DOES PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT MEDIATE THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROCEDURAL JUSTICE AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR?

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Our purpose was to test an explanation of how procedural justice may influence organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). The model tested suggests that procedural justice affects OCB by influencing perceived organizational support, which in turn prompts employees to reciprocate with organizational citizenship behaviors. Results suggest that procedural justice is an antecedent to perceived organizational support, which in turn fully mediates its relationship to three of four OCB dimensions.

In his discussion of the motivational basis for organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), Organ (1990) suggested that fairness perceptions play an important role in promoting OCB. Organ (1988, 1990) proposed a social exchange explanation whereby employees perform citizenship behaviors to reciprocate the fair treatment offered by organizations. Researchers have reported a robust relationship between perceptions of procedural justice and OCB in a variety of studies (e.g., Fahr, Podsakoff, & Organ, 1990; Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Moorman, 1991; Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Organ & Moorman, 1993; for a review, see Van Dyne, Cummings, and Parks [1995]).

However, little work has explored details of the thought processes of the parties engaged in the social exchange relationship that may affect a decision to perform organizational citizenship behaviors. Outside of Konovsky and Pugh's (1994) work supporting the role of supervisory trust as a mediator in the relationship between procedural justice and OCB, little work has focused on testing why and in what way procedural justice is related to such behavior. Our purpose was to test an explanation for the relationship between procedural justice perceptions and OCB by examining what may occur within the social exchange process to promote OCB. Specifically, we examined a mediating role played by perceived organizational support (POS) in linking perceptions of procedural justice and OCB.

In an examination of the processes involved in social exchange relationships, Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-LaMastro described perceived organiza-

tional support as "a general perception concerning the extent to which the organization values [employees'] general contributions and cares for their well-being" (1990: 51). Eisenberger and colleagues suggested that an employee's perception of how an organization values him or her may be vital for determining if any attitudes or behaviors benefiting the organization emerge from the social exchange relationship. We suggest that a reason why procedural justice predicts OCB is that the justice perception may affect employees' perceptions that they are valued by their organizations. In turn, this impression may prompt the employees to reciprocate by performing citizenship behaviors.

Recent research has supported a relationship between perceived organizational support and forms of organizational citizenship behavior (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). However, can perceived organizational support also offer an explanation for *why* procedural justice predicts OCB? To support the idea that POS mediates the relationship between procedural justice and citizenship behavior, we first must support procedural justice as an antecedent of perceived organizational support. Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa proposed that perceived organizational support "would be influenced by various aspects of an employee's treatment by the organization and would, in turn, influence the employee's interpretation of organizational motives underlying that treatment" (1986: 501). Eisenberger and colleagues (1990) summarized these possible antecedents of perceived organizational support by suggesting that "positive discretionary activities by the organization that

benefited the employee would be taken as evidence that the organization cared about one's well-being" (1990: 31). Consistent with Eisenberger's views, Wayne and colleagues (1997) found that POS was related to developmental experiences (for example, formal and informal training) and the number of promotions received over five years.

Thus, among other possible antecedents, perceptions of procedural fairness could be part of an employee's evaluation of the discretionary actions taken by an organization or its agents. As Fasolo noted, "It may be the case that procedures are evaluated by employees as discretionary activities on the part of the organization" (1995: 190). Shore and Shore (1995) also noted that employees are likely to believe that organizations have discretion over procedures even when the organizations lack discretion over outcomes. Fasolo offered preliminary evidence of such a relationship when he found that in a sample of 213 law enforcement employees, perceptions of fair appraisal procedures explained significant variance in perceived organizational support. Thus, our first hypothesis is:

Hypothesis 1. Procedural justice will be positively related to perceived organizational support.

However, to explain why procedural justice may affect OCB through perceived organizational support, we invoked the group value model of procedural justice (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Lind and Tyler proposed both a self-interest model and a group value model of procedural justice to explain both the instrumental and noninstrumental effects of procedural justice judgments. For example, voice procedures are seen as fair not only because of the instrumental effect voice may have on outcome distributions, but also because voice has a noninstrumental effect by demonstrating that the organization considers employee input to be of value. According to Lind and Earley (1991), such noninstrumental effects (group value effects), in which fair procedures communicate to employees that they are valued by their organization, are most important for the creation of the environment in which citizenship behaviors occur. Procedural justice affects citizenship behavior because the justice judgments affect the degree to which an employee believes an organization values him or her. Lind and Earley suggested that the link between procedural justice and OCB is the perception of support elicited by the justice perception.

Shore and Shore supported the mediating role of perceived organizational support when they discussed how perceptions of justice create a "global schema of history of support" (1995: 159). They

wrote the following: "Perceived organizational support is more likely than distributive or procedural justice perceptions to impact employee attitudes and behavior. In other words, it is the history of decisions, and the associated employee interpretations of organizational caring, that are most likely to influence employee behavior" (Shore & Shore, 1995: 160).

Therefore, procedural justice may be related to organizational citizenship behavior because perceptions of procedural justice affect an employee's general perception that an organization values him or her, and this perception of support may prompt the employee to reciprocate with increased citizenship behaviors.

In order to determine whether the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior is mediated by perceived organizational support, we tested the following:

Hypothesis 2. Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behavior.

METHODS

Sample

Data were gathered from civilian subordinates and their supervisors from all departments of a large military hospital located in the Midwest. The surveys, which contained the measures of procedural justice and perceived organizational support, were distributed to 450 civilian subordinates. At the same time, supervisors of the 450 subordinates were asked to rate the latter on the measure of organizational citizenship behavior.

Of the 450 surveys distributed to subordinates, 255 surveys were returned, for a response rate of 57 percent. Of those 255 surveys, matching supervisory surveys (a supervisor rated a subordinate who had also turned in a survey) were returned for 218 individuals. Using "listwise" deletion for missing variables, we obtained a final analytic sample of 157 supervisor-subordinate matched responses and thus an effective response rate of 35 percent. Of the subordinates in the final sample of 157, 30 percent were men; the average age was 42.5 years (s.d. = 8.7), and average tenure at the hospital was 7.6 years (s.d. = 6.0). These 157 matched surveys represented 69 supervisors, of whom 35 were civilians. Seventy-two percent of the supervisors were women.

Measures

Organizational citizenship behavior. Supervisors assessed citizenship behavior with a modified version of the four-dimensional scale developed by Moorman and Blakely (1995); response options ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The scale was based on Graham's (1989) dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior. The four dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior measured, each with 5 items, were (1) interpersonal helping, which focuses on helping co-workers in their jobs when such help is needed, (2) individual initiative, which describes communications to others in the workplace to improve individual and group performance, (3) personal industry, which describes the performance of specific tasks above and beyond the call of duty, and (4) loyal boosterism, which describes the promotion of the organizational image to outsiders. In Moorman and Blakely's (1995) study, this measure had an acceptable confirmatory fit index (CFI) of .91 and acceptable reliabilities. However, to further improve the scale reliability, we modified 11 of the original items to create more of a distinction between OCB and in-role behavior.

Confirmatory factor analyses from LISREL 8 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993) suggested that we exclude one personal industry item from the analysis because of its poor loading on the hypothesized factor. The CFI for the four-factor model of organizational citizenship behavior was .83, which indicates a marginal fit. Our final measure had a chi-square of 438.07 for 145 degrees of freedom ($p < .001$) and contained five interpersonal helping items, five individual initiative items, four personal industry items, and five loyal boosterism items. The coefficient alphas for the four dimensions were .78, .80, .83, and .84, respectively.

Procedural justice. Procedural justice was measured using 12 items from the procedural justice scale reported in Niehoff and Moorman (1993) and Moorman (1991). The 12 items were chosen to reflect the importance of fair procedures in organizations and also the fair use of those procedures by an employee's supervisor. The current measure used a 1–7 response scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree) and differed from past measures in that we asked respondents to think about decisions that affected other employees in general or themselves in particular. We added "other employees in general" because we wanted the fairness judgments measured by this scale to combine both an individual respondent's experiences and the respondent's views of others' experiences in the organization. The CFI for the model was .94, indicating a good fit,

and all the items loaded significantly on the single factor. The coefficient alpha for the procedural justice items was .98. The model had a chi-square of 202.54 for 52 degrees of freedom ($p < .001$).

Perceived organizational support. We assessed perceived organizational support with the 17-item scale developed by Eisenberger and colleagues (1986). Respondents were asked (1, strongly disagree, to 7, strongly agree) to indicate how much their organization supported them. Shore and Wayne (1993) reported a coefficient alpha of .95 for this scale, and our coefficient alpha was .98. However, a single-factor confirmatory analysis reported a CFI of only .82. The single-factor model for the perceived organizational support scale had a chi-square of 558.98 for 119 degrees of freedom ($p < .001$).

Analyses

Because of our sample size and the number of parameters estimated, we needed to use procedures to reduce the number of parameters in our overall measurement model. For the procedural justice and perceived organizational support scales, we followed the procedure suggested by Mathieu and Farr (1991) and created composite subscales consisting of four items each for the procedural justice scale and five, six, and six items each for the perceived organizational support scale. For the OCB scale, we followed the procedures described by Williams and Anderson (1994) and created single-item indicators for the four citizenship behavior dimensions. Measurement error was approximated by fixing the factor loading to equal the square root of the coefficient alpha and by fixing the random error variance to the product of the variance of scale score and the quantity of one minus the coefficient alpha.

These procedures resulted in a measurement model containing three indicators of procedural justice, three indicators of organizational support, and one indicator each for the four citizenship behaviors. The chi-square for this model was 44.68 for 24 degrees of freedom ($p < .01$), and the CFI was .99.

RESULTS

Scale means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and correlations are reported in Table 1. The first model evaluated was the saturated model that contains both direct paths from procedural justice to dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior and indirect paths through perceived organizational support. This model represents a partially

O1C
O3L

TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations between Study Variables[a]

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Procedural justice	4.94	1.50	(.98)					
2. Perceived organizational support	4.48	1.35	.69***	(.98)				
3. Interpersonal helping	5.81	0.93	.26**	.25**	(.78)			
4. Individual initiative	5.65	0.99	.07	.08	.62***	(.80)		
5. Personal industry	6.14	0.90	.20**	.16*	.73***	.70***	(.83)	
6. Loyal boosterism	5.21	1.04	.17*	.28**	.72***	.67***	.64***	(.84)

[a] Reliabilities for each scale are listed on the diagonal.
 * $p < .05$
 ** $p < .01$
 *** $p < .001$

mediated model of the effects of procedural justice on OCB. The chi-square for this model was 44.68 for 24 degrees of freedom; the CFI was .99; the goodness-of-fit index (GFI) was .95; the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) was .074; and the parsimony normed fit index (PNFI) was .52. The CFI and the GFI suggest a good fit, and the RMSEA suggests a marginally acceptable fit. Support for Hypothesis 1 is shown by the significant path between procedural justice and perceived organizational support ($\gamma = .71$, $p < .001$).

To test Hypothesis 2 and examine if the relationship between procedural justice and OCB was explained better as a fully mediated relationship through perceived organizational support, we compared the saturated model to the theoretical model. This model represented a fully mediated model of the effects of procedural justice on OCB because no direct paths between procedural justice and dimensions of OCB were present. The chi-square for the theoretical model was 53.20 for 28 degrees of freedom ($p < .001$). The change in chi-square between the saturated model and the theoretical model was 8.52 for 4 degrees of freedom, and this change was not significant when assessed by a two-tailed test. As for the fit indexes for this model, the CFI was .99, the GFI was .94, the RMSEA was .076, and the PNFI was .60.

Given the nonsignificant change in chi-square, the small change in the fit indexes, and the increased parsimony of the theoretical model, our results support Hypothesis 2 by providing stronger support for a fully mediated model in which procedural justice affects OCB through its effect on perceived organizational support.

The parameter estimates for the best-fitting model are reported in Figure 1. In addition to the significant path between procedural justice and perceived organizational support, the paths from POS to interpersonal helping ($\beta = .29$, $p < .01$), personal industry ($\beta = .19$, $p < .05$), and loyal

boosterism ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$) were significant. However, the path from perceived organizational support and individual initiative was not significant ($\beta = .10$, $p > .05$). The significance of the indirect effects of procedural justice were consistent with the above parameter estimates. The indirect effect of procedural justice on interpersonal helping was .20 (s.e. = .06); the effect on individual initiative was .07 (s.e. = .06); the effect on personal industry was .12 (s.e. = .06); and the effect on loyal boosterism was .24 (s.e. = .07). All the indirect effects except the effect of procedural justice on individual initiative were significant at $p < .05$.

Finally, the variance in each dependent variable in the model is reported by the squared multiple correlations. The squared multiple correlation for perceived organizational support was .51; for interpersonal helping, it was .08; for individual initiative, .01; for personal industry, .04; and for loyal boosterism, .10. Though only a small amount of variance was explained for the OCB dimensions, these amounts are consistent with other OCB research (Organ, 1988).

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to test an explanation for why procedural justice judgments affect citizenship behavior. We examined if procedural justice affects citizenship by influencing the degree to which an employee perceives organizational support and if this perception of support prompts the reciprocation of citizenship behavior. Results offer support for a relationship between procedural justice and perceived organizational support and between perceived organizational support and three of the four organizational citizenship behavior dimensions. However, by including the mediating variable, we found stronger support for a fully mediated model of the effects of procedural justice on OCB.

FIGURE 1
Measurement and Fully Mediated Model

* *p* < .05
** *p* < .01
*** *p* < .001
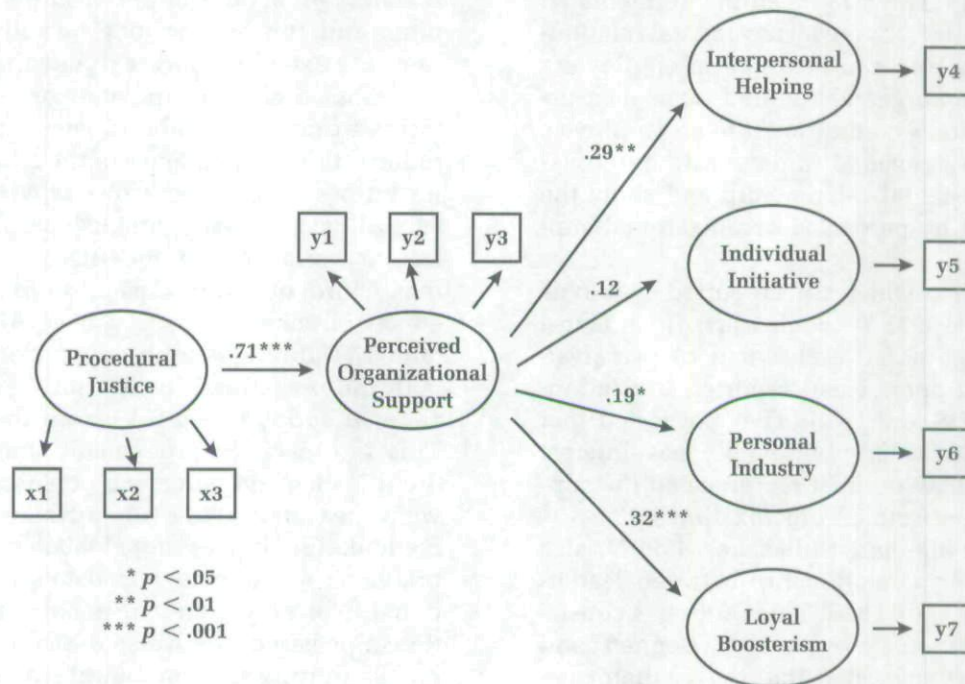
Although there is theoretical and empirical support for our theoretical model, we cannot rule out alternative explanations for our findings. For example, perceived organizational support could affect judgments of procedural justice, instead of the other way around. Similarly, employees who perform citizenship behaviors may be more likely to elicit support from their organizations. Since Eisenberger and colleagues (1986) developed the construct of perceived organizational support to describe the process of social exchange, we acknowledge that the process may be reciprocal. One suggestion for future research is to develop and test a more complete representation of the possible antecedents of perceived organizational support and to also determine the degree of reciprocal causation.

Our theoretical model suggests support for a relationship between perceived organizational support and three behavior dimensions: interpersonal helping, personal industry, and loyal boosterism. No relationship was found between support and individual initiative, but in retrospect this is not surprising. Graham (1989) envisioned individual initiative as a citizenship behavior performed by responsible yet unsatisfied employees. These behaviors include speaking out against injustice in an organization and prodding others with new ideas for their jobs. Graham (1989) suggested that this type of citizenship might even be more strongly

related to measures of dissatisfaction with a supervisor than to satisfaction with the supervisor. Since perceived organizational support reflects more of a positive attitude toward supervision, the lack of relationship is understandable.

Our results are consistent with other work examining the relationship between perceptions of justice and citizenship but also suggest avenues for further research. Konovsky and Pugh (1994) found that the relationship between procedural justice and citizenship was fully mediated by employees' trust in their supervisors. However, we believe our results are not merely replicating those of Konovsky and Pugh because we were measuring an employee's perception of how an organization valued him or her. Trust in a supervisor is, like job satisfaction and organizational commitment, a measure of an individual's evaluation of some entity (e.g., job, boss, organization), and this is different from an evaluation of how that entity views the individual. This distinction, though subtle, is important, and further research is needed to determine the different relationships between procedural justice, perceived organizational support, and interpersonal trust.

The results of this study are also consistent with the results of Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994). Van Dyne and colleagues (1994) proposed a mediating relationship between six antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior (job satisfac-

tion, cynicism, values, motivating potential, tenure, and job level) and a five-factor model of citizenship behavior. The relationships are mediated by a construct called "two-way covenantal relationship" which contains a measure of an employee's commitment to an organization and items measuring an organization's commitment to an employee. Further research is needed to demonstrate the nature of this covenantal relationship and show the role played in it by perceived organizational support.

Also consistent are the results reported by Wayne and colleagues (1997). Though they did not test procedural justice as an antecedent of perceived organizational support, they reported a relationship between POS and OCB. They suggested that this relationship was based on employees' interest in performing behaviors that reciprocated the support they received from an organization.

However, Wayne and colleagues (1997) also found support for a relationship between leader-member exchange and OCB. This finding is consistent with a recent study by Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996) that suggested that the mediator between procedural justice and OCB might best be represented by leader-member exchange rather than by perceived organizational support. Settoon and colleagues examined two levels of exchange relationships, the exchange between employees and their supervisors (LMX) and the exchange between employees and their organizations (POS). They found that the type of exchange relationship most predictive of OCB was the relationship represented by leader-member exchange and not that represented by perceived organizational support.

One explanation for their results in light of the present study may lie in the dimensions of OCB studied. Settoon and colleagues (1996) measured OCB using the helping behavior dimension only. Helping is a dimension that taps behavior directed toward a specific individual but does not include behaviors that may be directed toward an organization in general. This distinction was noted by Williams and Anderson (1991) when they divided OCB into two dimensions: OCBI, reflecting individually directed organizational citizenship behavior, and OCBO, reflecting organizationally directed organizational citizenship behavior. Excluding more organizationally directed dimensions of OCB (like loyal boosterism) may explain why perceived organizational support was not related to OCB in their study. Future research is needed to compare the effects of LMX and perceived organizational support on both individually directed and organizationally directed dimensions of organizational citizenship behavior.

The present study does have a number of methodological limitations that suggest areas for future research. First, our sample was from a military hospital, and this setting may be unique enough to limit the external validity of our findings. Second, we assessed citizenship behavior by asking supervisors to rate their subordinates, but this method reduces the independence of the citizenship behavior ratings. Most supervisors rated more than one subordinate, and this might have introduced systematic variance into the citizenship behavior ratings. Third, our study design could not rule out the effects of common method bias. Although we obtained OCB ratings from supervisors, we obtained both the procedural justice and perceived organizational support measures from the subordinates. This is especially problematic since both procedural justice and perceived organizational support were measured at the same time using a similar method. Finally, as noted above, some obvious problems are due to our data's being cross-sectional. Not only were we unable to rule out relationships based on reverse causality, we were also unable to truly test our causal inferences.

Even with these limitations, we believe we have achieved our purpose for this study. First, we have offered an explanation for why procedural justice judgments may affect citizenship behavior. The apparent mechanism is that perceptions of procedural justice affect the degree to which employees perceive support from their organization, and this perception of support creates a climate in which the employees are likely to reciprocate with citizenship behaviors. Second, we have also supported the role of procedural justice as an antecedent of perceived organizational support. Though other possible antecedents were not tested, we can suggest that actions designed to promote procedural fairness may be useful in communicating how a company values and supports its employees.

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