Building perceived organizational support through justice: the mediating effect of perceived organizational support on the relationship between justice interventions and organizational outcomes

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BUILDING PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT THROUGH JUSTICE:
THE MEDIATING EFFECT OF PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT
ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN
JUSTICE INTERVENTIONS AND ORGANIZATIONAL OUTCOMES

by

Maria B. Arboleda

A Dissertation
Submitted to the University at Albany, State University of New York
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Abstract

Research on perceived organizational support has focused on theoretical antecedents and organizational outcomes, however to date there is limited research on practical interventions to enhance POS. The present study examined, in a lab setting, whether two operationalizations of justice, provision of information (informational justice) and encouraging suggestions (procedural justice) influence the extent to which employees feel supported by their organization. Further, this study explored the mediating effect of POS on the relationship between these justice interventions and organizational outcomes supported in the literature, affective commitment, extra-role performance and in-role performance.

One hundred and seventy three participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: encouraging suggestions, provision of information and a control group. Participants were exposed to different treatment from the organization based on the condition to which they were assigned. Results of this study showed that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition reported significantly higher levels of perceived organizational support. Bootstrapping mediation analyses using regression was used to examine POS as a mechanism between encouraging suggestions and organizational outcomes: affective commitment, extra-role performance and in-role performance. Results showed that POS mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions and affective commitment and extra-role performance, however it did not mediate the relationship between encouraging suggestions and in-role performance. The results also show that provision of information was not a direct manipulation of informational justice, due to the non-significant relationship with Colquitt’s (2001) measure of informational
justice. Further, provision of information did not influence POS or any organizational outcomes, therefore tests for mediation were not conducted. These results support the relationship between procedural justice and POS, and the positive influence that POS has on organizational outcomes.
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Chapter 1

Introduction and Statement of Problem
Research has shown that employees form global perceptions of whether their organization values their contributions and cares for their well being, called perceived organizational support or POS (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). The theoretical framework involved in understanding the antecedents and outcomes of POS is called organizational support theory, a social exchange approach that assumes employees will reciprocate treatment they receive from the organization with positive behaviors at work (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Antecedents of POS include the support employees receive from their supervisor, organizational rewards and job conditions and fairness (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). A recent meta-analysis of the antecedents and outcomes of POS showed that higher levels of POS lead to such outcomes as higher performance, enhanced citizenship behaviors, and affective commitment to the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Further, POS is also important in reducing negative behaviors, as higher levels of POS related to lower levels of absenteeism and employee turnover.

Purpose of Present Study

Although a large amount of research has found that POS leads to positive outcomes for organizations (e.g., greater affective commitment, higher occurrence of organizational citizenship behaviors, and lower turnover intentions, see Rhoades & Eisenberger for review), little research has provided advice to organizations on how to provide favorable treatment that would encourage its employees’ view of the organization as a supportive place to work. To date, research has focused on determining the theoretical antecedents of POS, with little practical advice on how to turn these antecedents into interventions that will influence POS. This study provides a first step
towards translating two aspects of fairness: employee voice and informational justice, into practical interventions that may positively influence POS. The current study also explores whether the interventions positively affect commonly studied outcomes of POS, including affective commitment (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001), organizational citizenship behaviors and in-role performance (Eisenberger et al., 2001).

For the present study, I chose to create interventions (provision of information and encouraging suggestions) based on two forms of organizational justice, or in other words fairness, (informational justice and procedural justice). Justice was found to be the strongest theoretical antecedent of POS in the Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) review of the POS literature, and thus is a logical place to start when considering interventions to enhance POS. These two forms of organizational justice are also likely to be perceived as discretionary acts (employers willingly engage in them rather than being required to do so by law or other external forces) and therefore should lead to higher levels of perceived organizational support (Eisenberger et al., 1997). Organizational support theory suggests that employees view discretionary acts, including those engaged in by agents of the organization (such as supervisors), as particularly strong evidence that the organization cares about the employee’s well-being because employees attribute them to the organization’s own wishes rather than external constraints (Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1990; Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998).

This logic is consistent with attribution theories from the social psychological literature. Because employees tend to personify the organization (Levinson, 1965), employees attribute behavior from the organization much in the same way as they would behavior coming from an individual. Heider (1958), thought of as the father of attribution
theory, suggested that individuals attribute behaviors from others in one of two ways: internal/dispositional or external/situational. When individuals are determining why others behave the way they act, they either attribute the behavior to their personality (dispositional) or to circumstances which led to the behaviors (situational). In the case of behaviors from the organization, employees may view discretionary behaviors as attributed to internal or dispositional factors, or reflecting the organizations’ desires and non-discretionary acts to be viewed as external or due to another force determining the behavior.

Organizations may have little discretion over rewards and many conditions of the job. Conversely, justice, particularly voice and timely provision of information, may be under the control of organizational agents and thus are a good place to start to create interventions designed to enhance POS. Agents of the organization (such as supervisors) can show employees that they are valued members of the organization by giving them voice in decisions, a common operationalization of procedural justice (e.g., Prooijen, Kareemans & Beest, 2006; Earley & Lind, 1987; Folger, 1977). Procedural justice is cultivated when organizations’ policies for decision-making follow specific rules set forth by Leventhal (1980). For example, procedures should utilize accurate information, be consistent across individuals and time, be free from bias, offer mechanisms for change, represent groups’ concerns, and promote ethical standards in order to be considered just (Leventhal, 1980). Procedures which also offer employees some control over the decision-making process, by providing them voice or influence, will also be seen as fair (Brockner & Weisenfeld, 1996; McCabe & Lewin, 1992; Lind et al., 1990; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Due to the consistently strong positive relationship between procedural
justice and perceived organizational support, as reported by Rhoades and Eisenberger in their meta-analysis (2002), encouraging employees to voice their opinions should enhance perceived organizational support.

In the same manner that employees evaluate the fairness of procedures in their organization, they also evaluate whether the organization is providing them with timely and accurate information. This perception has been named informational justice (Greenberg, 1993). Colquitt (2001) defined informational justice in terms of the adequacy of the information provided to employees regarding procedures. By providing employees with clear, timely and accurate information, organizations reduce employees’ ambiguity about the workplace. Employees perceive this as fair and effective communication (Cascio, 1993) and this is likely to enhance the employee’s perception that he or she is valued and cared about. Employees value information as a source to reduce ambiguity. When employees are given additional information about a change in the organization, they are more likely to reciprocate trust towards the organization in exchange for the trust the organization demonstrates to the employees by relaying the information.

Informational justice has been studied in times of ambiguity where information that is provided is most useful, for example during performance appraisals or large organizational change. Research has shown that in times of change or uncertainty, this information is particularly important (Bruning et.al., 1996, Lind & Van den Bos, 2002; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). However, little research on informational justice has manipulated this construct for everyday work situations. The present study seeks to evaluate whether employees are receptive to additional timely information and whether this additional information will influence their perceptions that the organization supports
them. Given that information is an important aspect of justice perceptions, that providing information is under the discretionary control of organizational agents, and the strong relationship between justice and POS, providing information to employees that may be seen as beneficial to the employee should influence perceptions of organizational support.

Enhancing employee POS through just treatment should have beneficial outcomes. Both types of justice and POS have been associated with a number of positive outcomes. Justice perceptions have been found to have relationships with employee behaviors such as job performance (Adams, 1965; Lind, Kanfer, & Earley, 1990), counterproductive work behaviors (Greenberg, 1993b), and organizational citizenship behaviors (Moorman, 1991; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Procedural justice in particular has been found to be positively related to outcomes for the organization such as: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust and job performance (Colquitt et al., 2001). With regard to informational justice, Colquitt et al.’s (2001) meta-analysis found that informational justice positively correlated with outcome satisfaction, organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behaviors (that aid individuals and the organization) and performance. Perceived organizational support results in positive outcomes due to the norm of reciprocity: when the organization treats employees well, they feel obligated to reciprocate the good treatment (Eisenberger et al., 1986; 2001). A few ways that employees commonly reciprocate positive treatment from the organization are enhanced affective commitment and both in-role and extra-role performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Perceived organizational support is likely to mediate the relationship between the justice perceptions generated by the two interventions in the present study (encouraging
suggestions and providing timely information) and the common positive outcomes of POS (affective commitment, in-role and extra-role performance). Part of the reason justice perceptions relate to positive outcomes is that fairness enhances employees’ perception that the organization cares about and values them and this creates a reciprocal relationship. For example, previous research has found that POS mediates the relationship between procedural justice and outcomes (Masterson et al., 2000; Moorman et al., 1998). That is, justice can lead to positive outcomes for the organization in part because they relay to employees that the organization cares for them. Employees see these fair procedures as indicative that the organization supports them. Moorman, Blakely, and Niehoff (1998) found that procedural justice served as an antecedent of POS, which in turn influenced organizational citizenship behaviors aimed at helping the organization.

In sum, the goal of the present study is to create interventions that represent operationalizations of two forms of justice (procedural and informational) and explore the extent to which such interventions lead to higher POS and its associated outcomes. Allowing employees voice and providing them accurate and timely information should lead to enhanced perceptions of procedural and informational justice, respectively, with positive effects on POS and its commonly studied outcomes of affective commitment, in-role performance, and extra-role performance. The present study seeks to investigate the singular and additive effects of these interventions in hopes of finding suggestions for organizations to improve POS.
Chapter 2

Review of the Literature and Statement of Hypotheses
Employees have been found to develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being; this is known as perceived organizational support or POS (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Employees develop this belief both to meet socioemotional needs and determine whether the organization will reciprocate their efforts with support and other tangible rewards. A recent meta-analysis (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) found that procedural justice, supervisor support and job rewards and conditions contribute to employee POS. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) argue discretionary actions by the organization and its agents should contribute most to POS. In turn, POS has been found to be positively related to a variety of outcomes, including affective organizational commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Settoon et al., 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991), and in-role and extra-role job performance (Eisenberger et al., 1990, 1986). Therefore organizations should be interested in developing POS among their employees because it directly benefits the organization.

Organizational Support Theory

Organizational support theory is the theoretical framework that considers the development, nature, and outcomes of POS (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2002; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch, & Rhoades, 2001; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Shore & Shore, 1995). Organizational support theory developed from the social exchange theory notion that in exchange for good treatment by an organization, employees will be loyal to an organization and try to help the organization achieve its goals (Angle & Perry, 1983; Etzioni, 1961; Gould, 1979;
Levinson, 1965; March & Simon, 1958; Mowday, Porter, & Steers, 1982). Levinson (1965) noted that employees tend to assign lifelike qualities to an organization to help determine the organization’s intent. Also, employees view the actions of the organization’s agents as reflections of the wishes or beliefs of the organization (Levinson, 1965). Agents of the organization include any employees who are responsible for enacting policies and norms, prescribe role behaviors, and exert power or supervise other employees. It is through individuals’ perceptions of these actions that they form beliefs about whether they are supported by the organization. The formation of organizational support perceptions helps employees assess the organization’s readiness to reward efforts made on its behalf and to fulfill employees’ socioemotional needs (Eisenberger et al. 1986).

**Social Exchange and Felt Obligation**

Organizational support theory is based on the notion of social exchange. Social exchange theory as applied to organizations concerns the notion that, due to the norm of reciprocity, employment involves the trade of effort and loyalty for tangible (e.g., pay) and socioemotional (e.g., esteem, approval) benefits from the organization (Blau, 1964). According to Settoon, Bennett, and Liden (1996), perceived organizational support represents the employee’s perspective of the exchange relationship between the employee and the organization. Settoon et al. (1996) state that in organizations, social exchange emerges at two levels: employees maintain global exchanges with the organization and also have exchange relationships with their supervisors, who act as representatives of the organization. This contention has also been supported by Wayne, Shore, Bommer and Tetrick (2002). Employees view treatment from agents of the organization, such as
supervisors or managers, as reflective of the wants of the organization. Therefore, they
derive how the organization feels about them in part through these interactions with their
supervisors.

Based on the reciprocity norm, which states that people should help those who
have helped them (Gouldner, 1960), POS creates a felt obligation to care about the
organization’s welfare and to help the organization reach its objectives (Eisenberger et
al., 2001). In addition, POS helps fulfill employees’ socioemotional needs (such as
esteem, affiliation, approval) and as such employees reciprocate in part because their
needs are being fulfilled. Organizational support theory purports that individuals who
perceive their organization as highly supportive will feel obligated to reciprocate this
support; research on OST has provided evidence for this notion (Eisenberger et al., 2001;
George & Brief, 1992).

Outcomes of Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived organizational support creates a felt obligation to support the
organization in return. Thus POS results in more positive: attitudes (Eisenberger et al.,
1990; Guzzo et al., 1994; Randall, Cropanzano, Bormann, & Birjulin, 1994; Settoon et
al., 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Tetrick & Sinclair, 1994;
Wayne et al., 1997) and behaviors (Masterson et al., 2000; Moorman et al., 1998; Wayne
et al., 1997). For example, POS has been shown to lead employees to care about the
organization’s well-being, increase commitment to the organization, help the
organization meet its goals, perform better (Eisenberger et al., 2001; Wayne, Shore, &
Liden, 1997), reduce their tendency to miss work, and make them less likely to leave the
organization (Wayne et al., 1997). Eisenberger and his colleagues (1986) argue that part
of the loyalty that employees feel towards the organization manifests itself as an emotional commitment towards the organization known as affective commitment (Mowday et al., 1979). Consistent with this notion, POS has been repeatedly linked to affective commitment (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Settoon et al., 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991). Perceived organizational support is positively related to a variety of other work-related outcomes, including evaluative and objective measures of in-role job performance (Eisenberger et al., 1990, 1986), help given coworkers (Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne et al., 1997; Witt, 1991), constructive suggestions for improving the operations of the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990), and influence tactics designed by employees to make supervisors aware of their dedication and accomplishments (Shore & Wayne, 1993). Perceived organizational support has also been found to be related to job satisfaction (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997) and withdrawal behaviors (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Finally, POS was negatively related to absenteeism (Eisenberger et al., 1990, 1986) and turnover intention (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Wayne et al., 1997).

*Discretionary Acts from the Organization*

One of the most important aspects of organizational support theory with regard to antecedents of perceived organizational support is how employees evaluate the treatment they receive from the organization. Employees determine not only whether treatment from the organization is favorable, but also whether it is discretionary, that is whether organizations (or agents of organizations) engaged in the behavior through their own will versus due to external constraints. If the employee views the treatment as obligatory, they
would not view it as an indication of their value to the organization and may not feel obligated to respond in a positive manner. Because employees tend to personify the organization, they make attributions about organizational behavior much as they would for an individual person. Therefore, the logic behind why POS is increased by favorable discretionary treatment is similar to logic set forth in social psychological theories of attribution. Attribution theory is concerned with how individuals interpret events and how this relates to their thinking and behavior. Heider (1958) contended that individuals attribute others’ behavior to internal/dispositional traits or external/situational circumstances. A larger framework for attribution theory assumes that individuals make assumptions about others’ behavior in an effort to understand why they have behaved in a certain way, and can attribute one or more causes to the behavior of others (Jones et al, 1972; Weiner, 1974, 1986). This framework states that to make determinations about how to attribute others’ behavior, three steps need to occur: an individual observes the behavior, the individual believes that the behavior was intentionally performed, and the individual determines whether the other person was forced to perform the behavior (in which case the cause is attributed to the situation) or not (in which case the cause is attributed to the other person) (Jones et al, 1972; Weiner, 1974, 1986).

With regard to organizational support theory, which is based on social exchange accounts of relationships, social exchange theorists have argued that the receipt of resources from another person is valued more highly if thought to be discretionary rather than dictated by circumstances largely beyond the donor's control (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger et al., 1997). When people help one another through their own free will, it can be seen as an indication that the donor genuinely values and respects the recipient
For employees to develop POS, they must believe that organizations are engaging in discretionary favorable treatment and thus they engage in an attribution process like that described in social psychological theories of attribution when receiving treatment from the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Because employees may not always agree on whether treatment from the organization is discretionary or how much control the organization has over the behavior, it is important to consider that understanding discretionary treatment may not be simple. It is possible that discretionary control may be viewed as a continuum where the organization can have high discretionary control to little discretionary control over the treatment it gives to employees. Depending on the type of treatment, such as pay, promotion, training, interpersonal treatment, or procedural fairness, there are many constraints that can affect whether the organization can engage in these behaviors including funding, laws, time constraints, and priorities. While these constraints may provide rational reasons for the presence or absence of treatment, employees will still value positive discretionary treatment as an indication that the organization cares about them more than positive treatment out of the organizations’ control.

Consistent with this notion, when organizations provide resources or job conditions beyond those required through formal or psychological contracts, the employees’ view that the organization cares about them is strengthened (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003; Eisenberger et al., 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Literature on POS argues that discretionary actions that imply the organization is investing in the employee, or demonstrate that the organization appreciates and recognizes the employee,
contribute to POS (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997; Shore & Shore, 1995). Eisenberger and his colleagues (1997) found that the relationship between the favorableness of job conditions and POS was dependent on how employees evaluated the discretion that organizations had to implement those job conditions. Those job conditions that were viewed by employees as highly discretionary were more likely to lead to POS than those that were viewed as low in discretion. That is, the level of discretion that employees believed organizations had over the conditions moderated the relationship between favorableness of the condition and perceived organizational support. High discretion job conditions impacted POS to a greater extent (accounting for 5.5 times more variance in POS) than low discretion job conditions. Thus, any attempt to enhance perceived organizational support should be more successful to the extent that the treatment is discretionary in nature.

Perceived organizational support has been studied for over 20 years and research has explored the theoretical antecedents and outcomes of an employee’s POS. However, to date little research has explored discretionary behaviors that organizations engage in which can influence POS and its outcomes. Further, few studies have provided concrete suggestions about interventions to improve POS. There is limited research that has empirically examined what forms of treatment create a sense of obligation or indebtedness in employee–organization relationships (i.e., POS; Shore & Shore, 1995). Research has established organizational justice or in other words, fairness, as the theoretical antecedent most highly related to POS (see Rhoades and Eisenberger, 2002 for a review). Given that justice is likely to be viewed as discretionary treatment; it is a logical place to start.
Organizational justice is a subjective judgment made by employees about fairness in an organization. Broadly, justice has been studied in terms of the outcomes of decisions and the procedures used to determine those outcomes. In the past decade, research has focused on the distinctiveness of justice constructs and how many different judgments are made to determine the fairness in an organization. Colquitt (2001) determined that there are four distinctive types of justice: distributive justice, procedural justice, informational justice and interpersonal justice (which have at times been combined and labeled interactional justice). Distributive justice is the fairness associated with outcomes in an organization, such as performance appraisals and promotions. Procedural justice is associated with the procedures that lead to those outcomes and has been defined as feelings of fairness regarding the procedures used in an organization (Leventhal, Karuza, & Fry, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). An aspect of procedural justice commonly studied is voice. When employees are able to express their opinions or engage in the decision making process at work, they view the procedures in an organization as more fair (Brockner et al. 1998; Lind et al., 1990). Bies and Moag (1986) originally defined interactional justice as a third type of justice and stated that employees consider interactional justice when deciding how to respond to supervisors and other bosses. Although interactional justice is still seen as a single justice construct by some (e.g., Bies, 2001), others (e.g., Colquitt, 2001) have divided it into interpersonal and informational justice. Interpersonal justice concerns the relationship between an employee and a supervisor to the extent that there is respect in that relationship. Finally, informational justice, while closely linked to procedural justice, evaluates the quality of
communication between an employee and the organization. Colquitt (2001) defined informational justice in terms of the adequacy of the information provided to employees regarding procedures. Even though informational justice has been considered part of the larger interactional justice component, research has provided evidence for its distinctiveness as a justice construct (Colquitt et al., 2001; Bies & Moag, 1986).

Importance of Justice to Perceived Organizational Support

Of the theoretical antecedents of POS, justice seems ripe for investigation as allowing for potential intervention. Justice is one of the strongest theoretical and empirical antecedents of POS due to the fact that employees view fair treatment by the organization as indicative that the organization cares about them (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Research has shown that employees will reciprocate fair treatment with positive outcomes for the organization. When organizations treat employees fairly over many instances, they demonstrate that they care about their employees’ well-being (Shore & Shore, 1995). Further, the authors argue the importance of justice to POS because organizational fairness involves the procedures used and allocation of resources from the organization. Since employees value these resources, when they believe that the procedures and outcomes are fair, they attribute this to the organizations’ willingness to be fair to their employees, and by extension to the value they place on their employees.

Fair treatment may also be seen by employees as discretionary because the organization sets the standards for fairness and chooses whether to enforce those standards. There is no standard for all organizations to determine the fairness of procedures and outcomes; therefore, organizations make decisions regarding what they consider fair treatment and what they believe employees will view as fair. Further, the
policies used to determine who receives organizational resources may be seen as
demonstrating the organization’s wants and needs and therefore are viewed as
discretionary (Eisenberger et al., 1997). Although some fair treatment can be viewed as
obligatory, such as hiring practices and labor policies, organizations also engage in fair
practices that are more likely to be seen as discretionary. For fair treatment to be seen as
obligatory there should be an authority that is in charge of making sure the behaviors are
present. An example of this would be OSHA ensuring that employees are given the
appropriate safety equipment by the organization while working in dangerous situations
by enforcing workplace laws. However, for other types of fair treatment, such as
providing additional information or encouraging voice from employees, no such authority
exists. This lack of accountability for fair treatment may also help employees believe that
the organization desires to engage in these fair practices. The present study will explore
providing information and encouraging voice as manifestations of two types of justice
(informational and procedural) because they are likely to represent the organization’s
own intentions.

Informational Justice

One type of fair treatment that may be seen as discretionary is informational
justice, the extent to which employees receive timely and accurate information regarding
procedures and outcomes (Colquitt, 2001). Research conducted on informational justice
as a justice type (Colquitt, 2001; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Kernan & Hanges, 2002) has
found that it has unique antecedents and outcomes, which distinguish it from other justice
components. Informational justice has been manifested as effective communication by
giving clear and rational explanations to procedures. Research suggests that when
organizations use effective communication, they reduce employee’s anxiety by minimizing the ambiguity that they experience at work (Kernan & Hanges, 2002). Further when this type of communication is used, individuals will perceive procedures as more fair (Kernan & Hanges, 2002). Research on the cognitive dynamics of fairness suggests that people care about fairness when they are unclear about the outcomes they receive from management or their relationship with management (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). More specifically, fair treatment helps people to manage their uncertainty because it gives them confidence that they can trust the authority to act in a manner that will be in their best interest (Lind & van den Bos, 2002). Accordingly, fair treatment may motivate individuals to make an effort for their own long-term self-interest and well-being (see Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). Communication influences employees’ justice perceptions because information from the organization, especially when it concerns explanations, will be seen as positive treatment from the organization because it shows employees that the organization wants to keep them informed of procedures and outcomes (Jones & Skarlicki, 2005).

Kernan and Hanges (2002) argue that informational justice should lead individuals to have greater trust in their supervisors because supervisors are generally the ones relaying information to employees. Supervisors are often viewed as agents acting on behalf of the organization, so their provision of information should result in more positive views of the organization as well (Eisenberger et al., 2002). To date there has been some research supporting the relationship between informational justice and perceived organizational support. Although not directly examining informational justice and POS, Colquitt et al (2001) found that informational justice also predicted trust in system level,
or upper level management who are higher level agents of the organization. The authors also found that informational justice was more strongly related to system referenced evaluation of authority than agent referenced evaluation of authority ($r = .65$ and $r = .47$, respectively). In addition, Roch and Shanock (2006) found that informational justice had a significant positive relationship with POS. The authors argue that because the measurement of informational justice evaluates information given from supervisors and supervisors are believed to represent the organization, it is possible that employees view this information as representative of what the organization wants them to know. Therefore informational justice should also be associated with POS.

**Outcomes of Informational Justice**

Informational justice is an important aspect of fair treatment not only influencing POS, but also a variety of positive outcomes for the organization. A meta-analysis of justice constructs found that informational justice positively correlates with outcome satisfaction ($r = .30$), organizational commitment ($r = .29$), OCBIs ($r = .26$), OCBOs ($r = .18$) and performance ($r = .13$) (Colquitt et al., 2001). Roberson and Stewart (2006) argue that informational justice in an organizational setting could provide employees with information about their standing in an organization. This leads employees to reciprocate this treatment as a social exchange process and also to maintain their standing in the organization. Roberson and Stewart conducted a lab study using college student’s reactions to grades as parallel to employees’ reactions to an appraisal system. The results found that informational justice was significantly related to motivation to improve ($r = .48$). Informational justice also adds a small amount of unique variance to performance and OCBS targeted at the organization over other types of justice. In the present study, I
expect that employees who believe that their organizations provide them with timely and accurate information will be more likely to reciprocate this treatment with behaviors aimed at helping the organization, specifically in-role and extra-role performance.

Timely information and explanations

The present study seeks to develop an intervention based on informational justice properties that may influence employees’ POS. Research suggests that timely information, which functions as an explanation to reduce ambiguity should lead to perceptions of informational justice; therefore the intervention will be based on these properties.

Informational justice focuses on the explanations provided to employees, which convey information about why specific procedures were used or why outcomes were distributed in a certain way (Greenberg, 1990). In his review of the literature, Greenberg (1993) points out some qualifications for explanations to be considered informational justice. Explanations in and of themselves are not fair, they must possess certain qualities. For example, employees can detect authenticity of behaviors from organizations and agents of organizations; therefore, employees will perceive explanations as more fair when they do not believe that there are ulterior motives (Bies, Shapiro & Cummings, 1988). Explanations must also be logical and use reasoning that is understandable in order to be considered fair (Shapiro et. al, 1994). Greenberg (1994) conducted a study examining the effectiveness of explanations on perceptions of justice. Greenberg (1994) manipulated the level of detail in the explanations: the low informational justice conditions received very broad explanations and the high informational justice conditions received specific reasons for the decision, a smoking ban. An interesting side note of this
study is that because the ban posed a negative outcome to some workers, but not all, there was a difference in the impact of the manipulation. Surprisingly, for those who were the most impacted by the ban, informational justice had the highest impact. Finally for those workers who were not impacted by the ban, their acceptance levels did not improve with informational justice because they were already high. It did, however, influence their justice ratings of the ban, a different variable than acceptance.

Other research suggests that justifications for decisions and explanations that are characterized as “reasonable, timely and specific” also influence employee perceptions of justice (Bies & Moag, 1986, Shapiro, Buttner, & Barry, 1994). Bruning et al.’s (1996) research also provides some support for the link between effective communication and justice perceptions. Their results state that employee satisfaction with the timeliness, accuracy, and value of the information provided by an organization predicted subsequent justice perceptions. Therefore using these guidelines to create an informational justice intervention, I propose the following:

**Hypothesis 1:** There will be a positive relationship between the presence of timely, accurate and valuable information and perceived organizational support.

**Procedural Justice**

Another type of fair treatment that may be considered discretionary and thus influence POS is procedural justice, the fairness associated with the procedures used in an organization to allocate resources and make decisions. Procedural justice has been studied for over 30 years beginning with Thibaut and Walker’s (1975) research on disputant reactions to legal procedures. This very important study found that individuals were more willing to forego the decision stage in these disputes as long as they were able
to have voice in the process stage. Research by Leventhal (1980) later incorporated six rules of procedural justice. Procedures must be: applied consistently across people and time, free from bias, based on accurate information, have a mechanism to correct procedures, conform to ethics and morality and ensure that the opinions of groups that are affected are considered (Leventhal, 1980). These rules were created as guidelines for procedural justice in the workplace and provided explanations for the conditions under which employees would perceive procedures as just. Many of these “rules” about processes in organizations are up to the discretion of the organization and are not mandated by any entity. This makes it more likely that employees would view procedural justice as discretionary and an indication that the organization cares about their employees. Not surprisingly, research has established procedural justice as one of the strongest antecedents of POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). When employees believe that the procedures in an organization are fair, they are more likely to believe that the organization supports them (Cropanzano et al., 2002; Masterson, Lewis, et al., 2000; Moorman et al., 1998; Settoon et al., 1996). Fasolo (1995) found that procedural justice dimensions of performance appraisals explained unique variance in POS when distributive justice was controlled; in fact procedural justice explains 17% more variance in POS than distributive justice. Employees are likely to assume that greater discretion is possible in procedures than in outcomes (Shore & Shore, 1995) because organizations set procedures, which result in outcomes. When procedures are set, employees will not make the assumption that outcomes are based solely on the organization’s desires. Therefore it is not surprising that procedural justice has a strong relationship with POS. When work-related decisions are based on accurate and unbiased information and when employee
voice mechanisms are in place (i.e., procedural justice), this communicates concern for employee well-being, which influences POS.

*Outcomes of Procedural Justice*

Procedural justice has also been found to be positively related to positive outcomes for the organization such as: outcome satisfaction, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, trust and job performance (Colquitt et al., 2001). Further, the same meta-analysis found that procedural justice has been found to be negatively related to detrimental outcomes for the organization such as withdrawal and negative reactions to outcomes. This is important to organizations because when employees perceive the procedures as fair, they do not react as negatively to outcomes regardless of whether the outcomes are in their favor, and in fact may reciprocate with positive behaviors toward the organization. Research has found support for POS as a mediator of the relationship between procedural justice and outcomes (Moorman et al. 1998; Masterson et al., 2000). Moorman and colleagues (1998) found that procedural justice served as an antecedent of POS, which in turn influenced organizational citizenship behaviors aimed at helping the organization. In addition, Moorman et al. (1998) showed that POS mediated the relationship between procedural justice and organizational citizenship behaviors. That is, employees interpreted information regarding just procedures as indicative of how the organization feels about them. It may be that due to the social exchange processes, employees felt an obligation to perform behaviors that are beneficial to the organization.

*Employee Voice*

It is important to consider how organizations can influence POS through procedural justice. One of the common operationalizations of procedural justice is voice
Employee voice has been defined as a construct that entails both an employee’s ability to air grievances and an employee’s participation in decision making processes of an organization (McCabe & Lewin, 1992). Employees’ opportunities to express their opinions is related to their perceptions of procedural justice (Brockner et al. 1998; Lind et al., 1990), that is when employees have voice, they are more likely to believe that the procedures are fair. People value voice because it leads them to believe that they have power over others’ decisions. Lind et al. (1997) found that when participants were asked to express opinions about a goal, they gave more information when they thought they could change the goal, than when they were told they could not. Shapiro (1993) found that voice can be conceptualized as instrumental or non-instrumental, that is having an effect on outcomes or merely being listened, and can ultimately lead to procedural justice to the same extent. Specifically, it is not necessary to believe that one has made a direct impact in order to reap the benefits of voice. Shapiro (1993) further states that the two facets of voice, instrumental and non-instrumental can be intertwined and may not be so easily distinguished. Due to the consistently strong positive relationship between procedural justice and perceived organizational support (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), encouraging employees to voice their opinions should enhance perceived organizational support.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a positive relationship between encouraging suggestions and perceived organizational support.

Justice, Perceived Organizational Support and Outcomes

The interventions described above should result in higher POS, which can lead to
positive outcomes for the organization such as affective commitment, in-role and extra-role performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). This chapter has argued the relationship between justice perceptions and perceived organizational support, such that employees who believe they are being treated fairly and at the organizations’ discretion should feel more supported by their organization. Perceived organizational support is an important variable to explore given its relationship with positive outcomes for the organization. Research has previously established the connection between POS and these outcomes; however, there have been few studies which address interventions that directly impact POS with resulting positive outcomes for the organization.

Perceived organizational support has been found to be positively related to affective commitment toward the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Eisenberger et al., 1990; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore & Liden, 1997). Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses indicate that POS can be empirically distinguished from affective organizational commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Shore & Tetrick, 1991), therefore these two constructs have been shown to interact such that higher levels of perceived organizational support can lead to higher affective commitment to the organization (Rhoades et al., 2001). Further, Koys (1991) found that when employees believed that the organization was acting on their behalf, they were more likely to express affective commitment to the organization. However, when employees believed that the organization was required to do so, they did not express commitment toward the organization. This finding supports the argument that employees do consider the discretion involved in treatment they receive from the organization and will express
affective commitment to the organization when employees believe the organization is willingly acting on their behalf. Perceived organizational support has also been found to act as a mediator between treatment from the organization and affective commitment, e.g., Rhoades et al. (2001) found that POS mediated the relationship between procedural justice and affective commitment. These findings suggest that POS acts as a mechanism which leads to positive outcomes for the organization. Allen et al. (2003) found that the relationship between positive treatment from the organization and affective commitment could be explained in part by the treatment’s influence on POS. That is, the positive treatment influenced how supported employees felt by their organization and employees reciprocated this support with affective commitment toward the organization.

Specifically, perceptions of the fairness associated with the procedures in an organization influenced POS which in turn led to higher affection commitment to the organization. While there has been no research supporting the role of POS as a mediator in the relationship between informational justice and outcomes for the organization, the present study provides arguments for POS as a mechanism between informational justice perceptions and outcomes such as affective commitment. In the current study, I am using provision of timely information as an operationalization of informational justice and encouraging suggestions as an operationalization of the voice aspect of procedural support. Given the strong relationship between both types of justice and perceived organizational support and the reciprocal relationship between positive treatment from the organization and outcomes for the organization, I propose the following:

**Hypothesis 3a:** Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between provision of timely information and affective commitment.
Hypothesis 3b: Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between encouraging suggestions and affective commitment.

POS also creates a felt obligation to reciprocate treatment from the organization by helping the organization reach its goals and objectives. This reciprocation can take many forms, including both in-role and extra-role performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). There has generally been a stronger relationship between POS and extra-role performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, Wayne, Shore, Bommer and Tetrick, 2002, Masterson et al., 2000, Wayne et al., 1997) than between POS and in-role performance (Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1990), perhaps because employees often have more latitude to engage in OCBs and must perform at a high level regardless of treatment from the organization (e.g., there is less variability in in-role performance generally). Nonetheless, the felt obligation to help the organization reach its objectives created by POS would make employees want to work harder at their jobs and aid the organization in ways that go beyond formal requirements. In the present study, I am interested in evaluating perceived organizational support as a mediator of the relationship between justice manipulations and both OCBs and in-role performance. Thus far there is some support for POS as a mediator between procedural justice and OCBs (Moorman, Blakely, & Niehoff, 1998). Employees used procedural justice information as indications of positive treatment from the organization and in turn reciprocated with behaviors aimed at helping the organization. The felt obligation that employees experience should still have some impact on in-role performance; that is employees with higher POS should perform better on in-role tasks as well. Given these results and previous findings, I expect the following:
Hypothesis 4a: Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between provision of information and extra-role performance.

Hypothesis 4b: Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between encouraging suggestions and extra-role performance.

Hypothesis 5a: Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between provision of information and in-role performance.

Hypothesis 5b: Perceived organizational support will mediate the relationship between encouraging suggestions and in-role performance.

Present study

Figure 1 summarizes the hypothesized relationships for the present study. Although acts that can be considered discretionary may vary from organization to organization, justice, particularly with regard to allowing voice and providing timely information and explanations, should be under the discretionary control of the organization. Organizations can encourage agents to allow voice and can allow access to information. Thus, employees will be more likely to view these behaviors as reflective of the organizations’ desires above other types of just treatment such as fair outcomes (i.e., distributive justice, which may depend on economic conditions, union contracts, etc.) or interpersonal treatment (i.e., interpersonal justice, which may be more up to the personality or whim of each individual supervisor). Further, it is relatively straightforward to manipulate the presence of these forms of justice in a lab setting. Previous lab studies have found that recipients of aid returned greater benefits and expressed greater liking for donors if aid was made to appear voluntary rather than required by the experimenter (Goranson & Berkowitz, 1966; Gross & Latane, 1974;
Kiesler, 1966). Therefore, it is important that the interventions used are discretionary behaviors that organizations can engage in to the benefit of their employees. The present study explores the potential impact of the presence of justice interventions in an organizational setting. It is one of the first lab studies exploring the influence of discretionary behaviors from the organization on perceived organizational support. The operationalizations of procedural and informational justice are the most appropriate for testing my hypotheses due to their relationship with perceived organizational support and various organizational outcomes. The results of this study may be used to provide guidance to organizations hoping to improve perceptions of support in the workplace.
Figure 1.

Hypothesized Relationships

Provision of Information → Perceived Organizational Support

H1

Perceived Organizational Support → Affective Commitment

H3a

Affective Commitment → Organizational Citizenship Behavior

H4a

Organizational Citizenship Behavior → In-role Performance

H5a

Perceived Organizational Support → Encouraging Suggestions

H2

Encouraging Suggestions → Affective Commitment

H3b

Affective Commitment → Organizational Citizenship Behavior

H4b

Organizational Citizenship Behavior → In-role Performance

H5b
Chapter 3

Method
Pilot Studies

Two pilot studies were conducted to try out the experimental design, experimental tasks, and to check whether the manipulations (interventions) appeared to work. The first pilot study explored the relationship between the intervention conditions and manipulation check items and POS. I also used information from research assistants regarding participant reactions to help evaluate the realism of the employee in a retail store scenario and the use of two time points for the experimental design. In the first pilot study, individuals were randomly assigned to one of four between-subjects conditions (provision of information, encouraging suggestions, combination of interventions, control group) after participation in a baseline condition (company immersion). Participants were asked to come into the laboratory for two one-hour sessions exactly one week apart. The purpose of the first session was to immerse participants in the company so that I could evaluate the participant’s reactions (i.e., to see whether participants felt like they were employees in an organization). I also used the first pilot to test the appropriateness of the manipulation check measures as representations of the constructs of interest (voice and informational justice), and whether the manipulations that occurred at time 2 had an effect on POS.

The second pilot study expanded on the first by strengthening both the manipulation check measures and the interventions and examining whether intervention-relevant tasks would strengthen the manipulations. This pilot study took place at one time point and contained 4 groups, each representing a different condition (provision of information, provision of information with task, encouraging suggestions, and encouraging suggestions with task).
Participants

Participants for both pilot studies were recruited using the psychology research subject pool in a small southeast university. Details for demographics and number of participants are included below under each pilot study. Participants enrolled in the studies received extra credit or course credit for psychology courses.

Experimental Background

In both pilot studies, the participants were asked to imagine themselves as employees in an electronics store. This particular job was selected because it is a type of job participants could easily relate to as college students. That is, it is likely that college students are familiar with working in a retail store. Further, given the prevalence of the use of technology by college students, it is also likely that they have experience of browsing or making purchases in an electronics store. It was important to select both a job and an industry that participants are familiar with so they could relate to the conditions of the experiment.

Pilot Study One

Experimental Design and Procedure

Pilot study 1 used forty-one participants across four conditions with roughly ten participants in each condition. The participants were sixty-nine percent male and thirty-one percent female. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 30 years with 98% of participants under the age of 25. Seventy-two percent of the participants were Caucasian, fourteen percent were African American, and roughly five percent were each Asian, Latino or designated their race as “other”. One hundred percent of participants were employed with 98% employed either part or full time, the remaining participants were
temporarily employed.

Session 1: Company Immersion

The purpose of the first session was simply to immerse participants into their role as a fictitious retail employee and gather baseline measures of their attitude towards the organization. Participants were greeted by a “human resources representative” (a confederate who was an undergraduate research assistant), brought into the lab and invited to participate in a simulated employee experience for a fictitious company, Electronics Warehouse. Participants were asked to put on a work uniform including a polo shirt and a nametag with the company logo. They were given five minutes to read through a scenario detailing their experience with the company (see Appendix A). Participants were told that they are assistant managers at one of the Electronics Warehouse stores and were asked to read a job description detailing the responsibilities of their position. Participants were also provided with a brochure of the company detailing its’ priorities, including promoting quality customer service. Once participants were familiarized with the organization, they were given a survey asking questions about their opinions and experience with the organization. This survey included items measuring employee POS, affective commitment, procedural justice and informational justice. These items were included in the survey to act as a baseline attitude towards the organization after immersion only, no exposure to an experimental condition. In order to further assimilate “employees” into their role in the organization, they were also asked to take five minutes to create a sales flyer of their choosing. This task was chosen because it would not be perceived as a difficult task and the participant would be asked to draw on their knowledge of this type of store and therefore would be further embedded into the
role of employee.

Participants were then asked to complete two performance tasks related to their responsibilities as assistant managers. In the first task, participants were given a scenario to read about a customer service issue. They read the details of the problem and were asked to write how they would have tried to solve the problem. This task illustrated an in-role performance task, something that would be in their job description as an assistant manager in an electronics retail store. In the second task, participants were given a second scenario to read. They were asked to write a letter to a friend letting them know about a position that the organization is trying to fill. This task served as an extra-role performance task because it is outside their normal job duties and thus the quality of their letters should differ depending on how they feel about the organization. Finally, participants were asked to rate their perceived effort and time spent working on the aforementioned tasks. Participants were then dismissed until session 2, one week later. Session 2: Intervention

Upon returning, participants were randomly selected to one of four conditions (provision of information, encouraging suggestions, combination or control) for session 2. At the start of session 2, all participants were greeted again by a “human resources representative”. They were one again familiarized with the organization by being asked to wear the uniform including their name tag, given the company brochure and given their job descriptions to read. Human resources representatives read participants a brief scenario regarding the importance of the store meeting its sales quota. It was stressed that part of the assistant manager’s responsibility is to help the store reach its sales quota. At this point, the experimenters introduced the interventions. All of the participants were
given information regarding their store’s weekly sales performance. In the first condition, informational justice, “employees” were given additional information regarding sales and specifically were provided with analyst comments that were explanations for why the store was performing poorly. In the second condition, providing employee voice, “employees” were given basic information about sales numbers and were encouraged to provide feedback or ideas regarding why they believed the store was not performing well and how they could get the store back on track. It was stressed that employees’ suggestions were needed and valued. In the third condition, “employees” were given the additional information with analyst comments and also encouraged to make suggestions about how to improve the store’s performance. This condition simulates the combination of informational justice and procedural justice. The fourth condition was the control condition; “employees” received the bare minimum of information regarding the store’s performance. While they were offered the opportunity to give suggestions for making up revenue loss, they were not told whether the suggestions were needed or would be valued. The exact wording of the conditions is included in the Appendix B. After the interventions took place, participants were given a second survey regarding their opinions of working with the company. This survey was similar to the survey in the first session and contained items measuring employee POS, affective commitment, and manipulation checks (see Appendix C).

Participants were then asked to complete two performance tasks related to their responsibilities as assistant managers. The tasks were given to all participants regardless of the condition and were not related to the type of intervention they received. These tasks were the same as in session one with minor adjustments. Participants were given a
scenario to read about a second customer service issue. They read the details of the issue and were asked to write about how they would have responded to the problem. This task differed from session one because the electronic product in question was different (television vs. printer), the task however required the same thought process (see Appendix B). Participants were then given a second scenario to read. They were asked to write a letter to a friend letting them know about a second position that the organization is trying to fill. This task differed from session one in that the position was located in a different city than in session one (see Appendix B). Finally the participants were asked to rate their perceived effort and time spent working on the aforementioned tasks. Participants were then given a demographic survey and thanked for their participation.

Measures

All items appear in Appendix C. All measures were based on 5 point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Perceived Organizational Support. The Survey of Perceived Organizational Support has been shown to have high internal reliability and unidimensionality (Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1990; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). POS was rated using six items from the short form of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). A sample item includes: “Electronics Warehouse values my contributions.” The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 1 was acceptable (Session 1 \( \alpha = .78 \), Session 2 \( \alpha = .83 \)).

Affective Commitment. Affective commitment was measured using six items from Allen and Meyer’s (1990) measure of affective commitment. A sample item includes: I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career at Electronics Warehouse. The
internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 1 was acceptable (Session 1 $\alpha = .69$, Session 2 $\alpha = .73$).

*Manipulation Check Provision of Information.* The provision of information intervention was measured using a 4-item measure created to examine the strength of this intervention. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse helps me do my job by providing me with up to date information”. This measure was only administered during Session 2 of the pilot study. The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 1 was acceptable (Session 2 $\alpha = .74$).

*Manipulation Check Encouraging Suggestions.* The encouraging suggestions intervention was measured using a 4-item measure created to examine the strength of this intervention. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse asks for suggestions on how to improve the organization”. This measure was only administered during Session 2 of the pilot study. The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 1 was acceptable (Session 2 $\alpha = .76$).

**Results and Discussion**

*Manipulation Checks.* A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test the manipulation checks of the interventions. For the provision of information manipulation check, there was no significant difference between the means of the four conditions, $F (3, 37) = 1.27, p=.30$ (see Table 1). However the means demonstrate that those in the provision of information or combined conditions rated higher on this manipulation check than those in the encouraging suggestion or control conditions. For the encouraging suggestions manipulation check, there was no significant difference between the means of the four conditions, $F (3, 37) = .20, p=.89$ (see Table 1). Although there were no
significant differences, the means demonstrate that those in the encouraging suggestion conditions rated higher on this manipulation check than those in the provision of information condition.

*Perceived Organizational Support.* A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test the influence of the interventions on Perceived Organizational Support. There was no significant difference between the means of POS across the four conditions, $F (3, 37) = .62, p = .61$ (see Table 1). The mean of the encouraging suggestions conditions was higher than the control condition, however the mean of the control condition was higher than both the provision of information and combined conditions, albeit not significantly higher.

*Affective Commitment.* A one-way ANOVA was used to test whether the interventions had an impact on affective commitment. There was no significant differences between the four conditions on affective commitment, $F (2, 81) = 1.43, p = .25$. Examination of the means demonstrate that affective commitment is higher in both the provision of information condition and the encouraging suggestions condition than the control group. Surprisingly, affective commitment was lowest for the combined intervention condition (see Table 1).
Table 1

*Pilot Study 1 ANOVA results, Cell Means and Standard Deviations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Condition</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Info</th>
<th>Enc Sugg.</th>
<th>Combined</th>
<th>Control</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1.27</td>
<td>3, 37</td>
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<td>4.19(.39)</td>
<td>3.76(.43)</td>
<td>3.85(.48)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>3.88(.38)</td>
<td>4.11(.59)</td>
<td>3.94(.64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Perceived Organizational Support</td>
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<td>3, 37</td>
<td>3.79(.68)</td>
<td>3.96(.45)</td>
<td>3.60(.75)</td>
<td>3.82(.37)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Affective Commitment</td>
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<td>3.63(.55)</td>
<td>3.10(.75)</td>
<td>3.32(.51)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* $N=41$
The lack of significant findings in Pilot study 1 led me to consider the potential limitations of this study. The first step was to explore the design of the study. Through conversations with the confederates (research assistants), I discovered that undergraduate participants were frustrated by the two time-point study. They were bored by having to complete very similar tasks at two different times. This frustration could have led participants to attribute problems with the design to the organization and therefore may have influenced their responses to survey items. I also investigated whether the manipulations were strong enough to influence perceived organizational support. One of the issues surrounding the interventions in this pilot was that the task for the provision of information condition was too complicated (as reported by the research assistants’ experiences with the participants). The combination of the immersion tasks, intervention tasks and repetitive job related tasks may have overwhelmed the participants with too much work. Therefore I decided to repeat the pilot study with one time point and fewer tasks.

I also wanted to explore whether the interventions could be strengthened by adding a brief accompanying task so that I could test the difference between using the interventions with and without accompanying tasks. The intervention-relevant tasks would be specifically designed to have participants actively respond to the intervention and thus are different from (i.e., they would be in addition to) the in-role and extra-role performance tasks. Specifically, I wanted to see whether provision of information or encouraging suggestions would have a greater impact if employees were able to actively use the additional information or provide suggestions to a specific goal. That is, will “employees” value justice from organizations if they are not given the opportunity to use
the information or voice in any way? Although this would mean more tasks than just the two performance tasks (in-role and extra-role), the intervention-relevant tasks would be brief and there would still be less tasks overall than in the original design. The benefits of strengthening the interventions by having participants actively use the information or make suggestions should hopefully outweigh the addition of these tasks.

Another limitation of this study was the manipulation check items. The means on the manipulation checks were in the correct direction but were not significantly different by condition. One reason may be that these items were too vague and/or not relevant to the current experiment because they were adapted from general measures of procedural and informational justice. I therefore redesigned the items to be more specific and applicable to the interventions for use in Pilot study 2 (See Appendix E). Finally, a limitation to this study is that I did not include Colquitt’s (2001) measures of procedural justice and informational justice. Although the manipulation check scales should provide some information about whether the interventions are working, the justice items would have been able to provide me with information regarding whether the interventions were operationalizations of procedural justice and informational justice.

Pilot Study Two

The second step of pilot work was to address the weaknesses of the first pilot study by strengthening the interventions, the manipulation check items, and remodeling the experimental design. The main differences between the first and second pilot study are that the second pilot occurred completely at one time point rather than two, and the interventions were revised to better represent the constructs of interest. One of the concerns with the first pilot study was whether the interventions would be strengthened
by adding a task where participants would use the content of the interventions as parts of their experience at the fictitious company. That is, would the “employees” value additional information or being encouraged to suggest changes if they were not given the opportunity to actively use the additional information or provide suggestions? The second pilot was developed to answer this question. Participants were divided into four conditions: provision of information with intervention task, provision of information without task, encouraging suggestions with intervention task, and encouraging suggestions without task. Also, in pilot study 1 the participants seemed fatigued and frustrated by having to attend twice, do the same performance tasks more than once, and perform too many tasks, therefore pilot study 2 was conducted at one time point.

Experimental Design and Procedure

Pilot study 2 used one hundred and five participants. Participants were 67% female, 65% Caucasian and 93% under 25 years old. One hundred percent of participants were currently employed with 94% working part time or full time (as opposed to temporarily). Like in the first pilot study, participants were asked to imagine that they were employees in an electronics retail store. They were provided with a uniform including a polo shirt and a name tag and asked to wear this for the duration of the experiment. Participants were then given a job description and organization brochure to read through to allow them to feel more like employees of the organization (see Appendix A). All participants were asked to read a scenario about a problem employee, and were asked to write a letter addressing the issue (see Appendix D). This task was used to provide a realistic situation that an assistant manager would have to deal with to help immerse them in the role. The intervention took place after participants turned in
All groups of participants received a report detailing sales projections for the final week of the month. The exact wording for the conditions included in Appendix D. For the conditions receiving additional information (provision of information with intervention task and provision of information without task), participants received more detailed reports with analyst comments. Participants who were not in these conditions (encouraging suggestions with intervention task and encouraging suggestions without task) received basic projections without comments. In the “provision of information with intervention task” condition, participants were asked to read through the sales projection report and were then given 3 minutes to fill out a form regarding the information on the report. The provision of information condition without task was given the same information but was not asked to fill out a form. Participants in the encouraging suggestions with intervention task condition were given a sheet to provide ideas on how to increase sales. They were told that they were given an opportunity to provide suggestions and the company could really use their suggestions. Participants in the encouraging suggestions without task condition were told that the company could use their suggestions but were not given a sheet to fill out regarding these suggestions. The participant was given time to offer suggestions by the “human resource representative” but there was no insistence or encouragement for the participant to offer suggestions. The tasks included in these interventions were minimal tasks whose function was to see whether participants needed to engage in a task to value the treatment they were receiving. These tasks were not graded and analyzed for results.

Participants were then given a survey asking questions about their opinions and
experience with the organization. This survey included items measuring employee POS, affective commitment, and manipulation check items regarding voice and informational justice (see Appendix E). After the survey, participants were asked to complete two tasks: an in-role task and an extra-role task. Participants were asked to read a scenario about a customer service issue, they were to write about how they would respond to that particular issue (in-role task). Secondly, participants were asked to write a letter to a friend recommending that he or she apply for a job in the organization (extra-role task). After completing the tasks participants were asked to rate the effort and time exerted on the tasks. They were then given a survey with demographics questions.

Measures

All items are contained in Appendix E. All measures were based on 5 point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Perceived Organizational Support. Same items as pilot study 1. The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 2 was acceptable ($\alpha = .77$).

Affective Commitment. Same as items pilot study 1. The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 2 was acceptable ($\alpha = .74$).

Manipulation Check Provision of Information. The provision of information intervention was measured using a 6-item measure created to examine the strength of this intervention. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse helps me do my job by providing me with up to date information about how my store is performing.” The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 2 was acceptable ($\alpha = .74$).

Manipulation Check Encouraging Suggestions. The encouraging suggestions intervention was measured using a 7-item measure created to examine the strength of this
intervention. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse asked for ideas on what I could do to improve the store’s performance”. The internal consistency of this measure in Pilot Study 2 was acceptable (α = .87).

Results and Discussion

The second pilot study involved collecting data on four conditions (each intervention with and without a relevant task). Rather than adding a control group as a fifth condition to run, data from the first session of Pilot Study 1 was used as a control group because this session was used solely as immersion and baseline and did not contain any interventions.

Manipulation checks. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there were any significant differences on the manipulation check items for each intervention with and without the participant actively engaging in an intervention-related task (using the information provided or actually writing down suggestions). Comparing the provision of information conditions (with and without a task), there was no significant difference on the manipulation check items, $F(1, 49) = 1.65, p = .21$. Comparing the encouraging suggestion conditions (with and without a task), there was not a significant difference on the manipulation check items, $F(1, 49) = .35, p = .56$.

However, a one way ANOVA comparing those in the provision of information condition (with a task) and those in the encouraging suggestions condition (with a task) indicated that there was a significant difference between the participants on the manipulation check items for the provision of information condition. Specifically, participants who were in the provision of information condition (with a task) rated higher on those manipulation check items than those in the encouraging suggestions condition (with a task), $F(1, 45) = 13.74, p = .00$ (see Table 2). There was also a significant
difference between the participants on the manipulation check items for the encouraging suggestions conditions. Participants in the encouraging suggestions condition (with a task) rated higher on those manipulation check items than those in the provision of information condition (with a task), $F(1, 45) = 3.15, p=.08$ (see Table 2). Therefore I decided to proceed with using the conditions that incorporated an intervention-related task for the rest of the analyses. The next step was to see whether the intervention conditions with a task showed higher POS scores than the control condition (taken from the first pilot study).
Table 2

Pilot Study 2 ANOVA results, Cell Means and Standard Deviations

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<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
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<th>df</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>No Task</th>
<th>Task</th>
<th>No Task</th>
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<td>.16</td>
<td>3.95</td>
<td>4.33(.39)</td>
<td>4.19(.39)</td>
<td>3.76(.43)</td>
<td>3.85(.48)</td>
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<td>Check –</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provision of Information</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Provision of</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Information</td>
<td></td>
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<td>3.88(.38)</td>
<td>4.11(.59)</td>
<td>3.94(.64)</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Encouraging Suggestions</td>
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</table>

Note. *p = .01
Perceived Organizational Support. A one-way ANOVA was used to compare Pilot 1 session 1 control group participants, encouraging suggestions with intervention-related task participants and provision of information with intervention-related task participants. There was no significant differences between the three groups on perceived organizational support, $F(2, 81) = .26, p=.77$. However, examination of the means demonstrate that they are in the right direction (see Table 3).

Affective Commitment. A one-way ANOVA was used to test whether the interventions had an impact on affective commitment. The comparison groups for this test were the same as for Perceived Organizational Support. There was no significant differences between the three groups on affective commitment, $F(2, 81) = 1.59, p=.21$. Examination of the means demonstrate that affective commitment is slightly higher in the provision of information condition. Surprisingly, affective commitment was lowest for the encouraging suggestions condition (see Table 3).

Conclusions from Pilot Work and Revisions for the Main Study

The results from Pilot Study 2 suggest that the interventions, particularly when accompanied by a task, are working well as evidenced by the scores on the manipulation checks across conditions (see Table 2). As well, the presence of either intervention may have an impact on an employee’s perceived organizational support as evidenced by a lower mean on POS for the control group (although not significantly lower). The current control group was drawn from Pilot Study 1 and thus participants were tested for POS under slightly different conditions than those in Pilot Study 2. While the results indicate support for the use of these interventions and their potential impact on POS, further discussion with my dissertation committee led to the revision of the intervention
conditions. Specifically, the committee felt that the interventions were positive behaviors on behalf of employees, but did not necessarily represent the theoretical constructs of procedural and informational justice; they were not strong operationalizations of the justice constructs. The consensus was to change the context of the interventions and include Colquitt’s (2001) measures of informational and procedural justice to test whether the interventions were manipulations of the two justice constructs. In the first two pilot studies, the interventions reflected providing information about the job and encouraging suggestions about how to help the organization reach its’ goals. The literature on procedural justice and informational justice suggests that in order for employees to feel that organizations are just, the behaviors from organization must lead to an outcome which is personal to or directly impacts employees (Walster, Bersheid, & Walster, 1973; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Messick & Sentis, 1979). Therefore the interventions in the present study have been changed to providing information about how employee bonuses will be distributed and encouraging suggestions about how bonuses should be distributed. By changing the context of the interventions, the hope was that they would better represent the justice constructs and I could get a clearer picture of how these interventions would impact POS and ultimately outcomes for the organization. In the present study, I used one group for each intervention and a control group so that I could examine the difference between the two groups on level of POS and also the relevant outcome variables. Given the results of the first pilot study, I decided not to include a condition with combined interventions.
Table 3

ANOVA comparing Pilot Study 1 Control Group with Pilot Study 2 Conditions Involving Interventions

<table>
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<th>Df</th>
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<th>Encouraging suggestions (w/task)</th>
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<td>Support</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Affective</td>
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<td>2, 81</td>
<td>3.19 (.56)</td>
<td>3.25 (.54)</td>
<td>2.98 (.54)</td>
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</table>
Present Study Methods

Participants

One hundred seventy-three students from a small southeastern university participated in the study (power of .84 for the present study). Participants were recruited using an electronic experiment sign-up website used by the psychology department of the university and were given extra course credit for participating in experiments. Sixty-two percent of the participants were female. Participants were ethnically diverse, 56% were Caucasian, 22% African American, 6% Latino, 6% Asian, 2% Middle Eastern, and the remaining participants designated their racial ancestry as “Other”. Eighty-seven percent of the participants were between 18 and 25 years old and 98% percent of the participants were temporary, part time or full time employees.

Experimental Design and Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of three conditions: provision of information, encouraging suggestions, or a control group. Participants were asked to imagine themselves as employees in a fictitious organization. In addition to reading about their position and the organization, participants were asked to engage in an immersion task. This immersion task differed from the immersion task used in Pilots 1 and 2. In the present study, participants were asked to review information about the store’s performance and then asked to fill out a form requiring answers from the information they were given (see Appendix F). This task was originally one of the intervention tasks from the second pilot study, however given the context change to an employee bonus scenario for the interventions in the present study; it was no longer used as an intervention task. It was changed in the present study to give participants a more realistic
and involved task, this task enables participants to think as assistant managers and perform a task that is likely required of the job, the reporting of sales figures. After completing this immersion task, the experimenter (HR representative) instigated the intervention and participants were treated differently according to the group they were assigned. Interventions were based on the constructs of procedural justice and informational justice as described in Chapter 2. The interventions were revised after Pilot Study 2 to better reflect the justice constructs. This was done by changing the context of the interventions. “Employees” were still either given additional information or encouraged to provide suggestions; however these were done in the context of an employee bonus situation. By setting the interventions in an employee bonus situation, employees would more likely view this treatment as fairness from procedures which directly affect them at work. That is, the present study was designed in the context of an employee bonus situation because it provides a consequence of fair treatment. For employees to determine whether behavior from the organization is considered fair, treatment should impact some aspect of the employees’ experience at work. The exact wording of the revised interventions, provision of information and encouraging suggestions in included in Appendix F. After the interventions were completed, participants were asked to complete a survey regarding their thoughts about the organization and their experience with the organization. Participants were then asked to complete two tasks related to their position in the organization. These tasks were representative of in-role and extra-role performance (OCBs). Finally participants were given a demographics survey to collect information about the sample and an intrinsic motivation scale to assess various aspects of their motivation to participate in the
experiment.

**Measures**

All measures were based on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”, with the exception of the intrinsic motivation measure. All reliabilities for the measures are reported below. The measures used in the present study are generally the same measures used in Pilot study 2. Additional measures used solely in the present study including overall organizational justice, performance ratings and intrinsic motivation are listed below. All items are contained in Appendix G.

**Manipulation Check and Motivation Measures**

**Manipulation Check Provision of Information.** The provision of information intervention manipulation check was measured using a 5-item measure created to examine the strength of this intervention; a sixth item was deleted to improve the reliability of the measure. A sample item includes “I received timely communication from Electronics Warehouse about how bonuses will be distributed.” The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable ($\alpha = .74$).

**Manipulation Check Encouraging Suggestions.** The encouraging suggestions intervention was measured using a 7-item measure created to examine the strength of this intervention. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse encouraged my suggestions on how to give out bonuses this year.” The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable ($\alpha = .92$).

**Intrinsic Motivation Inventory.** Intrinsic motivation to participate in the experiment was measured using an abbreviated 17-item measure of Ryan’s (1982) Intrinsic Motivation Inventory. This measure was used to assess participants’ motivation
level during the study. It was particularly important to measure this due to the fact that participants are acting as employees in a fictitious organization and will have varying levels of motivation. All responses were measured on a 7-pt Likert-type scale ranging from “Not at all true to Very True.” The measure was divided into the 5 scales of the inventory most appropriate for measuring intrinsic motivation in this experiment: Interest/Enjoyment (e.g., “I enjoyed doing this experiment very much”), Value/Usefulness (e.g., “I think this is an important experiment”), Perceived Competence (e.g., “I am satisfied with my performance on this experiment”), Effort/Importance (e.g., “I put a lot of effort into this”) and Pressure/Tension (e.g., “I was anxious while working on this experiment”). The reliabilities for the following scales were acceptable: Interest/Enjoyment ($\alpha = .82$), Value/Usefulness ($\alpha = .77$), Perceived Competence ($\alpha = .76$), and Effort/Importance ($\alpha = .80$). The reliability for the Pressure/Tension scale was low ($\alpha = .49$) according to the acceptable level for reliability of .70 (Nunnally, 1967).

*Procedural Justice.* Procedural justice was measured using 6 items from Colquitt’s (2001) procedural justice scale. One item was removed for the purposes of this study because it was not applicable in this scenario. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse decides bonuses based on accurate information.” The internal consistency of this measure ($\alpha = .69$) was just below the acceptable level suggested by Nunnally (1967).

*Informational Justice.* Informational justice was measured using Colquitt’s (2001) 5-item informational justice scale. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse’s explanations regarding procedures were reasonable.” The internal consistency of this measure ($\alpha = .61$) was below the generally accepted value of .70 (Nunnally, 1967).
Discretionary Behavior – Encouraging Suggestions. A three-item measure was created to assess the degree to which participants believed the organization’s encouragement of suggestions was discretionary. Specifically, both discretionary scales were tailored toward each intervention, and this measure was based on behavior from the organization encouraging employee suggestions regarding the distribution of bonuses. This measure was created by the author under the supervision of a faculty member. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse was not forced into asking for my input on how to distribute bonuses.” The internal consistency of this measure (α = .60) was below the generally accepted value for reliability (Nunnally, 1967).

Discretionary Behavior – Provision of Information. A three-item measure was created to assess the degree to which participants believed the provision of information from the organization was discretionary. Specifically, this measure was based on behavior from the organization to provide information about the distribution of bonuses. A sample item includes “Electronics Warehouse did not have to provide me with information about how bonuses were to be distributed.” The internal consistency of this measure (α = .47) was below the generally accepted value (Nunnally, 1967).

Main Study Measures

Perceived Organizational Support. Same items as pilot study 1. The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable (α = .81).

Affective Commitment. Same items as pilot study 1. The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable (α = .74).

Turnover Intentions. Turnover intentions were measured using three items from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, &
Klesh, 1983). A sample item includes: “It is likely that I would actively look for a new job in the next year.” The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable ($\alpha = .88$).

**Continuance Commitment.** Continuance commitment was measured using six items from Allen and Meyer’s (1990) measure of continuance commitment. A sample item includes “It would be very hard for me to leave Electronics Warehouse right now, even if I wanted to.” The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable ($\alpha = .77$).

**Organizational Justice.** Organizational justice was measured using a six-item measure created by Ambrose and Schminke (2009). A sample item includes “For the most part, Electronics Warehouse treats its employees fairly. The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable ($\alpha = .86$).

**Withdrawal Behaviors.** Withdrawal behaviors were measured using a five-item self report scale evaluating the likelihood that “employees” would exhibit withdrawal behaviors. This scale was created by the author under the supervision of a faculty member. A sample item includes “In my job at Electronics Warehouse, I would call in sick even if I was not sick.” The internal consistency of this measure was acceptable ($\alpha = .77$).

**Performance Measures**

**Customer Service Issue Performance.** This task is considered an in-role performance task because employees in the assistant manager position would be expected to perform a similar task; this task is most likely to be part of their job description. In order to create a rating system for this task, the author and a research assistant brainstormed various items to measure the performance on this task. These items were then revised under the supervision of a faculty member and a rating scale was created for
use with this performance task, resulting in seven items. Raters participated in an hour-long performance dimension and frame of reference training, and then were given instructions on how to rate the customer service task. The tasks were scanned and recoded to remove any identification of the participant’s condition prior to being rated. Customer service performance was rated on a 7-item scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree and the mean of the seven items was used for analysis. For the present study, three raters rated each of the customer service tasks. Three different indices of interrater reliability were used, rwg was used to assess rater agreement and both consistency and absolute agreement intraclass correlations (ICCs) were calculated (McGraw & Wong, 1996). Overall customer rating showed adequate interrater reliability for all indices, rwg = .73, ICC1 = .63, and ICC2 = .67 both ICCs were slightly lower than the typical acceptable value of .70 (LeBreton, & Senter, 2008). Raters also measured the number of suggestions that participants came up with in response to this task as part of the performance rating.

Employee Job Recommendation Performance. This task is considered extra-role performance (OCBs). Job recommendations letters were rated on how strongly the participant promotes the organization by trained raters. Raters participated in an hour-long performance dimension and frame-of-reference training, and were then given instructions on how to rate the letters. The letters were scanned and recoded to remove any identification of the participant’s condition prior to being rated. The raters evaluated the employee letters on a six-item scale (e.g., “The letter expressed enthusiasm on behalf of the organization”, “The letter was well written”). Answers for this measure were recorded on a 5-item Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.
The letter rating is the mean of the seven items. The scale was created by the author and piloted in the second pilot study. Four undergraduate raters from a university in the Northeast rated a sample of letters from pilot study 2 to test for interrater reliability. Raters were provided with specific information on each of the dimensions to be rated. Interrater reliability was calculated for the letter rating (the average of the seven items). The letter rating showed strong interrater reliability for overall letter rating, rwg= .84, ICC1 = .75, and ICC2 = .75. For the present study, three raters rated each of the participant letters. Three different indices of interrater reliability were used, rwg was used to assess rater agreement and both consistency and absolute agreement intraclass correlations (ICCs) were calculated (McGraw, & Wong, 1996). Overall letter rating showed strong interrater reliability for all indices, rwg=.79, ICC1= .80, and ICC2 = .88. Raters were also asked to rate the number of sentences each participant wrote and the number of spelling mistakes.
Chapter 4

Experimental Results
**Summary of Data Analysis Strategy**

First I present the results of data screening including tests of normality and both univariate and multivariate outliers. Then, I report a check of the manipulations and intrinsic motivation for the experiment using One-way ANOVAs. The results for tests of Hypothesis 1 and 2 are also provided using One-way ANOVAs. Tests of the manipulation checks and Hypotheses 1 and 2 were conducted using Bonferroni adjusted alpha levels. Finally, I report the results of Hypotheses 3a through 5b using bootstrapping method of mediation using regression. Finally, the result of post-hoc analyses for variables not directly hypothesized are provided and reverse mediation is tested to provide further evidence for the hypothesized relationships.

**Data Screening**

The data was screened for the presence of missing data and out of range values both by group and for the entire dataset. There was only a small amount of missing data, less than 5% for most variables and the missing data was random; therefore it did not alter the analyses performed on these variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2001). Further the majority of missing data was demographic information that participants did not disclose. The only variables that may have been affected by missing data were the intrinsic motivation scales; three participants in one condition did not complete the intrinsic motivation scale. Mean substitution was used for the missing data on these scales. The data was also screened for violations of normality using histograms, skewness and kurtosis values and found to be roughly normally distributed. Also, given the statistical tests that were used to analyze the data (e.g. ANOVA, Regression) are robust to minor violations of normality and there was acceptable normality; I left all of the variables in
their original form. The data was screened for univariate and multivariate outliers, I did not remove any of the cases, as all of the values fell within the normal range and Cook’s D was lower than 1 for all of the cases. Tabachnick and Fidell (2001) report that values of outlier influence below 1 are not problematic; therefore the final N for the analyses was 173.

Descriptive Statistics and Correlations

Means, standard deviations, minimum and maximum values for each variable can be found in Table 4. Correlations between conditions and manipulations check variables as well as reliabilities are located in Table 5. Table 6 provides correlations and reliabilities of the main study variables and their relationships with experimental conditions. The data were checked for multicollinearity, the correlations between variables do not exceed .90 and therefore multicollinearity did not exist in the dataset. Initial analysis of the correlation tables shows support for the relationships between the hypothesized variables of interest. Reliability for all variables can also be found on the diagonals of tables 5 and 6. All of the variables in hypothesized relationships had acceptable values of reliability (α > .70, Nunnally 1964). Both variables measuring discretionary treatment of the encouraging suggestions and the provision of information conditions had unacceptably low levels of reliability and therefore were not used in further analyses.

Manipulation Checks

The data were analyzed to investigate whether participants were aware of the conditions of their interventions, that is whether they perceived the presence or absence of provision of information and encouraging suggestions. Table 7 contains the cell means
and standard deviations, ANOVA results and effect sizes for the manipulation check analyses. A one-way ANOVA was used to determine whether there were any significant differences on the manipulation check items for each intervention and the control group. For the informational justice manipulation check items, a one-way ANOVA determined there was a significant difference within the three groups, $F(2, 170) = 4.90, p=.01$. Further investigation of the means shows that participants in the provision of information condition rated these items higher (more agreement) than those in the encouraging suggestions condition and the control condition. For the encouraging suggestion manipulation check items, a one-way ANOVA found that there was a significant difference within the three groups, $F(2, 170) = 37.85, p=.00$. Further investigation of the means shows that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition rated these items higher (more agreement) than those in the provision of information condition or control condition.

One way ANOVAs were conducted to test whether the interventions were reflecting the constructs of procedural and informational justice. The data show that for the provision of information intervention, there were no significant ratings of informational justice across conditions, $F(2, 170) = 2.85, p=.06$. Surprisingly, participants in the encouraging suggestions condition had significantly higher ratings of informational justice than those in the provision of information and control conditions, albeit not significantly higher. A one-way ANOVA showed that for the encouraging suggestions intervention, participants in this condition had significantly higher ratings of procedural justice than those in the informational justice or control conditions, $F(1, 109) = 6.70, p=.01, F(1, 118) = 13.59, p=.00$. These results show that the provision of
information intervention was not an appropriate operationalization of informational justice. However, the encouraging suggestions intervention was an appropriate operationalization of procedural justice.

Participants were also asked to complete an intrinsic motivation to assess their interest in the study. On a seven point scale, participants rated the experiment an average of 4.83 on Interest/Enjoyment and 4.27 on Value/Usefulness. Also, participants rated themselves an average of 5.30 on Perceived Competence and Effort/Importance. Thus participants appeared to be reasonably motivated when engaging in the experiment. The mean for the Pressure/Tension scale was not reported since the scale was not found to be reliable for this sample ($\alpha = .49$). Interestingly, a one-way ANOVA showed that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition rated Effort/Importance significantly higher than participants in the control condition, $F (1, 117) = 6.52, p = .01$. Perhaps the encouraging suggestions condition led them to want to put more effort in or think the experiment was important which would be consistent with a social exchange approach to employer-employee relationships. This was the only significant difference found on this scale across conditions; overall participants were similar on most subscales of intrinsic motivation.
Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics for Present Study Variables*

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</table>

Table 5

*Intercorrelations and Reliabilities of Manipulations Check and Justice Variables for Present Study*

<table>
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<tr>
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<td>.25**</td>
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<td>.09</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
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<td>.18*</td>
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Table 5 continues
Table 5 (continued)

*Intercorrelations and Reliabilities of Manipulations Check and Justice Variables for Present Study*

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<td>11. Competence</td>
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<td>.45**</td>
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<td>12. Effort</td>
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<td>13. Pressure</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.16*</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Reliabilities are on the diagonal, except for variables which do not have reliabilities. *p < .05, **p < .01. Infodummy = Condition dummy coded, 0 = Control Group, 1 = Provision of Information condition. Voicedummy = Condition dummy coded, 0 = Control Group, 1 = Encouraging Suggestions, MCIJ = Manipulation Check – Informational Justice, MCES = Manipulation Check – Procedural Justice, IJ = Informational Justice, PJ = Procedural Justice.
Table 6

Intercorrelations and Reliabilities of Main Study Variables for Present Study

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Infodummy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Voicedummy</td>
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<td>(--)</td>
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<td>3. POS</td>
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<td>4. AC</td>
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<td>(.74)</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>5. TI</td>
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<td>-.56**</td>
<td>-.58**</td>
<td>(.88)</td>
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<td>6. OJ</td>
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<td>.74**</td>
<td>.59**</td>
<td>-.58**</td>
<td>(.86)</td>
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<td>-.22**</td>
<td>.18*</td>
<td>(.77)</td>
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<td>8. Withdraw</td>
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<td>-.05</td>
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<td>-.32**</td>
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<td>-.09</td>
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<td>.25**</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.35**</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Cust. Ser. Perf</td>
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<td>.02</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.18*</td>
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Table 6 continues
Table 6 (continued)

**Intercorrelations and Reliabilities of Main Study Variables for Present Study**

<table>
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<tr>
<td>8. Withdraw</td>
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<td>9. Letter Perf.</td>
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<td>10. Cust. Ser. Perf</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.23**</td>
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</table>

*Note.* Reliabilities are on the diagonal, except for variables which do not have reliabilities. *p< .05, **p<.01. Infodummy = Condition dummy coded, 0 = Control Group, 1 = Provision of Information condition. Voicedummy = Condition dummy coded, 0 = Control Group, 1 = Encouraging Suggestions, POS = Perceived Organizational Support, AC = Affective Commitment, TI = Turnover Intentions, OJ = Organizational Justice, CC = Continuance Commitment, Withdraw = Withdrawal behaviors, Letter Performance – OCB task performance, Customer service performance – In role task performance. Interrater reliabilities for task performance are located in the measures section.
Test of Hypothesized Models

The present study examines two interventions and their effects on perceived organizational support. The correlations show preliminary support for the relationship between conditions and POS. A one-way ANOVA was used to test whether there were any differences in POS across conditions. The results suggest that there is a significant difference between the conditions on POS, \( F(2, 170) = 7.52, p = .00 \). Further investigation of the means shows that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition reported significantly higher POS than those in the provision of information condition and the control condition, \( F(1, 109) = 7.69, p = .01 \), \( F(1, 118) = 16.12, p = .00 \) respectively, providing support for Hypothesis 2. Perceived organizational support did not significantly differ between the provision of information condition and the control condition, \( F(1, 113) = .58, p = .45 \), therefore Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Given the lack of support for the influence of this intervention on POS and by extension lack of preliminary support for POS as a mediator between provision of information and organizational outcomes, I did not test further hypotheses of this intervention. The data did not show support for Hypotheses 3a, 4a and 5a, hypotheses related to the information of provision of information over POS.

The remaining hypotheses were tested using the bootstrapping method of mediation via regression advocated by Preacher and Hayes (2004). Bootstrapping is advocated for use in small to moderate samples because it provides a better estimate of the standard error in a population by resampling from the current data set. Advocates of this method suggest that it provides closer estimates of indirect effects because it simulates a larger sample through the resampling process and is robust to minor
violations of normality, unlike the Sobel test (Preacher & Hayes, 2004; Efron & Gong, 1983). Further this method of mediation was used to test the hypotheses because it has more power than the more common Baron and Kenny (1986) method. Parameter estimates of the indirect effects, standard errors, z scores, significance levels and confidence intervals for mediation analyses are located in Table 8. The results of the bootstrap mediation analysis showed there is a positive relationship between the presence of encouraging suggestions and perceived organizational support \((b=0.41)\), and that POS, in turn, was positively related to affective commitment controlling for presence of encouraging suggestions \((b=0.77)\). Therefore the presence of encouraging suggestions positively related to POS and higher levels of POS corresponded with higher levels of affective commitment toward the organization. As well, examination of the confidence intervals (see Table 8) demonstrates that the indirect effect of encouraging suggestions on affective commitment when controlling for perceived organizational support was significant due to the absence of zero in the confidence interval. Given these results, Hypothesis 3b was supported; perceived organizational support partially mediates the relationship between the presence of encouraging suggestions and affective commitment. Perceived organizational support was also tested as a mediator between encouraging suggestions and two different types of performance, extra-role performance (organizational citizenship behavior) and in-role performance. The relationship between encouraging suggestions and POS is established above, in addition, the results show a positive relationship between POS and extra-role performance controlling for encouraging suggestions \((b=0.43)\). Exploration of the confidence interval demonstrates a significant indirect effect due to the absence of zero in the confidence interval. Therefore
the results show support for Hypothesis 4b. Finally a bootstrap mediation was conducted to test Hypothesis 5b, the indirect effect of POS on in-role performance. The data show a positive relationship between POS and in-role performance ($b = .14$), however further exploration shows that the indirect effect of POS is not significant due to the presence of a zero in the confidence interval. Therefore Hypothesis 5b is not supported by the data.

Post-Hoc Analyses

While the following relationships were not proposed as hypotheses in the current study, previous research has determined the relationship between perceived organizational support and the following positive outcomes for the workplace (turnover intentions, withdrawal behaviors and continuance commitment, Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Therefore I decided to test POS as a mediator between encouraging suggestions and organizational outcomes using the bootstrapping method of mediation via regression advocated by Preacher and Hayes (2004). It follows the same steps to test mediation as the Baron and Kenny (1986) approach, but with bootstrapping estimates for $a$ and $b$ relationships as well as their standard errors. Exploration of the correlations (see Table 6) determined that continuance commitment was not significantly related to POS, therefore I did not continue with mediation analyses. Turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors did not have significant correlations with the presence or absence of encouraging suggestions; however they were significantly correlated with POS. Since the IV to DV relationship does not need to be significant to test for mediation (Kenny, Kashy & Bolger, 1998), I examined the indirect effect of POS on the remaining organizational outcomes despite the lack of a zero-order correlation between presence of encouraging suggestions and these variables. In the case of turnover intentions, there is a negative
relationship between perceived organizational support and turnover intentions ($b = -.85$) such that employees who report higher values of POS report lower values of intent to turnover. The data (see Table 8) demonstrates that the indirect effect of encouraging suggestions on turnover intentions when controlling for perceived organizational support was significant due to the absence of zero in the confidence interval. I also explored whether POS mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions and withdrawal behaviors, there is a negative relationship between perceived organizational support and withdrawal behaviors ($b = -.27$) such that employees who report higher values of POS report lower values of intent to commit withdrawal behaviors. The results (see Table 8) demonstrate that the indirect effect of encouraging suggestions on withdrawal behaviors when controlling for perceived organizational support was significant due to the absence of zero in the confidence interval.

Tests of Reverse Mediation

To help provide evidence for the robustness of the hypothesized and post-hoc relationships, the reverse order of mediation was tested for each significant mediated relationship ($AC$, extra-role performance, in-role performance, turnover intentions, and withdrawal behaviors) such that encouraging suggestions is the dependent variable, POS is now the independent variable and the outcome variables are now being tested as mediators. Analysis of the indirect effect of affective commitment on POS controlling for encouraging suggestions ($b=.07$) found that the indirect effect was not significant due to the presence of zero in the confidence interval. Extra-role performance was discounted as a mediator due to a non-significant indirect effect ($b=.04$). In-role performance was also discounted as a mediator due to a non-significant indirect effect ($b=.00$).
Examinations of both confidence intervals indicated the presence of zeros within the intervals. Finally, reverse mediation was conducted with turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors as possible mediators with POS as an outcome. Results did not show evidence of significant mediation using the bootstrap method, due to the presence of zero in both confidence intervals.
Table 7
Present Study ANOVA Results, Cell Means and Standard Deviations

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<th>Variables</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Cohen’s d&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Eta Squared&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Info&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Enc Sugg.&lt;sup&gt;4&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
<th>Control&lt;sup&gt;5&lt;/sup&gt;</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>6.71***</td>
<td>.66&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>.10&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>3.75 (.80)</td>
<td>3.50 (.71)</td>
<td>3.21 (.8)</td>
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<td>2. Manipulation Check – Encouraging Suggestions</td>
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<td>.44</td>
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<td>4.25 (.56)</td>
<td>2.83 (.99)</td>
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<td>3. Perceived Organizational Support</td>
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<td>.73</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>3.50 (.69)</td>
<td>3.82 (.52)</td>
<td>3.41 (.60)</td>
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<td>4. Affective Commitment</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.09 (.68)</td>
<td>3.24 (.70)</td>
<td>3.12 (.62)</td>
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<td>5. Turnover Intentions</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.85 (.98)</td>
<td>2.84 (.93)</td>
<td>3.12 (.92)</td>
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<td>6. Withdrawal Behaviors</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.71 (.54)</td>
<td>1.67 (.58)</td>
<td>1.73 (.67)</td>
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<td>7. Overall Justice</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>3.87 (.69)</td>
<td>4.10 (.51)</td>
<td>3.85 (.66)</td>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>3.59 (.64)</td>
<td>3.86 (.45)</td>
<td>3.51 (.58)</td>
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Table 7 continues
Table 7 (continued)

*Present Study ANOVA Results, Cell Means and Standard Deviations*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2.85</th>
<th>3.71 (.55)</th>
<th>3.89 (.45)</th>
<th>3.71 (.46)</th>
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<td>11. Letter Performance</td>
<td>.054</td>
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<td>3.45 (.45)</td>
<td>3.43 (.46)</td>
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Note: N = 173. *p < .05, **p < .01, df = (1,170). 1Unless otherwise noted, effect size is calculated for the difference between Encouraging Suggestions and Control conditions. 2Effect size is calculated for the difference between Provision of Information and Control conditions. 3N=53, 4N=58, and 5N=62.
### Table 8

**Mediating Effects of Perceived Organizational Support on the Relationship between Encouraging Suggestions and Organizational Outcomes**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Organizational Outcomes</th>
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<th>Z</th>
<th>P value</th>
<th>95% C.I. Lower</th>
<th>95% C.I. Upper</th>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>.00</td>
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<td>.52</td>
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<td>Turnover Intentions</td>
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<td>-3.25</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.63</td>
<td>-.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Withdrawal Behaviors</td>
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<td>.05</td>
<td>-2.26</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.24</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Letter Performance(^1)</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer Ser. Performance(^1)</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>1.68</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.13</td>
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</table>

Note. \(n = 120\). *\(p < .05\). (Significant indirect effects). Independent Variable is Voicedummy = Condition dummy coded, 0 = Control Group, 1 = Encouraging Suggestions, Mediating variable = Perceived organizational support. \(^1\)Refers to hypothesized relationships, all others are post-hoc analyses.
Chapter 5

Discussion
The purpose of the present study was to test the impact of two justice-related interventions on POS. While the literature has supported the relationship between justice perceptions and POS (Roch & Shanock, 2006; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shore & Shore, 1995), there is insufficient research on practical interventions to influence POS. Research has shown that POS is important because it leads to positive outcomes for the organization and reduces negative outcomes (see Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002 for a review). Therefore, it is also, important to understand the role that POS plays as a mechanism between treatment of employees/interventions and such positive outcomes for the organization.

Research has supported justice perceptions as strong antecedents of POS (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). These perceptions are likely to be viewed as discretionary treatment because policies and procedures that lead to justice perceptions are often at the discretion of the organization. Therefore this study focused on developing POS through justice interventions, and as a mechanism to explain the relationship between just treatment and beneficial outcomes for the organization. The present study sought to accomplish this goal by creating two applications of the justice constructs to reflect just treatment: encouraging suggestions (procedural justice) and provision of information (informational justice) and testing the effects of these interventions on perceived organizational support. I hypothesized that each of the conditions would positively impact employee ratings of perceived organizational support. In turn, POS ratings should positively relate to outcomes of POS supported in the literature such as affective commitment to the organization, extra-role performance and in-role performance (Eisenberger et al., 2001, Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001). While the
results did not find support for provision of information as an operationalization of informational justice or as an intervention likely to influence POS, there was support for the encouraging suggestions intervention. The findings supported encouraging suggestions as an intervention to enhance POS and found that POS mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions and affective commitment and extra-role performance. Further, post-hoc tests found that POS also mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions, turnover intentions, and withdrawal behaviors. Finally, tests of reverse mediation found that the hypothesized direction of the mediation was correct with POS serving as a mechanism for the relationship between encouraging suggestions and organizational outcomes as opposed to an outcome itself.

**Theoretical Implications**

The findings of the present study contribute to the literature on POS and justice perceptions. The most important contribution of this study is translating a theoretical antecedent of POS (procedural justice) into the creation of an intervention that can improve employee’s perceptions that their organization supports them. This finding addressed a gap in the literature on POS which had not yet tested and endorsed practical ways for organizations to enhance employee POS (Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003; Shore & Shore, 1995). While research has established the importance of POS to organizations and the benefits of having a workforce that feels supported, it has not provided specific behaviors that organizations can work on to enhance this perception. For the most part, research on the link between POS and justice has been explored using field studies that involve correlational designs measuring self reported perceptions of both organizational support and justice (Greenberg, 2009). The present study is one of the first to test a
justice based intervention (encouraging suggestions) in the lab to determine whether this type of treatment influences POS. Further this study contributes to the justice literature by focusing on the specific relationship between procedural justice and POS. To date little research has explored the direct relationship between voice (encouraging suggestions) and perceived organizational support, and none to date using an experimental design. Further, the present study attempted to examine provision of information as an operationalization of informational justice; however, as noted above, the results did not support the notion that I manipulated informational justice.

The results of the present study provided further support for the strong relationship between POS and procedural justice perceptions. This finding also contributes to the literature on voice. Research has established the relationship between POS and procedural justice (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002); however the present study also provides support for the influence of voice (more specifically in the form of encouraging suggestions) on POS. This study manipulated voice in the lab by encouraging suggestions regarding the policy that an organization would set to distribute bonuses. Participants in the encouraging suggestions condition were told that their input was valuable to the organization and that the organization was opening the floor up to employee suggestions. While a number of studies have manipulated voice in a lab and studied its influence on justice perceptions, few studies have influenced how voice directly impacts perceived organizational support and none in an experimental setting where the inclusion of voice could be compared to a control group’s POS. The results of the present study show that giving employees the opportunity to provide suggestions on organizational policy and encouraging these suggestions leads employees to believe that
the organization supports them. This perception also led to higher affective commitment and higher ratings on an OCB.

This study also attempted to test the influence of provision of information as (positive treatment from the organization) on perceived organizational support and beneficial outcomes for the organization. Unfortunately, this treatment was not shown to be reflective of informational justice, I discuss some of the reasons for this finding in the limitation section to follow. Due to different frameworks of justice constructs, research on informational justice as its’ own justice type has been restricted. Specifically, research has explored informational justice as part of interactional justice or as a component of procedural justice (Colquitt et al., 2001). In the present study, the provision of information intervention was used in the context of explaining how employee bonuses would be distributed and was expected to reflect informational justice because it was created based on definitions of informational justice. Participants in this condition were given an explanation about how the company was going to distribute bonuses and why they had chosen to distribute them in that way. While the presence of this treatment did not influence ratings of informational justice, I still examined the effect of this treatment on POS. The data showed a small, non-significant correlation between POS and provision of information. The lack of a positive finding could indicate that employees do not view information provided by the organization as an indication that the organization supports them. It is possible that while employees value information provided by the organization, the type of information provided in this study was either not seen as discretionary and therefore not attributed to the organization caring about and valuing them or not seen as valuable given that the participants were not really going to receive bonuses. Thus this
treatment might not have been perceived as something that the organization did based on goodwill; instead participants may have believed that organizations were expected to provide this information. Research has found that employee perceptions of whether treatment from the organization is discretionary will influence how supported they feel by their organization (Eisenberger et. al., 1997), however there are some limitations in the study which may have influenced the extent to which employees viewed treatment as discretionary or just treatment.

*Interventions and Discretionary Treatment*

One of the key purposes of the study was to create interventions that would enhance POS; specifically it was important for these behaviors from the organization to be considered discretionary. Research has supported the idea that individuals value treatment more when that treatment is based on the givers’ own desires, that is, treatment appears more genuine when the giver of treatment chooses to provide such treatment (Blau, 1964; Eisenberger et al., 1997). I attempted to create interventions based on justice constructs due to the organization’s ability to decide what is considered fair, particularly in the cases of encouraging suggestions and provision of information. To help test this assumption, I created a scale to determine whether employees perceived these behaviors from the organization as more or less discretionary. This is the first time such a direct measure of perceived discretion was created or used in a study of perceived organizational support, despite organizational support theory’s assumption that discretionary treatment results in higher POS. Only one previous study in the POS literature examined level of discretionary treatment (Eisenberger et al., 1997) but did so by conducting a field study of employees from various organizations using an indirect
measure of discretion. This survey study asked participants to categorize 18 job conditions into three groups: most controlled, intermediate control and least controlled by the organization. The results found that overall there was little agreement regarding which job conditions were considered high, intermediate or low control by the organization, however employee perceptions regarding degree of control moderated the relationship between the favorableness of job conditions and POS, providing support for the importance of employee perceptions of discretionary treatment. This differs from the present study which exposed participants to different treatments and asked them to determine, using three items for each behavior, whether they perceived the behavior to be in the organizations’ control. The present study builds on this previous research by allowing participants to experience the treatment first and subsequently determine whether they believed the treatment was discretionary.

Unfortunately, however, the scales of discretionary treatment developed for this study did not have suitable reliability for inclusion in analyses, and therefore were not suitable measures to determine whether these interventions would be considered discretionary. However, exploration of the means on the discretion manipulation checks show that on average participants in the two intervention conditions rated these treatments as higher than the scale average, a possible indication that participants generally believed these treatments to be discretionary. Further the correlations between the individual discretionary control items and POS showed that for two out of three of the items there was a positive significant correlation between discretionary control and POS. That is, participants who rated the interventions as highly discretionary (e.g. Electronics Warehouse was not forced into asking for my input on how to distribute bonuses,
Electronics Warehouse had the freedom to decide whether to provide me with information on how to bonuses are to be distributed) also reported higher values of perceived organizational support. Therefore it may be that participants who believed the treatment was due to the organizations’ wishes also felt more supported by the organization. Further these items were also significantly positively related to affective commitment and significantly negatively related to turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors. Further research exploring practical interventions to improve POS should explore which behaviors are seen as discretionary by employees and whether the manner in which the treatment is administered influences perceptions of discretion. A key addition to furthering this line of research will be the creation of a formal scale for perceptions of discretionary behavior. Creation of this scale must contain a validation process involving collecting as much validity evidence as possible. Researchers involved in this process should have subject matter experts brainstorm possible questions, collect data on the selected questions, and conduct factor analyses on the data to further explore the structure of the scale, i.e. how many factors, what items group together. As well, the challenge is that the scale may have to be contextualized to the particular organization and behaviors (based on its regulatory environment and norms in the industry). However, if possible, the creation of a valid discretionary behavior scale would help determine these perceptions for a variety of behaviors from organizations and agents of organizations and could provide further insight into the influence of discretionary behavior on POS. As will be discussed next, another measurement issue that arose in the present study was the use of Colquitt’s (2001) justice measures to determine if the interventions used influenced justice perceptions.
Justice Interventions and Measurement

A limitation of this study was the relationship between the justice interventions and Colquitt’s justice measures for the provision of information condition. Given the prevalence of Colquitt’s justice measures and the strong relationship between the interventions and manipulation check items (i.e., participants in the encouraging suggestions condition reported significantly higher values on the manipulation check items for encouraging suggestions, and participants in the provision of information condition reported significantly higher values on the manipulation check items for provision of information), I expected that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition would report higher levels of procedural justice and participants in the provision of information condition would report higher levels of informational justice. I conducted a one-way ANOVA to determine whether participants reported varying levels of procedural justice depending on the condition they were in. In line with my expectations, the data showed that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition reported significantly higher procedural justice perceptions than the control group, $F(1, 118) = 13.59, p=.00$. Surprisingly, the data also showed that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition also reported higher values on informational justice items than those in the control group and provision of information group, albeit not significantly higher.

There are several possible explanations for these findings. It may have been the case that provision of information was not considered a behavior reflecting justice, but instead was seen as an organizational policy, something expected, or just very similar to other information the participants were provided about the organization during their
immersion. Since participants might have seen provision of information as an extension of the treatment they had already been receiving from the organization, it may not have been seen as discretionary treatment. Participants also may have been overwhelmed with the amount of information they were expected to process about the organization, especially given the study occurred at one time point. Another possibility is that participants were confused by the informational justice items (see Appendix G). The items created by Colquitt (2001) measure specific aspects of communication such as “timeliness”, “candidness” and whether participants perceive that communication was specifically tailored to them. Given the time constraints of a lab study, participants may not have been able to accurately judge these characteristics of communication.

Another possible reason for these findings was discussed by Ambrose and Schminke (2009). Their article discussed the need for an overall justice measure. The authors state that it is possible that employees develop overall justice perceptions in the workplace as opposed to making specific judgments about specific behavior from the organization. They argue that researchers should use more global measures of predictors when they are trying to predict global outcomes such as performance or affective commitment. Finally, Ambrose and Schminke (2009) found support for overall organizational justice as a mediator between specific justice components and organizational outcomes. The authors used three types of justice in their analyses, (distributive, procedural and interactional) and found that overall organizational justice fully mediated the relationship between the three types of justice and a variety of organizational outcomes (job satisfaction, commitment and turnover intentions). In a second study, they also found that overall organizational justice fully mediated the
relationship between the three types of justices and task performance, OCB and organizational deviance. Unfortunately Ambrose and Schminke (2009) did not divide interactional justice into interpersonal and informational justice and thus their studies are unable to provide any insight into the informational justice intervention in the present study. Additionally, it is possible that in the present study, employees developed overall justice perceptions when they were encouraged to provide suggestions, this might explain why participants in this condition reported significantly higher levels of procedural justice and higher (non-significant) ratings of informational justice. A one-way ANOVA showed that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition also reported significantly higher levels of organizational justice than the other conditions, $F(2, 170) = 2.91, p=.05$. Thus, perhaps participants viewed encouraging suggestions as behavior reflecting overall fairness and therefore it influenced their perceptions of justice overall.

**Perceived Organizational Support as a Mediator**

The present study also contributes to the literature supporting POS as a mechanism which leads to more positive outcomes and less negative outcomes for the organization. The results showed that POS led to a variety of outcomes including greater affective commitment, better extra-role performance, lower turnover intentions and lower self-reported withdrawal behaviors. Previous research has found support for POS as a mediator between justice perceptions and outcomes such as turnover intentions and extra-role performance (OCBs) (Allen et. al., 2003; Moorman et. al. 1998); the present study not only replicated these findings, it also found support for the mediation using a practical application of procedural justice. While some field studies have been conducted testing POS as a mediator, the present study directly manipulates treatment by the
organization which in turn influences POS. Researchers who have studied POS as a mediator suggest the importance of establishing cause and effect of POS as a mechanism to improve outcomes for the organization, (Moorman et. al, 1998), this study has begun to provide such support. The results of the present study found through bootstrapping that POS mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions and organizational outcomes (affective commitment, OCB, turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors). Additionally, to provide further support of the direction of the relationship, reverse mediation was also tested using POS as an outcome. The results found that organizational outcomes did not mediate the relationship between encouraging suggestions and POS. Therefore the present study determined that encouraging suggestions leads to higher levels of POS, which in turn leads to higher affective commitment and OCBs and lower levels of turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors. These relationships were more easily determined in a lab study due to the control and temporal precedence of the interventions, in the next section, I discuss the benefits of conducting organizational research in the lab.

*Manipulating Justice in the Lab*

The present study was conducted in a lab and therefore I was able to have control over the interventions that were studied. This is an important contribution to the literature because lab based studies are effective tools to test theories that are rarely practically testable in the workplace. While it can be perceived as a limitation of a study, conducting this type of research in a lab allows for a greater control of extraneous variables and threats to internal validity. By creating a fictitious scenario, I was able to control many variables that may have been present in a field study or already existing organizational
setting such as differences in employee tenure, supervisor, and any other previous experience in an organization that may have affected perceptions of justice and organizational support. By controlling for these variables, I was able to minimize threats associated with confounding variables; all participants had the same immersion process regardless of treatment group. That is, by using random assignment in a lab environment, I was able to better ensure that the only difference between participant experiences in the study occurred when interventions were introduced, this way I was able to attribute employee attitudes and behaviors to the interventions instead of other confounding variables. Another benefit to exploring these hypotheses in a lab setting is that I was able to conduct two pilot studies to test the interventions and manipulation check items, a step that is impractical in the workplace. Pilot testing allowed me to limit most threats of instrumentation since I was able to pilot many of the scales and measurements prior to the present study. Another threat which I was able to control for was experimenter bias, all experimenters were trained and given scripts on how to treat participants, these scripts allowed for greater control of experimenter behavior. Finally, one of the most important benefits to conducting a lab study is that it allows for a greater ability to establish cause and effect, since many other possible causes of attitudes and behavior have been controlled due to the experimental design. Lab studies have been criticized in the literature and there has been a decrease in their presence in published studies (Dipboye, 1990), however the criticism is mostly due to the claim that lab studies lack external validity. That is, due to the lab setting creating an unrealistic work environment, results of lab studies cannot be generalized to organizations as readily as field studies (Berkowitz & Donnerstein, 1982). However, this criticism is misguided because the
purpose of lab studies is to test theories in a controlled setting to evaluate whether they might be tested in the workplace, not to generalize results directly to the workplace (Mook, 1983). Lab studies provide a controlled environment to test hypotheses, reduce threats to internal validity, examine causal relationships and work well as a first step to testing and revising theories prior to their test in the workplace. Therefore this study contributes to the POS and justice literature by testing the theoretical relationships in a controlled and consistent setting rather than testing them in the field where the results could be susceptible to other influences from the environment. It is also important to note that there are limited lab studies testing the relationship between justice and POS, most studies exploring these relationships are studied in the field and so the present study contributes to this limited research. While the major contribution of lab studies is testing theories prior to their examination in the workplace, this line of research does also contribute practical implications in the workplace.

Practical Implications

Employee Attitudes and Performance

While my results showed that POS mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions and an organizational citizenship behavior, there was lack of support for POS as a mediator between encouraging suggestions and in-role performance. Previous research has found that there is a small relationship between justice and performance, similarly there is also a small relationship between POS and performance. While my sample size allowed for a power of .84 and I found significant relationships between POS and other outcomes, it is possible that I needed more power to find a relationship between the interventions, POS and performance. Outcomes like
performance are more distally related to employee attitudes and consequently have smaller effects and need more power to be detected. Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001) also provide insight into my results, their meta-analysis on justice found that in lab studies the justice to performance relationship was much smaller than in field studies. The authors suggest that this might be the case because situational demands are more salient in the lab than they are in the field, that is, it makes sense that individuals in different treatment conditions would not perform differently because all participants might feel that they are required to perform well. It is also possible that I did not find support for an effect on in-role performance due to the measure used to evaluate performance. Unlike the OCB task ratings, I was unable to pilot the ratings for in-role performance. Further, the items used may have been more subjective than the OCB task. This could explain the difference in interrater reliability between the two tasks; raters were more likely to agree on OCB performance than in-role performance. Therefore measurement may have also played a role in the findings for performance.

A positive sign for exploring performance in this type of study was the finding that participants in the encouraging suggestions condition rated their effort on the experience (intrinsic motivation subscale) as significantly higher than the control condition. This suggests that participants not only acknowledge positive treatment from the organization (i.e. the results were significantly higher in a treatment group but not in the control), but will also reciprocate positive treatment with effort. Therefore, while it was beneficial to measure performance in the present study, future field studies on justice interventions should measure performance as a baseline and again after interventions to evaluate whether there will be any change in performance related to justice perceptions or
POS. Future research should also measure intrinsic motivation specifically perceptions of effort to see if employee effort is reflected in their performance.

There are several findings from the present study that may be useful to organizations and researchers (again with the caveat that these results are coming from a lab study). A main finding is the influence of encouraging suggestions on POS. The present study showed that participants who were given the opportunity to provide suggestions also felt their organization supported them. This is an important finding for organizations that are looking to improve employee POS. The data also showed that POS mediated the relationship between encouraging suggestions and a variety of organizational outcomes. This provides support for the importance of a workforce that feels supported by their organization, in this case through provision of voice. While one of the interventions was successful in influencing POS, future research should explore a variety of interventions based on the antecedents of POS. The findings should not be taken to mean that providing information is not good practice. Employees do value the information that organizations provide them, particularly in the case where the information is related to procedures that will affect their lives at work. Research has supported the relationship between perceptions of informational justice and a variety of outcomes for the workplace such as affective commitment, job satisfaction, and OCBs (Colquitt et al., 2001). It is possible that in the present study, due to the immersion techniques, participants were overloaded with information and therefore did not view it as just treatment. Further, since information may be viewed as just treatment particularly when it influences employees directly, the treatment provided in this study (provision of information) may not have been seen as just because participants were not provided final
decisions regarding whether they would receive bonuses. Specifically, participants were provided explanations regarding the distribution of bonuses but were not provided with sufficient information to determine whether their performance fit the criteria for receiving a bonus.

*Limitations and Future Research*

*Measurement Issues*

One limitation of this study, which I had hoped would contribute to the literature on the relationship between discretionary treatment and POS, is the lack of reliability for the scales examining the extent to which employees believed the interventions were behaviors that were based on the organizations’ wishes. As mentioned earlier in this discussion, the items on the discretionary behavior scale for each intervention were not reliable and therefore were not included in the main analyses for the study. This scale was created due to the lack of existing items measuring whether employees perceive behavior to be discretionary. Future studies testing interventions as just treatment from the organization should determine whether this treatment is considered discretionary prior to testing the treatment. Perhaps, treatment could be evaluated by a sample of employees to determine whether employees would place higher value on treatment which they considered to be discretionary.

Another measurement issue occurs in the classification of the experimental tasks as in-role performance and organizational citizenship behavior. The tasks were classified in this manner because one type of task (customer service issue) may be seen by employees as reflective of work described on the job description they were provided or their schema of an assistant manager at an electronics store. Due to the likelihood that
participants would view this task as a requirement of the job, it was classified as in-role performance. The other task used in the present study involved writing a letter on behalf of the organization. This task was classified as an organizational citizenship behavior because responses to this task would reflect how the participants felt about the organization. That is, the variation in this type of performance would be due to whether participants felt positively or negatively about the organization and their experience with the organization. Because participants were asked to complete both tasks, the classification of these tasks was due to the nature of the tasks instead of whether the participant perceived the task as in-role or as an organizational citizenship behavior. Future research should include a measure to evaluate whether employee perceptions of the type of task influences their performance on the task.

Limitations of Lab Research and Suggestions

Lab studies are useful tools to help us test relationships between variables; however there are some consequences of conducting this type of research in the lab. Conducting studies in the lab allows for a greater control of the environment, including using random assignment to conditions, which allows the experimenter to control for extraneous variables and test for hypothesized relationships with a lower possibility of confounding variables. When experiments are conducted in such a controlled environment it also takes away from the realism of the situation because a laboratory at a university rarely resembles a work setting. In order to compensate for the lack of realism in lab studies, I incorporated some aspects of the work environment into the experiment. For example, in the present study participants were asked to imagine themselves as employees in a fictitious electronics company. In order to make this situation more
realistic I provided participants with an employee uniform complete with polo shirt and name tag, reminiscent of what you might see a “Best Buy” employee wear. As part of the immersion into the company, along with the scenario, I created a company brochure and a job description to provide participants with more background regarding the mission and goals of the company. This was done to compensate for the brief amount of time that participants would consider themselves employees of the organization. Finally tasks were embedded within the study to further immerse the participants into the role of assistant manager. While these additions do not create the ideal situation to study the hypothesized relationships, they were able to improve the realism of the study and reduce the negative stigma of conducting organizational research in a lab.

Another issue of concern is the population that can be studied in the lab, usually college students between 18 and 21 years old with little work experience. Particularly in psychology research pools, the students who are available to participate in experiments and are given credit to participate in experiments are usually first year students taking Introduction to Psychology. Conducting this type research in a lab also makes obtaining an adequate sample to test these hypotheses difficult; the sample in the present study used participants between 18 and 25 years of age and only allowed students who were recently or currently employed to participate. This requirement for participation was enforced to create a sample that would be able to respond to a work situation due to their own experiences as employees of other organizations. The combination of the lack of realism in lab studies and available population to sample made it difficult to create interventions resembling procedural and informational justice constructs. A tough component of creating interventions to test in the workplace is ensuring that the treatment in the
interventions is only reflecting the construct or in this case justice component of interest. When creating the interventions, I had to be very careful to separate out treatment that would be considered encouraging suggestions or providing information but not directly support from the organization or other types of fair treatment. This compartmentalization of treatment is important to find relationships between the variables of interest without confounding from other variables and is only able to occur in a lab setting due to the control that it affords.

Given the results of this study, the next step would be to test the encouraging suggestions intervention in the workplace. Ideally, it would be best to incorporate the realism of a field study with the control of a lab study as best as possible. In the case of this study, the importance lies in testing justice interventions to see whether they positively influence POS and by extension positive outcomes for the organization. While it is very difficult to get buy in from an organization to test out different interventions, it might be easier to do so in a retail situation such as the one that was envisioned for this study. A feature that may set retail organizations apart from other types of organizations is the presence of multiple functioning mini-organizations, each of the retail stores. Each store has a similar structure, policies set by the overarching organization, and a similar work environment, thus stores could function as different comparison groups. The first step would be to get baseline attitudes from employees, this would help to account for any differences in attitudes regarding fairness, organizational support and commitment that employees may already have due to existing treatment from the organization, and I would also use current performance and OCBs as a baseline. As this study and previous research has suggested, in order for employees to view treatment as fair, behaviors from
the organization must lead to an outcome which is personal to or directly impacts employees (Walster, Bersheid, & Walster, 1973; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Messick & Sentis, 1979). Therefore it is important to carefully select the treatment that will be tested across groups. It is impractical to test a treatment in an organization when it is not a naturally developing change in the organization, however the addition of fair treatment should not impact or cost organizations a great deal and therefore is a less intrusive intervention than perhaps others in this type of study. In the case of studying different retail organizations, I would provide different justice interventions to different stores and reexamine employee attitudes after the administration of the interventions. Finally, it would be interesting to see if performance changes after the introduction of fair treatment. Designing a study in this manner melds the best of both lab and field studies and perhaps may provide greater insight into the influence of just treatment on employee attitudes and behaviors.

Conclusions

The present study is the first study to test, in a controlled lab setting, whether two types of treatment function as operationalizations of justice and whether these interventions influence POS. Results showed that of the two interventions tested, encouraging suggestions (an operationalization of procedural justice) was found to directly influence POS. Further, POS acted as a mechanism in the relationship between encouraging suggestions and organizational outcomes such as affective commitment, OCB, turnover intentions and withdrawal behaviors. Unfortunately, in-role performance was not influenced by encouraging employees to provide suggestions regarding an organizational policy or POS. This finding is not surprising due to the limited relationship
between employee attitudes and in-role performance (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) and even less so given the difficulty in finding a justice to in-role performance relationship in the lab (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Although the provision of information condition was not found to be an operationalization of informational justice and did not influence POS in this study, future research should explore this treatment’s influence on POS. It is possible that a variety of limitations reduced any impact of providing information to employees, however this treatment is easy for the organization to engage in, costs little to organizations and may be seen as discretionary to employees and should therefore be further studied. The present study also highlights the need for development of a measure of discretionary treatment; that is to what extent employees view treatment from the organization as discretionary. Overall, the results of this study have provided insight into the development of POS, and the influence of POS as a mediator between just treatment and organizational outcomes.
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Appendix A

Pilot study 1, Pilot Study 2, and Present Study Scenario and Job Description:

Directions: Please take 5 minutes and read the following scenario. Please imagine that you are an employee at the organization discussed below.

Imagine that you are an employee at Electronics Warehouse. Electronics Warehouse is a home electronics store that sells everything from computers and big screen TVs to CDs and DVDs. They are a relatively successful company considering their competitors, Circuit City and Best Buy, are twice their size. They opened in 2004 and have quickly become a household name for electronics. You started working there as a holiday cashier to earn extra money. After working in customer service for 9 months, you were promoted to assistant manager. You are currently the Charlotte store’s assistant manager and have been at this job for 3 months. As with working at most companies, there have been ups and downs.

Job Description
Your responsibilities as an Assistant Manager are listed below:

• Customer Service:
  o Provide customer service by greeting and assisting customers, and responding to customer inquiries and complaints.
  o Monitor sales activities to ensure that customers receive satisfactory service and quality goods.
  o Inventory stock and reorder when inventory drops to a specified level.
  o Keep records of purchases, sales, and requisitions.
  o You are expected to help reach the store’s weekly sales quotas of $127,000
  o Perform work activities of subordinates, such as cleaning and organizing shelves and displays and selling merchandise.

• Supervisory Duties:
o Direct and supervise employees engaged in sales, inventory-taking, reconciling cash receipts, or in performing services for customers.

o Assign employees to specific duties.

o You currently supervise 15 employees, 9 full time and 6 part time/weekend employees.

o Enforce safety, health, and security rules.

o Hire, train, and evaluate personnel in sales, promoting or firing workers when appropriate.

- Compensation
  o Your job pays $15.00 an hour
  o Full medical and dental benefits.
Appendix B

**Pilot Study 1 Tasks**

**Session 1 Immersion Task**

Directions: As you know, one of your responsibilities is making sure the store is reaching its’ weekly sales quota. Please take the next few minutes to come up with a flyer for a sale at the store. In front of you is some blank paper and the organizations’ brochure. (For today’s purpose please create the flyer on the front or back of this piece of paper).

**Session 1 Task 1 – In-role performance task**

Directions: One of your employees has approached you with an issue. A customer is looking for an HP 3 in 1 Scanner – Printer – Copier. Normally, your store carries this product but it is currently out of stock. Please take the next few minutes to describe how you would address this situation.

**Session 1 Task 2 – Extra-role performance task**

Directions: Electronics Warehouse is opening a new store in Winston-Salem. The organization is currently looking for applicants for assistant manager positions in the new division. The organization has asked you to reach out to a friend to recommend that he or she apply for the job. The position will be a full time, second shift position. The position will have the same responsibilities that you currently have. Please take the next 10 minutes to write your friend a letter based on your knowledge and experience with the organization.

**Pilot Study 1, Session 2:**

Intervention script:

“Well the reason that we’ve brought you here is to talk about the weekly sales projection that we received from the store today. As you know one of your responsibilities is to make sure that your store is meeting the sales quota, which ultimately contributes to the company’s profits. It looks like your store will not be meeting their sales quota for this month, so far this is just a projection.

Here is what we’ve gotten from our analysts.”

Hand employee weekly sales projections
Conditions (ONLY USE 1)

Condition A – Provision of Information

“As you can see, we’ve asked our analysts to provide information on why the projections are not meeting the quota for this week. They’ve provided some analysis of the numbers and some insights as to why the store is projected to fall short of the quotas this week. Hopefully this information will be helpful to you in trying to get back on track with meeting the sales quota. Please write down your thoughts on why you think the store isn’t meeting the sales quota”.

Provide a fake sheet asking for ideas.

Condition B – Encouraging suggestions

“Using the information that has been provided by the analysts, we would like to hear what you think about the sales not meeting the quotas. More importantly we would really appreciate any advice or thoughts that you could give us on how to try to get the numbers back on track.”

Provide a fake sheet asking for ideas.

“Please take the next few minutes to jot down some of these ideas. We could really use your suggestions.”

Condition C – Combination of Provision of Information and Encouraging Suggestions

“As you can see, we’ve asked our analysts to provide information on why the projections are not meeting the quota for this week. They’ve provided some analysis of the numbers and some insights as to why the store is projected to fall short of the quotas this week. Hopefully this information will be helpful to you in trying to get back on track with meeting the sales quota”.

“Using the information that has been provided by the analysts, we would like to hear what you think about the sales not meeting the quotas. More importantly we would really appreciate any advice or thoughts that you could give us on how to try to get the numbers back on track.”

Provide a fake sheet asking for ideas.

“Please take the next few minutes to jot down some of these ideas. We could really use your suggestions.”

Condition D – Control Group

“Hopefully this report will be helpful to you in trying to get back on track with meeting the sales quota. It might be good to jot down some ideas we could use to make up some of the lost revenue”.

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Provide a fake sheet asking for ideas.
[The experimenter leaves the room for a few minutes to see if the participant wants to
provide suggestions, but does not insist. If the participant writes down ideas, the
experimenter should thank the participants.]

ALL CONDITIONS

Session 2 Tasks

Session 2 Task 1 - In-role performance task

Directions: One of your employees has approached you with an issue. A customer is
looking for a SONY Bravia 46” Flat Panel TV. Normally, your store carries this product
but it is currently out of stock. Please take the next few minutes to describe how you
would address this situation.

Session 2 Task 2 – Extra-role performance task

Directions: Electronics Warehouse is opening a new store in Wilmington. The
organization is currently looking for applicants for assistant manager positions in the new
division. The organization has asked you to reach out to a friend to recommend that he or
she apply for the job. The position will be a full time, second shift position. The position
will have the same responsibilities that you currently have. Please take the next 10
minutes to write your friend a letter.
Appendix C

Pilot Study 1 Survey Items

Perceived Organizational Support
1. Electronics Warehouse cares about my opinions.
2. Electronics Warehouse really cares about my well being.
3. Electronics Warehouse values my contributions.
4. Electronics Warehouse is willing to help me if I need a special favor.
5. Electronics Warehouse would forgive an honest mistake on my part.
6. Electronics Warehouse shows little concern for me.

Affective Commitment
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career at Electronics Warehouse.
2. I do not feel like “part of the family” at Electronics Warehouse.
3. I do not feel “emotionally attached” to Electronics Warehouse.
4. Electronics Warehouse has a great deal of personal meaning to me.
5. I really feel as though Electronics Warehouse’s problems are my own.
6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to Electronics Warehouse.

Manipulation Check Provision of Information
1. I receive timely communication from Electronics Warehouse
2. Electronics Warehouse helps me do my job by providing me with up to date information
3. I receive information about my tasks from Electronics Warehouse
4. Electronics Warehouse gives me all the information I need to do my job

Manipulation Check Encouraging Suggestions
1. Electronics Warehouse encourages my suggestions
2. Electronics Warehouse wants to hear what I think about how it does business
3. Electronics Warehouse asks for suggestions on how to improve the organization
4. Electronics Warehouse values my suggestions
Appendix D

Pilot Study 2 Interventions

Experimenter puts on their own name tag. Experimenter greets participants and gives participants the informed consent. Allow them time to read it and answer questions.

After the participants have read the informed consent, the experimenter gives participants the polo shirt, a name tag.

After giving participants time to read information, provide them with immersion task.

Hand employee weekly sales projections (Conditions E & F get the projections with the Analyst comments, Conditions G & H get the projections only with the graphs).

Conditions (ONLY USE 1)

Condition E – Provision of Information with task

“As you can see, we’ve asked our analysts to provide information on why the projections are not meeting the quota for this week. They’ve provided some analysis of the numbers and some insights as to why the store is projected to fall short of the quotas this week. They also mentioned that in this struggling economy, is it not surprising that sales are not as strong as we would like. We wanted to give you this information right away, hopefully this information will be helpful to you in trying to get back on track with meeting the sales quota as quickly as possible”.

Provide the form for participants to fill out:

“Based on the analysts’ comments, please take the next 3 minutes to fill out the sales report form”

(This is the brief intervention-relevant task for the provision of information condition)

Condition F – Provision of information without task

“As you can see, we’ve asked our analysts to provide information on why the projections are not meeting the quota for this week. They’ve provided some analysis of the numbers and some insights as to why the store is projected to fall short of the quotas this week. They also mentioned that in this struggling economy, is it not surprising that sales are not as strong as we would like. We wanted to give you this information right away, hopefully this information will be helpful to you in trying to get back on track with meeting the sales quota as quickly as possible”.

Condition G – Encouraging suggestions with task

“Using the report that has been provided by the analysts, we would like to hear what you
“think about the sales not meeting the quotas. More importantly we would like to give you
the opportunity to offer any advice or thoughts on how to try to get the numbers back on
track.”

Provide the Sales Quota sheet (asking for ideas).
“Please take the next 3 minutes to offer suggestions about how to get the numbers back
on track.”
(This is the brief intervention-relevant task for the encouraging suggestions condition)

Condition H – Encouraging suggestions without task
“Using the report that has been provided by the analysts, we would like to hear what you
think about the sales not meeting the quotas. More importantly we would like to give you
the opportunity to offer any advice or thoughts on how to try to get the numbers back on
track.”
(Experimenters: Pause For 10 Seconds To See If They Say Something.
If Not, Move On To Survey)

ALL CONDITIONS:
Pilot Study 2 Tasks:

Task 1 – Immersion – These tasks are intended just to get participants into acting as
if they are part of the company and in the role of assistant manager. They are for
immersion purposes only.
Directions: Since your promotion to assistant manager 3 months ago, your
responsibilities have broadened and you are the supervisor of many customer service
(CS) employees. One particular employee, Bob Jones has given you particular trouble.
Bob has worked in CS on the first shift for the past 9 months. After his 6 month trial
period, required of all employees, Bob received a “Needs improvement” score on his
performance review. Over the past three months, Bob has been late on average twice a
week. You have received complaints that he has been rude to the customers and he has
neglected duties such as restocking the computer accessories part of the store. For the
past week, Bob has not even shown up for one shift. You are asked by the company to
write Bob a letter in response to his behavior. Please take the next 10 minutes to write
this letter. (all conditions are asked to do this immersion task)

**Sales Projections Form (Condition E only is asked to do this immersion task)**

Note: The following task was formatted as a form but was condensed here for parsimony.

Directions: Please take the next 3 minutes fill in the following form on how the store has performed over the past month.

1. How much is the store projected to make during week 4 of this month?
2. What is the stores’ goal each week?
3. Has the store reached its goal during each week of this month?
4. Which week has been the best for the month?
5. Which products are selling well?
6. Which products are not selling well?
7. Which products are competitors pushing?

**Sales Quota Sheet (Condition G is asked to do this immersion task)**

Directions: Please take the next 3 minutes to summarize how the store has performed over the past month.

**Task 2 - In-role performance task**

Directions: One of your employees has approached you with an issue. A customer is looking for a SONY Bravia 46” Flat Panel TV. Normally, your store carries this product but it is currently out of stock. Please take the next few minutes to describe how you would address this situation.

**Task 3 - Extra-role performance task**

Directions: Electronics Warehouse is opening a new store in Wilmington. The organization is currently looking for applicants for assistant manager positions in the new division. The organization has asked you to reach out to a friend to recommend that he or she apply for the job. The position will be a full time, second shift position. The position will have the same responsibilities that you currently have. Please take the next 10 minutes to write your friend a letter.
Appendix E

**Pilot Study 2 Survey Items**

**Perceived Organizational Support**
1. Electronics Warehouse cares about my opinions.
2. Electronics Warehouse really cares about my well being.
3. Electronics Warehouse values my contributions.
4. Electronics Warehouse is willing to help me if I need a special favor.
5. Electronics Warehouse would forgive an honest mistake on my part.
6. Electronics Warehouse shows little concern for me.

**Affective Commitment**
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career at Electronics Warehouse.
2. I do not feel like “part of the family” at Electronics Warehouse.
3. I do not feel “emotionally attached” to Electronics Warehouse.
4. Electronics Warehouse has a great deal of personal meaning to me.
5. I really feel as though Electronics Warehouse’s problems are my own.
6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to Electronics Warehouse.

**Manipulation Check – Provision of Information**
1. Electronics Warehouse was completely candid and frank with me
2. I receive timely communication from Electronics Warehouse about the sales projections of my store.
3. Electronics Warehouse helps me do my job by providing me with up to date information about how my store is performing.
4. Electronics Warehouse gives me specific information about why the store is not performing well.
5. I receive information about my store’s performance from Electronics Warehouse.
6. Electronics Warehouse provided you with timely information about the sales report and its implications.

**Manipulation Check – Encouraging Suggestions**
1. Electronics Warehouse encourages my suggestions on how to get my store back on track.
2. Electronics Warehouse wants to hear what I think about how the store is doing.
3. Electronics Warehouse considered your viewpoint.
4. Electronics Warehouse values my suggestions on how to get the numbers back on track.
5. Electronics Warehouse gave me an opportunity to express my opinions.
6. Electronics Warehouse asked for ideas on what you could do to improve the store’s performance.
7. Electronics Warehouse asks for suggestions on how to improve the company
Appendix F
Present Study Interventions

Intervention Conditions:

Condition I – Provision of information
“Upon much deliberation, here's the explanation for how we decided to distribute the bonuses. We decided to give bonuses to the top performers based on last year's performance. Our reasoning was that these employees are most deserving of the bonuses because they have shown dedication to the company through their performance. We felt that this was the best way to distribute the bonuses because we wanted to reward our top employees. We wanted to convey this to you before the bonuses are distributed so that you were aware of our justifications and were not surprised by the decision.

Condition J – Encouraging suggestions (Provide lined paper).
“We have not yet decided how we are going to distribute the bonuses. We greatly value input about ways to distribute the bonuses and would like to open the floor to employee suggestions. Please feel free to write down and turn in any suggestions that you think would be helpful in our decision making process about how to distribute bonuses.”

Condition K – Control group
“We at Electronics Warehouse will decide who gets the bonuses. Employee input will not be considered for this decision.”

Present Study Tasks

Immersion Task
“As you can see, we’ve asked our analysts to provide information on why the projections are not meeting the quota for this week. They’ve provided some analysis of the numbers and some insights as to why the store is projected to fall short of the quotas this week. They also mentioned that in this struggling economy, is it not surprising that sales are not as strong as we would like. We wanted to give you this information right away, hopefully this information will be helpful to you in trying to get back on track with meeting the sales quota as quickly as possible”.

Sales Projection Form Questions

1. How much is the store projected to make during week 4 of this month?
2. What is the stores’ goal each week? ______________
3. Has the store reached its goal during each week of this month? ________________
4. Which week has been the best for the month? ______________
5. Which products are selling well?
6. Which products are not selling well?
7. Which products are competitors pushing?
Weekly Sales Report Projections

Note: Numbers reported are in thousands

Analyst comments:
- Computers, peripherals and accessories are selling at a good rate, either stable or increasing.
- Television and accessory sales have been steadily declining.
- Video games, consoles and accessories have been increasing in sales.
- DVDs/Music and Players are relatively stable.
- Competitors are pushing TV sales
- Competitors using HD technology and digital cable as selling points for flat panel TVs.
- Digital converter boxes are not selling as rapidly as anticipated.
Job Recommendation Letter Task (Extra-role/OCB)

Provide the scenario for letter to friend.

Electronics Warehouse is opening a new store in Wilmington. The organization is currently looking for applicants for assistant manager positions in the new division. The organization has asked you to reach out to a friend to recommend that he or she apply for the job. The position will be a full time, second shift position. The position will have the same responsibilities that you currently have. Please take the next 10 minutes to write your friend a letter.

After completing the task:
“Thank you for dealing with this situation. We would now like to ask you to handle an employee issue as you would on the job. Please take ten minutes to read the following scenario and complete the task.”

Customer Service Task - (In-role performance)

Provide the scenario for “customer service”.

One of your employees has approached you with an issue. A customer is looking for a SONY Bravia 46” Flat Panel TV. Normally, your store carries this product but it is currently out of stock. Please take the next few minutes to describe how you would address this situation.

After completing the task: (Hand employee Survey 2).
“Thank you for completing the tasks.”
Appendix G

Present Study Survey Items

Manipulation Check and Justice Measures

Manipulation Check – Provision of Information
1. Electronics Warehouse was completely candid and frank with me. (Removed to improve reliability).
2. I received timely communication from Electronics Warehouse about how bonuses will be distributed.
3. Electronics Warehouse helped me by providing me with up to date information about how bonuses will be distributed.
4. Electronics Warehouse gave me specific information about how they have decided to give out bonuses this year.
5. Electronics Warehouse provided me with timely information about this year’s bonuses.
6. Electronics Warehouse asked for suggestions on how to improve the bonus procedures.

Manipulation Check – Encouraging Suggestions
1. Electronics Warehouse encouraged my suggestions on how to give out bonuses this year.
2. Electronics Warehouse wanted to hear what I think about how to give out bonuses this year.
3. Electronics Warehouse considered your viewpoint.
4. Electronics Warehouse valued my suggestions on how to decide who receives bonuses this year.
5. Electronics Warehouse gave me an opportunity to express my opinions.

Procedural Justice
1. Electronics Warehouse decides bonuses based on accurate information.
2. My interactions with Electronics Warehouse have been free of bias.
3. The procedures at Electronics Warehouse have been applied consistently.
4. I have had influence over the outcomes arrived at by the procedures at Electronics Warehouse.
5. I have been able to express my views and feelings during my time at Electronics Warehouse.
6. The procedures at Electronics Warehouse have upheld ethical and moral standards.

Informational Justice
1. Electronics Warehouse’s explanations regarding procedures were reasonable.
2. Electronics Warehouse has been candid in communications with me.
3. Electronics Warehouse has communicated details in a timely manner.
4. Electronics Warehouse has thoroughly explained what I need to do.
5. Electronics Warehouse has seemed to tailor communication to my specific needs.

Manipulation Check – Discretionary Behavior – Encouraging Suggestions
1. Electronics Warehouse did not have to ask for my input on how to distribute bonuses.
2. Electronics Warehouse was not forced into asking for my input on how to distribute bonuses.
3. Electronics Warehouse had the freedom to decide whether to ask for my input on how to distribute bonuses.

Manipulation Check – Discretionary Behavior – Provision of Information
1. Electronics Warehouse did not have to provide me with information about how bonuses were to be distributed.
2. Electronics Warehouse was not forced into providing me with information about how bonuses were to be distributed.
3. Electronics Warehouse had the freedom to decide whether to provide me with information about how bonuses were to be distributed.

Intrinsic Motivation Scales (to serve as an indication of participant interest/motivation for the experiment)

Interest/Enjoyment
1. I enjoyed doing this experiment very much.
2. This experiment did not hold my attention at all.
3. This experiment was fun to do.
4. I thought this was a boring experiment.

Value/Usefulness
1. I would be willing to do this again because it has some value to me.
2. I think this is an important experiment.
3. I believe this experiment could be of some value to me.

Perceived Competence
1. I was pretty skilled at this experiment.
2. I think I did pretty well at this experiment, compared to other students.
3. This was an experiment that I couldn’t do very well.
4. I am satisfied with my performance at this experiment.

Effort/Importance
1. It was important to me to do well at this experiment.
2. I put a lot of effort into this.
3. I didn’t put much energy into this.
4. I didn’t try very hard to do well at this experiment.

Pressure/Tension
1. I was very relaxed in doing this.
2. I was anxious while working on this experiment.

Main Study Variables

Perceived Organizational Support
1. Electronics Warehouse cares about my opinions.
2. Electronics Warehouse really cares about my well being.
3. Electronics Warehouse values my contributions.
4. Electronics Warehouse is willing to help me if I need a special favor.
5. Electronics Warehouse would forgive an honest mistake on my part.
6. Electronics Warehouse shows little concern for me.

Affective Commitment
1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career at Electronics Warehouse.
2. I do not feel like “part of the family” at Electronics Warehouse.
3. I do not feel “emotionally attached” to Electronics Warehouse.
4. Electronics Warehouse has a great deal of personal meaning to me.
5. I really feel as though Electronics Warehouse’s problems are my own.
6. I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to Electronics Warehouse.

Overall Justice
1. Overall, I’m treated fairly by Electronics Warehouse.
2. In general, I can count on Electronics Warehouse to be fair.
3. For the most part, Electronics Warehouse treats its employees fairly.
4. In general, the treatment I receive around here is fair.
5. Most of the people who work here would say they are often treated unfairly.
6. Usually, the way things work at Electronics Warehouse are not fair.

Withdrawal Behaviors
1. In my job at Electronics Warehouse, I would make excuses to get out of work.
2. In my job at Electronics Warehouse, I would call in sick even if I was not sick.
3. In my job at Electronics Warehouse, I would use equipment for personal purposes without permission.
4. In my job at Electronics Warehouse, I would do my best to not miss any workdays.
5. In my job at Electronics Warehouse, I would arrive on time each day.

Turnover Intentions
1. It is likely that I would actively look for a new job in the next year.
2. I would probably look for a new job in the next year.
3. If I got another job offer, I would take it.

Continuance Commitment
1. I am not afraid of what might happen if I quit my job at Electronics Warehouse without having another one lined up.
2. One of the major reasons I continue to work for Electronics Warehouse is that leaving would require considerable personal sacrifice – another organization may not match the overall benefits I have here.
3. It would be very hard for me to leave Electronics Warehouse right now, even if I wanted to.
4. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave Electronics Warehouse now.
5. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving Electronics Warehouse.
6. One of the few serious consequences of leaving Electronics Warehouse would be the scarcity of available alternatives.
7. It wouldn’t be too costly for me to leave Electronics Warehouse now.
8. Right now, staying with Electronics Warehouse is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
Task Ratings

Customer Service Issue (In-role performance task)
1. The employees' response makes Electronics Warehouse look good.
2. Based on this answer, I would recommend Electronics Warehouse to a friend.
3. Based on this answer, I would ask this employee for help in the future.
4. If I were this customer, I would be satisfied with this response.
5. The solutions offered by the employee are realistic.
6. Overall, the employees' response to the problem was clear.
7. Overall, the language the employee used to describe their solution was coherent.

Letter Task (Extra-role performance task/ OCB)
1. The letter writer sounds happy to promote the company.
2. The letter was well written.
3. The letter praised the company.
4. The letter praised the position.
5. The letter expressed optimism for the job recommendation.
6. The letter was persuasive.
7. If I read this letter, I would want to apply for this job.