution—knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding—which are critical antecedents of team performance and its effectiveness (Peng, 2013; Srivastava et al., 2006).

To comprehensively understand why team members under high team status disagreement do not share or do hide their knowledge, we also need to examine contingency factors of status hierarchy within team dynamics. Specifically, this research suggests skill differentiation plays an important role in the relationship between status disagreement and a team member's knowledge contribution. More specifically, highly skill differentiated teams are more conducive for reduced knowledge contribution because other team members may not exactly know how much knowledge other team members have and how much of that they are contributing. In addition, highly skill differentiated teams have different

expectations and additional standards for creating status compared to low skill differentiated teams. The reason why skill differentiation of teams is particularly related to status disagreement is that this level of differentiation aggravates the negative effect of status disagreement. Therefore, this research proposes that the level of team skill differentiation under the condition of status disagreement functions toward team member's knowledge contributions.

In addition, current scholarship has emphasized the necessity of studying knowledge sharing or knowledge hiding in a power perspective (Wang & Noe, 2010). Previous literature has shown that considering knowledge as a source of power and superiority is one of the key inhibitors for knowledge exchange among team members (e.g., Gupta & Govindarajan, 2000; Kim & Mauborgne, 1998). Consequently, different perceptions of power or status among team members might change their attitudes, motivation, and behaviors of knowledge sharing or knowledge hiding. Thus, this research seeks to integrate these two research streams (study of social hierarchy and knowledge management) by arguing that the key in understanding how status disagreement harms team performance is through the contribution of knowledge transfer activities, including knowledge sharing and hiding.

The aim of this study is threefold. First, we will explore the consequences of overall status disagreement. Since our understanding of the effect of status disagreement among team members is still limited, we hope to extend the primary focus of prior status research. For instance, prior status research has mainly focused on advantages or disadvantages of status hierarchy toward teams (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009a;

Bunderson & Reagans, 2011; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Simpson et al., 2012) and benefits of status conferred by others (Kirchmeyer, 1993; Tiedens et al., 2000), assuming a high degree of consensus about status hierarchy exists (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Although Kilduff et al. (2016) has provided evidence that status disagreement negatively impacts team performance through reduced team contribution, relatively less work has been conducted on how team members reduce their team contribution. This research tries to answer a specific question about status disagreement: *how do team members under status disagreement reduce their contribution?* Consequently, it will expand our understanding of social hierarchy more comprehensively. Second, we will propose that status disagreement among team members reduces employee's sharing of knowledge and promotes their knowledge hiding behaviors at the team level, which eventually might lead to reduced team performance. This research tries to integrate the study of social hierarchy with knowledge management. Such integration will provide us a better understanding of how/why social hierarchy influences team performance and, more specifically, how/why high degrees of status disagreement within teams ruin their team performance. Lastly, we will look into the boundary condition of the theoretical model, specifically team skill differentiation. Investigating different contexts around social hierarchy will help us see the broader picture of team dynamics. The remainder of this research (1) discusses status disagreement and its effect on team knowledge sharing/hiding and team performance by reviewing previous literature, (2) develops several propositions, and (3) suggests theoretical and practical contributions and directions for future research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Status and Status Disagreement

Status is defined as the amount of prestige, prominence, and deference in the eyes of other team members (Anderson et al., 2001; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). It is a marker of social value that other members of the community ascribe to a specific person or group (Chen et al., 2012). Previous literature has shown that status confers psychological and social benefits on higher-status individuals (Barkow et al., 1975; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Leary et al., 2001). It also delineates the behavioral rules for higher status members and lower status members. For example, higher status team members are more likely permitted to have decision making authority (Johnson et al., 1998) or to show anger (Tiedens et al., 2000). In contrast, lower status team members are required to listen to and accept higher ranker's opinions or ideas (Kirchmeyer, 1993) and show appreciation (Tiedens et al., 2000).

Previous scholars have distinguished between power (i.e., resource controllability) and status (e.g., Anderson & Kilduff, 2009a; Blader & Chen, 2012; Greer et al., 2017). These scholars have suggested that power, which is a property of the actor, indicates actual control of tangible resources, but status, which is a property of co-actors and observers, indicates intangible resources socially conferred by others. Thus, compared to power, status is more contingent on the evaluation of others, and it is conferred to individuals through its own conferral process (Blader & Chen, 2012). In addition, status and power both have different hierarchy mutability. Hierarchy

mutability is defined as “the degree to which the basis of a hierarchy (e.g., status or power) is open to be contested and has been shown to increase a team’s conflict susceptibility” (Greer et al., 2018, pp.4). Compared to formal power, informal power (i.e., status) is more mutable because status is voluntarily granted by others based on subjective assessment in terms of contributions for shared goals (Hays & Bendersky, 2015). However, formal power is more rigid and unchallengeable than informal power because power is based on a formal authority structure (Greer et al., 2018, Magee & Galinsky, 2008). This mutability often leads to conflicts (Greer et al., 2017) and divergent perceptions about status among team members (Greer et al., 2011).

Such divergent perceptions about status among team members can bring out status disagreement within teams. Status disagreement is defined as “the extent to which individual members of a group hold disparate perceptions of who ranks where” in the status hierarchy that orders individual’s rank based on status (Kilduff et al., 2016, pp. 374). For instance, when member A, B, and C are in the group, and each member holds different perceptions about whose rank of status is first, second, and third, there would be status disagreement among team members.

Despite the potential disadvantages for members who are perceived to have lower status (Kirchmeyer, 1993; Tiedens et al., 2000), scholars have suggested that social hierarchy may be functional because it motivates team members to improve their status in a team (Schwartz, 1992), increases role clarity and behavioral norms among team members (Johnson et al., 1998; Magee & Galinsky, 2008; Tiedens et al., 2000), and motivates team members to contribute to more group efforts (Huo et al., 2010;

Simpson et al., 2012). The functional view of social hierarchy has generally assumed that team members widely agree with other’s relative status. These scholars propose that all team members hold a shared perception of a team member’s relative status based on the status comparison process, suggesting that status hierarchy is formed consensually (Berger et al., 1972; Magee & Galinsky, 2008).

In contrast to the beliefs of functionalists, we assume that the consensus of status hierarchy does not always exist in all groups for two reasons. First, status is based on each member’s subjective assessment, and the standard of assessment is highly ambiguous and uncertain (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009a). Team members are likely to have different standards for evaluating other’s competence, value, and expected contributions, and thus, assign different priority order for status. Consequently, this assessment process is imprecise and inherently subjective (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009a), leading to varying perceptions of the target’s status. For example, employee A can believe that organizational tenure is the most important factor for competence because A may believe that higher tenured employees have more experience in their area and may understand better how to work efficiently. However, employee B may believe that education is the most important factor in competence and not account for organizational tenure in the evaluation of status.

Second, status confers on individuals psychological, material, and social benefits, including greater influence over other members, access to insufficient team resources, and social support from other team members (Anderson & Kilduff, 2009b; Barkow et al., 1975; Kilduff et al., 2016; Kirchmeyer, 1993; Leary et al., 2001). Because

these tangible and intangible resources are conferred on higher status individuals, team members are reluctant to accept status hierarchies that might limit their potential benefits in the team (Kilduff et al., 2016). Due to these reasons, some individuals often inflate their own contributions for teams and undervalue other team members' contributions (Epley et al., 2006). They are more likely to focus on their own contributions than others' contributions and believe their contributions are more valuable than other team members. Thus, the products of these self-serving biases might promote status disagreement among employees.

Previous literature has suggested that status hierarchy is formed cooperatively and consensually, but this research proposes status disagreement may frequently occur more than expected because the process of status evaluation is inherently ambiguous and uncertain, and individuals can inflate their own contributions with self-serving biases. Even if the extent to which relative level of status disagreed is contingent on teams, we argue that perfect consensus of the perception of who ranks where is hard to exist. For instance, when teams have clear and rigid formal ranks (e.g., military) or work with relatively clear goals or standards for competence (e.g., sales teams), status disagreement may be less common in those types of teams. However, even those kinds of teams are composed of individuals who have different beliefs, experiences, and views of life beyond formal authority. In sum, status disagreement is more common than typically assumed. To interconnect status disagreement with team member's knowledge contribution, we will briefly review the literature on knowledge sharing and hiding in the next section.

2.2. Knowledge Sharing and Knowledge Hiding

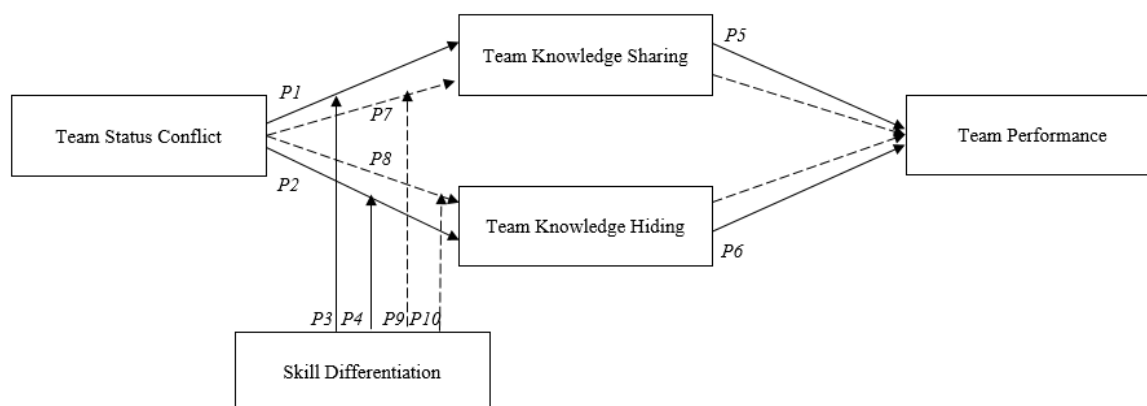
Many organizations have focused on knowledge management. Knowledge is a critical resource that is necessary to create a sustainable competitive advantage (Foss & Pederson, 2002; Kang, Hwang, & Park, 2016; Kwon, 2016; Song & Kwon, 2017). In addition, Kogut and Zander (1992) suggested that understanding how to create and transfer knowledge efficiently is a central concern of many firms for achieving competitive advantages. Thus, considerable past research has suggested that sharing of knowledge is one of the most important factors for knowledge management, and many factors promote sharing of knowledge among employees, such as climate, fairness, trust, and commitment (e.g., Collins & Smith, 2006; Connelly & Kelloway, 2003; King & Marks, 2008; Wang & Noe, 2010). Knowledge sharing is defined as "team members sharing task-relevant ideas, information, and suggestion with each other" (Srivastava et al., 2006, pp. 1241). Previous literature has illustrated knowledge sharing as social interaction among employees, which stimulates members to exchange their work-related information and skills with other members (Lin, 2007) and to combine existing knowledge with knowledge from outside sources (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), and to encourage creative thinking, ultimately leading to the creation of new knowledge (Nonaka, 1994). Knowledge sharing is divided into two sub-processes, "knowledge donating" and "knowledge collecting" (Lin 2007; Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). According to Cavaliere et al. (2015), knowledge donating refers to employees' voluntary behaviors to communicate with other colleagues and convey

their knowledge to other colleagues, and knowledge collecting refers to employees' behaviors asking or requesting knowledge from others. The reason why both of them should be studied together is that knowledge sharing among employees occurs either voluntarily or through requests from other colleagues, based on social interactions (Cavaliere et al., 2015). Thus, in this research, the term knowledge sharing includes both knowledge donating behaviors and knowledge collecting behaviors.

Significant research has considered the motivations of knowledge sharing but paid relatively little attention to the motivations of knowledge hiding (for exceptions, see Černe et al., 2014; Connelly, et al., 2012; Evans et al., 2015). According to Connelly et al. (2012), knowledge hiding is defined as a deliberate behavior to conceal and hold knowledge that would be requested by other members, suggesting low knowledge sharing and hiding are distinct. Although knowledge hiding is overlapped with low knowledge sharing behaviors, they are different because knowledge hiding includes factors of request from knowledge seekers and specific intention of hiding (Serenko & Bontis, 2016). Without any request, team members can share their knowledge voluntarily, but

knowledge hiding cannot occur. In addition, knowledge sharing is a voluntary behavior with the intention to help other team members, contribute to the team, or collect specific knowledge or skills from other team members (Cavaliere et al., 2015; Lin, 2007; Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). However, knowledge hiding occurs in a dyadic relationship with the intention to harm or deceive specific team members (Connelly et al., 2012). Specifically, a lack of knowledge sharing can occur because the giver does not have enough knowledge to share, and specific knowledge is hard to explain to others, such as know-how or tacit knowledge. If other members realize that a team member is hiding knowledge when requested, it may influence their interpersonal relationship negatively (Černe et al., 2014). However, lack of knowledge sharing does not always lead to interpersonal conflicts. Thus, in this research, we assume knowledge hiding is a distinct construct that differs from a low level of knowledge sharing.

As we discussed, knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding are both important and distinct concepts, so we need to explore each concept separately. Thus, this research considers both team knowledge sharing and hiding as critical factors for studying a team member's



〈Figure 1〉 Theoretical Model

knowledge contribution. In the next section, we will propose that status disagreement among team members impacts team contributions of team members and followed team performance negatively. <Figure 1> is a visual representation of the propositions we provide.

3. Theory Development

3.1. The Effects of Status Disagreement on Knowledge Sharing and Hiding

Based on the integration of organizational justice theories (e.g., Simon & Stürmer, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2013) and the theory of cooperation and competition (Deutsch, 1949), we argue that teams that do not reach a consensus of status may hinder team members' knowledge sharing and foster knowledge hiding. First, we propose that status disagreement makes feelings of disrespect more pervasive within the team, which reduces team member's knowledge sharing. Kilduff et al. (2016) has suggested that high status disagreement causes team members to feel disrespected by other team members and not to receive prestige and deference from other members as expected. In high status disagreement conditions, team members have different expectations about who should be more respected and who should be less respected. In work environments where there is high status disagreement, such denial of other member's status or prestige may impede team contributions.

Work on organizational justice provides support for these assertions. For instance, scholars have demonstrated that feelings of respect are the main factor that affects

psychological engagement and discretionary cooperative behaviors within groups (Tyler & Blader, 2013). De Cremer (2002) has suggested that respect from other team members denotes the message of social inclusion and acceptance by team, which motivates and promotes one's effort for team contributions. In addition, Simon and Stürmer's (2003) experimental research also has shown that a team member's perceived disrespect from other team members influences collective identification negatively, harming team serving behaviors for shared goals. As we discussed that team members in the conditions of high status disagreement are likely to choose covert ways to reduce their team contributions, employees who deny other member's status will neglect to ask ideas, information, and opinions from other employees (e.g., knowledge seeking behaviors) and ignore or fail to support other employees' ideas or provide their own knowledge or information (e.g., knowledge sharing behaviors) (Kilduff et al., 2016). In sum, we argue that the disrespectful climate created from team members' disagreement of the relative level of status negatively impacts team knowledge sharing because it is a key strategy to calibrate the extent of team contribution.

Proposition 1: Team status disagreement will be negatively related to team knowledge sharing.

Second, based on the theory of cooperation and competition (Deutsch, 1949), we argue that status disagreement may also lead to a highly competitive working environment, fostering knowledge hiding behaviors among team members. The theory of cooperation and competition (Deutsch, 1949) argues that individuals pursue their own goals that they believe will promote their interests and values. Team

members tend to be cooperative when gain by an individual member contributes to the gain of all team members, and pursued outcomes are distributed equally among team members. However, team members tend to be competitive when the gain of an individual interferes with the gain of other team members, and desired outcomes are distributed unequally among team members (Kelley & Thibaut, 1969). The present study proposes that disagreement on the status hierarchy evokes highly competitive working environments rather than cooperative ones. A divergent perception of relative status level makes teams less stable in terms of social (status) hierarchy. It causes interpersonal tensions to manifest because unclear and unstable status hierarchy may create uncertainty over one's place within the team hierarchy and provide more opportunities to challenge high-status members to low-status members. Consequently, status struggles may weaken high-status member's legitimacy, threatening their self-identities (Greer et al., 2017) and motivating them to protect their own status and position (Maner & Mead, 2010). Thus, in an unstable team that urges members to stay alert to potential status threats, team members may become more defensive toward teammates (Morrison et al., 2009), subsequently creating excessive competition among team members.

The highly competitive working environment disrupts the perception of psychological safety (Lee et al., 2018) that potentially causes team members to feel anxiety about their influence or power in a team. Fang (2017) has suggested that fear of losing power (i.e., both informal & formal) is one of the key factors that promote knowledge hiding behaviors. In a highly competitive environment, sharing knowledge requested by other team members may cause a person to lose power and depreciate one's value

in the team. Team members' fear of losing power may increase as the team working environment becomes competitive rather than cooperative. Given that knowledge is considered as power or one's value, team members in highly competitive work environments may feel more anxiety about losing power if they share their knowledge requested by others, subsequently leading to purposely withholding knowledge from each other (Eisenhardt & Bourgeois, 1988) and even hiding their knowledge requested by others (Fang, 2017).

Proposition 2: Team status disagreement will be positively related to team knowledge hiding.

3.2. Skill Differentiation

Skill Differentiation is defined as the extent to which members possess specialized knowledge or skill sets (resulted from different educational majors, work experiences, and expertise) that hamper their replacement with other team members in the workplace (Hollenbeck et al., 2012). In a team where there is a low level of skill differentiation, team members are highly substitutable, and their roles and tasks are easily interchangeable with other team members because team members have a relatively high level of "sharedness" with each other. In contrast, a team that has a high level of skill differentiation, such as operating teams (Edmondson et al., 2001), has low substitutability, and it is hard to interchange team member's roles.

Research has demonstrated that a team that is composed of a high skill differentiation set is more susceptible to team conflicts (Bunderson & Sutcliffe, 2002), triggering tensions between team members (Dougherty, 1992). High status disagreement among team members may inflate tensions due to high skill differentiation by creating

feelings of disrespect more pervasive and causing relational conflicts and task conflicts among employees. Specifically, the deviations of expected respect, behavior, and norms from other members may be bigger in the teams with high level of skill differentiation. In high skill differentiation team, each team member; who has different experiences, beliefs, and backgrounds; has different standards for evaluating status. Thus, we argue that the more the deviations of expectancy, the higher the chances are for team members to reduce their contributions.

Previous literature has suggested that teams with moderate skill differentiation support diverse ideas and are helpful in achieving elaboration of task information leading to higher team performances (van Knippenberg et al., 2004). However, under high status team disagreement, the advantage of high skill differentiation might be offset because even if all team members have diverse ideas or knowledge, tensions and conflicts due to status disagreement will be a critical obstacle for knowledge contribution. In addition, team members in high skill differentiated teams may have perceptions that their reduced knowledge contribution has a low risk of being detected or punishable by other team members compared to team members in low skill differentiated teams. The higher the skill differentiation within teams, the more difficult it is for team members to realize what knowledge other members have and what knowledge is withheld and hidden. Inherently, reduced knowledge contribution is not easily observable by other team members from both high and low skill differentiation teams (Lin, 2007). However, high skill differentiation teams experience more difficulties than low skill differentiation teams in detecting reduced knowledge contribution. Therefore, team members in high

skill differentiation teams under the condition of status disagreement may find it easier and safer to reduce their knowledge contribution without detection or punishment. Therefore, we predict that,

Proposition 3: The relationship between team status disagreement and team knowledge sharing will become increasingly negative as the levels of skill differentiation increases.

Proposition 4: The relationship between status team disagreement and team knowledge hiding will become increasingly positive as the levels of skill differentiation increases.

3.3. The Effect of Knowledge Sharing and Hiding on Team Performance

A substantial literature has examined how knowledge sharing among team members impacts team performance positively. First, active knowledge sharing among team members fundamentally provides a larger pool of information that can be used by them (e.g., Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998; Mesmer-Magnus & DeChurch, 2009). The term knowledge sharing and information sharing is interchangeably used in previous literature, and there are not many practical differences between the two (Wang & Noe, 2010). The larger pool of information not just means an increased amount of information that is available to team members, but also means improved decision making quality due to consideration of more alternatives and utilization of existing knowledge more effectively (Srivastava et al., 2006). Knowledge sharing refers to the provision of task-related information and help and collaboration with other team members for better decision making and the development of new insights (Cummings, 2004).

Second, knowledge sharing improves team performance

through improved team coordination. Srivastava et al. (2006) have demonstrated that knowledge sharing is helpful in creating a shared mental model and developing transactive memory, both leading to improved team coordination among team members. A shared mental model can be defined as shared knowledge and common knowledge structures co-created by team members for all tasks and team processes (Mathieu et al., 2000). When team members have different mental models, information processing is inefficient due to conflicts among team members (Hinsz et al., 1997). However, a shared mental model among team members makes it possible that coordination is easier and efficient through faster information processing and the development of collective intuition (Srivastava et al., 2006; Levesque et al., 2001). Specifically, as team members engage in knowledge sharing with other team members, common knowledge is accumulated and converged into their shared mental model, leading to improved team coordination (Mohammed & Dumville, 2001). Mathieu et al. (2000) has demonstrated with empirical findings that shared mental models have a positive impact on team performance through improved coordination among team members. In addition, knowledge sharing is beneficial for improving team coordination through the formation of transactive memory among team members. Transactive memory can be defined as shared awareness of “who knows what” (Wegner, 1987). With the formation of transactive memory, team members know what knowledge other members have, how incoming knowledge can be transferred to appropriate team members, and how specific knowledge can be accessed when needed, leading to improved team coordination (Mohammed & Dumville, 2001). The formation of transactive memory can

be achieved by team knowledge sharing because team knowledge sharing promotes the gain of expertise from other team members (Srivastava et al., 2006) and distribution of knowledge across the team (Mohammed & Dumville, 2001). Thus, team knowledge sharing influences team performance positively through improved decision making by providing a larger pool of knowledge and through team coordination by sharing a mental model and developing transactive memory among team members. Thus, we predict,

Proposition 5: Team knowledge sharing will be positively related to team performance.

Research on the role of knowledge hiding on team performance is less studied compared to the relationship between knowledge sharing and team performance. As mentioned above, knowledge hiding includes the effect of lack of team knowledge sharing (Connelly et al., 2012), so it can decrease the quality of decision making by reducing the pool of information and alternatives. Knowledge hiding hampers team coordination by making it hard for team members to form a shared mental model and develop transactive memory. Consequently, knowledge hiding may have a negative impact on team performance through reduced decision making and team coordination. In addition, knowledge hiding may hamper interpersonal relationships among team members through a reciprocal distrust loop, which may impact team performance negatively.

Černe et al. (2014) have demonstrated that an individual’s engagement in knowledge hiding triggers a reciprocal distrust loop that negatively impacts other team members’ willingness to share their knowledge and promotes knowledge hiding behaviors when knowledge is requested. The norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960) also suggests

that a bad experience or bad history in the interpersonal relationship among team members can stimulate knowledge hiding as a retaliation behavior in the workplace. The consequent reciprocal distrust loop makes knowledge hiding prevalent in the team, which may impair interpersonal relationships among team members, and consequently have detrimental effects on the team (Peng, 2013).

Proposition 6: Team knowledge hiding will be negatively related to team performance.

As we discussed, team knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding play an important role in team performance (Mesmer-Magnus & Dechrch, 2009). If team knowledge sharing among team members is interrupted or team knowledge hiding behavior is promoted through status disagreement, team performance will be disrupted due to a reduced pool of knowledge (Nahapiet & Ghoshal, 1998), lower quality of decision making, hampered coordination (Srivastava et al., 2006), and generation of a reciprocal distrust loop, which impairs interpersonal relationship among team members (Cerne et al., 2014). Thus, we predict that team knowledge sharing and knowledge hiding will play an important role in the relationship between status disagreement and team performance. In detail, divergent perceptions of relative levels of status among employees that create a disrespectful and competitive climate between team members will cause a low level of team knowledge sharing and a high level of team knowledge hiding, which inevitably results in lower team performance.

Proposition 7: Team status disagreement will impact team knowledge sharing negatively, subsequently hindering team performance.

Proposition 8: Team status disagreement will impact team

knowledge hiding positively, subsequently hindering team performance.

Further, we also suggest that under conditions of high team skill differentiation, the effects of team disagreement on team performance will be exacerbated through low team knowledge sharing and increased hiding. When a team's skill differentiation is high coupled with high status disagreement among team members, team knowledge sharing will be further disrupted, and team knowledge hiding will be more promoted because team members can reduce their knowledge contributions easily without having the risk of being detected by a supervisor or other team members, which will impact team performance severely. However, when a team is facing high status disagreement, but its skill differentiation is low, team knowledge contribution will be less hindered by team status disagreement because low team skill differentiation may make it harder for team members to intentionally reduce their contributions without any risk of being detected. Thus, high status disagreement within low skill differentiation teams might not impact team performance as much as high status disagreement within high skill differentiation.

Proposition 9: Relative to low team skill differentiation, team status disagreement with high skill differentiation will more negatively impact team knowledge sharing, subsequently hindering team performance more.

Proposition 10: Relative to low team skill differentiation, team status disagreement with high skill differentiation will more positively impact team knowledge hiding, subsequently hindering team performance more.

4. Overall Discussion

This research investigates the influence of status disagreement among team members on their knowledge contribution, including team knowledge sharing and hiding and team performance. We argue that high status disagreement among team members has a negative impact on team knowledge sharing and a positive impact on team knowledge hiding, which are critical dimensions for team performance. In addition, we investigate the moderating effect of team skill differentiation on team knowledge sharing and hiding. Thus, through this research, we try to answer three specific questions about team status disagreement: (1) How do team members under the condition, where status is not widely agreed upon, reduce their team contribution? (2) How do knowledge sharing and hiding influence team performance? (3) How does the interaction between team status disagreement and specific team characteristics (i.e., skill differentiation) impact team knowledge contributions and, in turn, affect team performance? We specifically suggest theoretical contributions, practical implications, and directions for future research below.

4.1. Theoretical Contributions

The purpose of this research is to explore the impact of team status disagreement. As such, we have focused on the nature of team status disagreement, its effect on team performance, team knowledge contributions (sharing and hiding), and its boundary condition. This research has four theoretical contributions for our understanding of status hierarchy and broadening the study of knowledge

and team dynamics. First, this research discusses the impact of team status disagreement on team performance, assuming that the perception of comparative levels of status rarely converges. This research is the first to suggest the relationship between team status disagreement and its effect on team performance through knowledge contribution (i.e., knowledge sharing & knowledge hiding). Based on organizational justice theories and the theory of cooperation and competition, we predict that (1) status disagreement among team members negatively impacts team knowledge sharing because it may create a disrespectful climate among team members and (2) status disagreement among team members promotes team knowledge hiding because it may excessively increase competitiveness among team members. Thus, this research will contribute toward a broader understanding of the essence of status hierarchy.

Second, this research integrates work on status hierarchy with knowledge management. In doing so, we expand our understanding of the impact of social hierarchy within team dynamics on team performance in a different perspective, that is, knowledge-based view. Previous approaches generally have focused on the social hierarchy itself without considering specific strategies team members use. This research differs from previous studies because we discuss the specific ways in which team members in high status disagreement reduce their team contributions through reduced knowledge sharing and increased knowledge hiding. In addition, integrating team knowledge sharing and hiding into a power perspective will expand the boundary of research for studying knowledge in organizations or teams.

Third, considering team skill differentiation under the

condition of status disagreement will help us understand comprehensively different contexts that may influence the activation of less knowledge sharing or more knowledge hiding. Examining different contexts around social hierarchies helps us foster a broader understanding of team dynamics. Last, this research reconfirms how knowledge sharing and hiding impacts team performance and the necessity of studying knowledge management at the team level. Although prior literature has shown possible antecedents (e.g., justice, individual differences, compensation) and outcomes (e.g., individual performance, creativity at individual level) of knowledge sharing or knowledge hiding, the antecedents and outcomes of team-level dimensions are relatively unexplored (Wang & Noe, 2010). Teams have become the basic unit in organizations (Campion et al., 1993) because it creates a larger pool of knowledge and information and active conversation and interaction, which lead to creative and innovative ideas. Thus, the study of knowledge at the team level is essential. Given this perspective, this research reinforces the importance of studying knowledge sharing and hiding at the team level.

4.2. Practical Implications

This research also has a number of practical implications. First, team leaders are required to sense the tensions and competitions resulted from status disagreement among team members and resolve them. Social hierarchies and status are sensitive topics, so reduced team contributions of team members in high status disagreement teams may be hidden and not easily identifiable (Greer et al., 2017), but it is likely to threaten a team's effectiveness. Thus,

leaders are required to be aware of the unnoticed tensions among employees and minimize competition in order to operate the team information process effectively. Second, team leaders are able to develop cozy and friendly relationships among team members to mitigate unnecessary tensions and excessive competition resulted from status disagreement. To develop trust and cultivate a positive climate, team leaders might facilitate open communications or informal gatherings between team members as those activities can give team members an opportunity to better understand each other and knowledge needs of team members. Third, when new teams are formed, organizations need to consider team design to maximize the effectiveness of a team. For example, although skill differentiation has some advantages in terms of diversity (van Knippenberg et al., 2004), it is also susceptible to conflicts (Bunderson & Sutcliffe, 2002) and tensions (Dougherty, 1992), especially in highly status disagreement team environments. Thus, understanding team characteristics and forming teams based on appropriate design is helpful to maximize team effectiveness and minimize potential risks resulted from high skill differentiation or diversity.

4.3. Future Research

Our theoretical model of status disagreement also has limitations and implications for future research seeking to expand our understanding of the role of status disagreement within a team. Most importantly, we encourage additional empirical research on propositions and the overall theory we have proposed. There is a considerable need to investigate the consequences of status disagreement in teams because status disagreement

is likely to be more common than typically assumed. Future empirical research will provide additional insights into how/why the divergent view of the relative level of status among team members hinders team performance and further understanding of social hierarchy and its dynamics in organizations and teams.

In the current research, we made two explicit assumptions. One is that the comparison of status levels with others or status itself is a sensitive topic, so employees need to rely on their subjective assessments to evaluate the status level of team members (Greer et al., 2017). The other is that obvious deviant behaviors possibly harm the current one's current status level. Based on these assumptions, we propose that team members under high status disagreement might choose to engage in "covert ways" to reduce their contributions by decreasing knowledge sharing or increasing knowledge hiding. However, we did not consider the possibility that open discussion, comparison, and competition about status are more tolerated or even valorized by some working contexts (e.g., team climate or organizational/team culture), promoting overt ways to maintain or challenge relative status levels within a team. For example, team members under high status disagreement environment might choose to form a coalition, assert their dominance for influence, and devalue the contributions of others openly (Bendersky & Hays, 2012). Thus, future theory and research should explore how different working contexts determine forms (i.e., covert versus overt) of subsequent behaviors followed by status disagreement.

Additionally, future research should carefully consider the antecedents of status disagreement because our theory mainly focused on the negative consequences of status disagreement on team performance. A variety of factors

could likely form status disagreement among team members. Examples include the absence of leadership, a lack of team resources, or a competitive climate. In order to draw the complete picture of social hierarchy, it is required to understand why status disagreement happens and what factors are involved in. Lastly, we only consider skill differentiation as a boundary condition of the relationship between status disagreement and knowledge contribution, but social hierarchy itself and its impact on a team are highly contingent on team characteristics (Greer et al., 2018). Thus, future research should consider additional team characteristics (e.g., team size, job autonomy, task interdependence, task visibility) in the relationship between team status disagreement and team knowledge contribution.

5. Conclusion

The aim of this research is to propose the impact of status disagreement on team members' knowledge contribution, including team knowledge sharing and hiding, which determines team performance. In addition, we explain the moderating effect of team skill differentiation on team disagreement. We hope our theoretical model of status disagreement allows researchers and practitioners to better understand social hierarchy and its dynamics in terms of knowledge management.

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〈 국문초록 〉

팀의 지식 공헌을 가로막는 조용한 장벽: 팀원의 위상(지위) 불일치를 중심으로

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사회적 위계서열에 대한 연구는 최근 경영 및 조직연구에 있어 관심이 증가하는 연구 주제이다. 하지만 팀내 사회적 위계서열에 관한 연구가 풍부함에도 불구하고 팀원 간의 지위 불일치(Status disagreement)에 관한 연구는 거의 존재하지 않는다. 특히 지위 불일치가 팀 성과에 영향을 미치는 팀원들의 공헌도를 감소시키는 이유와 메커니즘에 대한 이해가 부족한 편이다. 본 연구는 팀원 간의 지위 불일치는 지식공유를 감소시키고 지식은폐를 증가시켜 결과적으로 지식 공헌도를 감소, 팀 성과에 부정적인 영향을 미친다고 제안하였다. 또한, 팀 특성 중 하나인 기술(Skill) 차별화는 지위 불일치의 부정적인 영향을 더욱 악화시킬 수 있다고 제시하였다. 본 연구는 선행 연구를 토대로 지위 불일치, 지식공헌, 그리고 팀 성과에 관련된 명제를 제안하고 시사점 및 향후 연구 방향 등에 관한 추가 논의를 진행하였다.

주제어: 지식공유, 지식은폐, 사회적 위계서열, 팀 성과

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