

RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP AND THE TIGHTROPE OF MERIT AND EQUALITY

By

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation explores the complexities of responsible leadership (RL) and managers' sense of responsibility (SOR) in the context of structural power. Existing literature on structural power, SOR, justice, and responsible leadership, focuses on the powerful's responsibility to generate inclusivity and solidarity by enforcing norms of equal respect and participation within their teams, without fully accounting for multiple stakeholders and contradictory justice norms. This dissertation proposes a bipartite framework that contrasts managers' upward-facing SOR to institutional goals with their downward-facing SOR to care for lower-power others. I qualify the solidarity-enhancing perspective of structural power and responsibility by highlighting how structural power comes with responsibilities that are *both* equality-enhancing *and* inequality-enhancing. Unlike those without power, I suggest that powerholders have merit-based obligations (MBO) to regulate collective behavior by granting justice-relevant privileges (e.g., greater pay, voice, and respect) that favor high-performers who conform with organizational goals and punish those who do not. This responsibility leads those with power to perceive *larger discrepancies* between those who "fit" and "do not fit" with collective goals compared to lower-ranking others. However, these collective merit-based responsibilities contrast with relational norms of friendship and justice norms of equal voice, dignity, and consideration. Finally, I consider how employees' cooperativeness and competitiveness influence the perceived legitimacy and justice of exacerbated merit-based norms. This dissertation offers a descriptive theory of responsible leadership that underscores the paradoxical nature of responsibility and the constructed pro-social relevance of merit-based inequalities at work.

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To those who spend their lives looking after the underprivileged;
for there is no higher cause.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“Most people today also believe they live in free societies (indeed, they often insist that, politically at least, this is what is most important about their societies), but the freedoms which form the moral basis of a nation like the United States are, largely, *formal* freedoms. American citizens have the right to travel wherever they like - provided, of course, they have the money for transport and accommodation. They are free from ever having to obey the arbitrary orders of superiors - unless, of course, they have to get a job. In this sense, it is almost possible to say the Wendat had play chiefs and real freedoms, while most of today have to make do with real chiefs and play freedoms....

Perhaps this is what a state actually is: a combination of exceptional violence and the creation of a complex social machine, all ostensibly devoted to acts of care and devotion.

There is obviously a paradox here. Caring labour is in a way the very opposite of mechanical labour: it is about recognizing and understanding the unique qualities, needs and peculiarities of the cared-for... If those institutions... really do have any common features, one must certainly be a tendency to displace this caring impulse onto abstractions... This process is what made it possible for the whole arrangement to be imagined, simultaneously, as a family and as a machine, in which ... most of human activity was directed upwards, either towards tending rulers (living and dead) or assisting them with their own task of feeding and caring for their gods.” — David Graeber & David Wengrow, *The Dawn of Everything: A New History of Humanity*

The present intellectual work is the accumulation of years of thirst to understand the anti-egalitarian morality that justifies the lack of care that we see in so many organizations. However,

what I found in my research was far more complex than I imagined and this scholarship shined a light on the naivete of my younger self. What was once a simple resolution toward care now coalesced into a complex web of moral issues. What, after all, is legitimate? Of course as I am not the first to have such questions and this dissertation owes acknowledgment to more than a few great thinkers who are far wiser than myself; not the least of whom are Jean Jacques Rousseau and Max Weber. These scholars, philosophers, sociologists, and many others provided the intellectual cud that was chewed and molded into the present theory of power, responsibility, and justification for un-care.

Certainly, even greater acknowledgment is given to those who loved me unceasingly during this most difficult time in my life. To my wife, Cherish Marie Sarmiento Ph.D., you are my everything. No matter how hard the journey, no matter the rain, hail, or snow, I want to cross every bridge in life together. I could not have crossed this bridge without you, and we crossed it together. Thank you for crossing this bridge with me. To the many more great bridges that you, me, and our four-legged children will cross together in the future. With a love like ours, anything is possible.

To my Mother, Hazel Annabelle Fisher, whose love is so vast that it fills the hearts of all she cares for. You taught me what goodness looks like. You taught me that it is possible to love all unconditionally. You inspire me to love unceasingly, and the love I have to give is large and rich because of you. Thank you. Endlessly.

Lastly, but certainly not least, to that lover of wisdom who has titillated my mind with years of intellectual musings. So high on this hill we hath grown together; so high we hath grown. So much of the man I am today is because of you: my life, my compassion, my *philosophia*, and this dissertation. To your suffering and to your love. To your pride and to your

wisdom. I have not known and may not know again a friendship that you so graciously share with me. You are my muse as I am yours. “He accepted me for who I am. And that, I have learned, is friendship” (Geordi La Forge to Data in *Star Trek the Next Generation*, Season 5 Episode 24, “The Next Phase”).

*“But it is the same with man as with the tree. The more he seeketh to rise
into the height and light, the more vigorously do his roots struggle
earthward, downward, into the dark and deep”*

(Nietzsche, *Thus Spake Zarathustra*, Chapter 8: The Tree on the Hill)

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INTRODUCTION

Responsible leaders must fulfill their obligations to multiple stakeholders to sustain the legitimacy of their organization (Drori & Honig, 2013; Suchman, 1995; Pless, Maak, & Waldman, 2012). However, though the normative literature on responsible leadership has long recognized a wide variety of stakeholder issues (Waldman & Balvin, 2014) and the paradoxical nature of responsibility (Zhang, Waldman, Han, & Li, 2015), the literature on structural power and sense of responsibility (SOR) has been limited by a unidirectional perspective focused on powerholders' responsibility to the powerless (Scholl et al., 2022, p. 88; Tost, 2015; Tost, Wade-Benzoni, & Johnson, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019). Positions of structural power involves objective control over valued resources that others are dependent upon (Tost, 2015; Emerson, 1962). The consensus in the structural-power-and-responsibility literature is that powerholders are aware of this dependence (Tost, 2015) and that structural power induces a sense of responsibility to be more generous (Tost, Wade-Benzoni, & Johnson, 2015), inclusive of others (De Wit, Scheepers, Ellemers, Sassenberg, & Scholl, 2017) and to promote solidarity and unity with followers (Tost & Johnson, 2019). Pushing against the literature on the corrupting effect of psychological power (i.e., one's sense of control over the outcomes, or behaviors of others, Anderson, John, & Keltner 2012), the nascent research on structural power focuses on *sense of responsibility* as a solidarity-enhancing and relational aspects of power (Scholl et al., 2022) without considering the myriad stakeholders and contradictory responsibilities that leaders must attend to (Zhang, Waldman, Han, & Li, 2015).

Indeed, the relational approach to power and leadership is becoming increasingly prevalent and scholars often punctuate the *equality-enhancing* aspects of responsible leadership. Maak and Pless (2006, p. 104) write that a "responsible leader's core task is to *weave a web of*

inclusion where the leader engages himself among equals” with all stakeholders (italics in original). Indeed, research shows that friendship and solidarity involve norms of equality (Morgan & Sawyer, 1967; Benton, 1971; Greenberg, 1983). When powerful leaders treat others as equals, it fosters social and emotional solidarity (Lawler & Yoon, 1996; Goulder, 1960; Cook & Emerson, 1978), and trusting leader-follower relationships (Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Colquitt, Baer, Long, & Halvorsen-Ganepola, 2014). Taking this perspective, micro-theories of responsible leadership focus on concepts like shared leadership (Pierce & Conger, 2002), servant leadership (Patterson, 2003), and authentic leadership (Luthans & Avolio, 2003).

Nonetheless, the literature on responsibility in organizations has not given full attention to the *inequality-enhancing* responsibilities of power. However, social hierarchies of rewards, punishments, and respect are all common tools used to regulate behavior in social groups because hierarchies help members align themselves with behaviors of model merit-earning behaviors of high-ranking members (Henrich & Gil-White, 2001) Further, competitive merit-based systems are viewed as essential for retaining high performers (Gupta & Shaw, 2014) and improving collective performance (Huselid, 1995; Lepack & Snell, 1999). Therefore, a responsible manager could feel an exacerbated sense of obligation to enforce merit norms (a.k.a, merit-based obligation, MBO) to promote institutional goals.

The justice literature conveys that responsible behavior involves enacting justice norms characterized by equal consideration such that all members are granted equal respect, voice, and dignity (Colquitt, 2001) even if they receive unequal outcomes (Adams, 1965). Nonetheless, managers may use more than merit pay and bonuses to motivate behavior in their teams. “business reality knows numerous cases of humiliation, and fierce competition or winner-take-all cultures that leave practically no room for practiced solidarity” (Pless & Maak, 2004, p. 132). In

general, humans use a wide variety of tactics to influence tactics that regulate social behavior. This includes signals of approval via giving more praise, reciprocity, opportunity, and pay as well as signals of disapproval and punishment. This includes subtle emotional displays such as disappointment, or aggression, as well as less subtle social behaviors such as non-reciprocity, ostracism, and humiliation. Similarly, managers may feel a responsibility to give more credence to the voice, appeals, and inputs of high-performers than they do to those of low-performers. Thus, merit-based obligations (MBO) may involve behaviors that go beyond distributive justice (i.e., DJ-MBO) and spill over into merit-based norms of procedural justice (PJ-MBO) and interpersonal treatment (IJ-MBO) as well.

However, these obligations contrast with norms of solidarity and inclusivity. Pless and Maak (2004) emphasize how RLs create a culture of equal consideration and recognition, they also write that a responsible leader has an institutional responsibility to be “a guardian of values, a stronghold to protect personal and professional integrity, and... [to] protecting and preserving what one is entrusted with” (Pless & Maak, 2006, p. 108). However, enforcing and protecting organizational and professional values *is an inherently exclusive process*. For example, members can earn rank and merit by engaging in professional behavior. However, what counts as “professional” is culturally dependent and the concept of professionalism has been widely criticized for being exclusive of outside cultures (see, Goodridge, 2021). For minority groups, conforming to professional standards means aligning their hairstyles, vocal tone, language, and even food scents to conform with the majority (Ferguson & Dougherty, 2022). Nonetheless, a manager’s responsibility to enforce professional norms may lead them to form more *discriminate* perceptions (i.e., larger distances) between those who “fit” and “do not fit” with organizational

goals (Overbeck & Park, 2006) - dividing organizational members into high- and low-ranks. These hierarchy-enhancing responsibilities are the overarching theme of this work.

This dissertation informs “dark sides” of responsible leadership by highlighting how power comes with responsibilities that reduce their ability to engage with others as equals. I critique the relational perspective of structural power and responsibility by highlighting how structural power comes with responsibilities that are *both* equality-reducing *and* inequality-enhancing. Most managers are in a positions of “middle power” involving obligations to disparate stakeholders – both upward and downward in the hierarchy (Anichich & Hirsh, 2017; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). I propose a bipartite framework that contrasts managers’ responsibilities to each of these parties. In line with prior literature, power comes with *downward-facing* responsibilities to care for powerless others. Further, it also comes with *upward-facing* responsibilities to fulfill obligations for some ‘greater’ collective cause or individual authority. Because modern bureaucracies are built upon structures of appointed leadership, responsible leaders may place their role as guardians of the institution’s norms, goals, and values as being greater than their responsibility to sustain friendly norms of equality and inclusivity (Weber, 1947). Structural power could induce an obligation to use one’s resources to accomplish ‘collective’ goals benefiting the organization, shareholders, customers, their family, their team, and society (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003; Friedman & Miles, 2002, 2006). However, these concerns for ‘greater goods’ or authorities often act as justifications for anti-social behavior at the relational level (Amit & Greene, 2012; Côté, Piff, & Willer, 2012; Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2013).

I draw on the organizational justice and legitimacy literature to highlight how upward-facing institutional responsibilities involve different distributional obligations than do

downward-facing relational responsibilities. Legitimacy involves “a psychological property of an authority, institution, or social arrangement that leads those connected to it to believe that it is appropriate, proper, and just.” (Tyler, 2006, p. 375). The organizational justice literature has intensively studied what makes some resource allocations more legitimate than others. On the one hand, the justice literature suggests that procedural justice, interpersonal respect, and relevant information should be distributed equally among members. Thus, some justice theories staunchly note the importance of equality of consideration in terms of procedural and interpersonal justice (Greenberg, 2010; Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975).

However, productively allocating resources involves market dynamics to identify individuals who can (and cannot) use them most effectively, and *not* treating all members as equals. The foundational premise of Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) is that individuals have natural variation in their inputs (i.e., skills, abilities, effort, productivity) and that outputs should reflect these inequalities of inputs. However, managers who feel responsible for collective goals may feel they *must*, therefore, treat members with merit-based *inequality* during resource allocations – including granting greater voice and more favorable interpersonal treatment to high performers compared to lower performers. Notably, however, some suggest that the meritocratic argument that favors unequal outcomes acts as a “hierarchy legitimating myth” that justifies maintaining social inequalities among groups (Ho, Sidanius, Pratto et al., 2012).

The contributions of this dissertation are two-fold. First, is to develop a descriptive theory of responsible leadership predicting how individuals feel they *ought* to behave when different stakeholder responsibilities are salient. Normative theories of leadership responsibility (e.g., Maak & Pless, 2006; Pless, Maak, & Stahl, 2011; Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019) should emphasize the necessity of ethics in responsibility. However, *a sense of responsibility* is ethically

neutral and captures one's sense of obligation to meet the unique needs of different stakeholders. Sense of responsibility only contains ethical content to the degree that the actor views their obligations as having pro-social relevance. This is critical for understanding how managers will respond when enacting the prescriptions of the responsible leadership literature.

Secondly, I build upon prior works by developing theory and methodology regarding *sense of responsibility* to multiple stakeholders. Importantly, these contrasting responsibilities *are not held by those without structural power* because the powerless do not have resource allocation or norm enforcement responsibilities. This is relevant to conversations about the potentially metamorphic or 'corrupting' effect that power can have on even the most responsible leaders. In contrast to prior works (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019), my work identifies how positions of structural power involve sustaining legitimacy across multiple stakeholders leading and can require norms of both equality and inequality. That is, I reemphasize that research must consider "*to whom,*" "*for what,*" and "*by what standard?*" one is responsible if they want to predict individual behavior (Overbeck & Park, 2006).

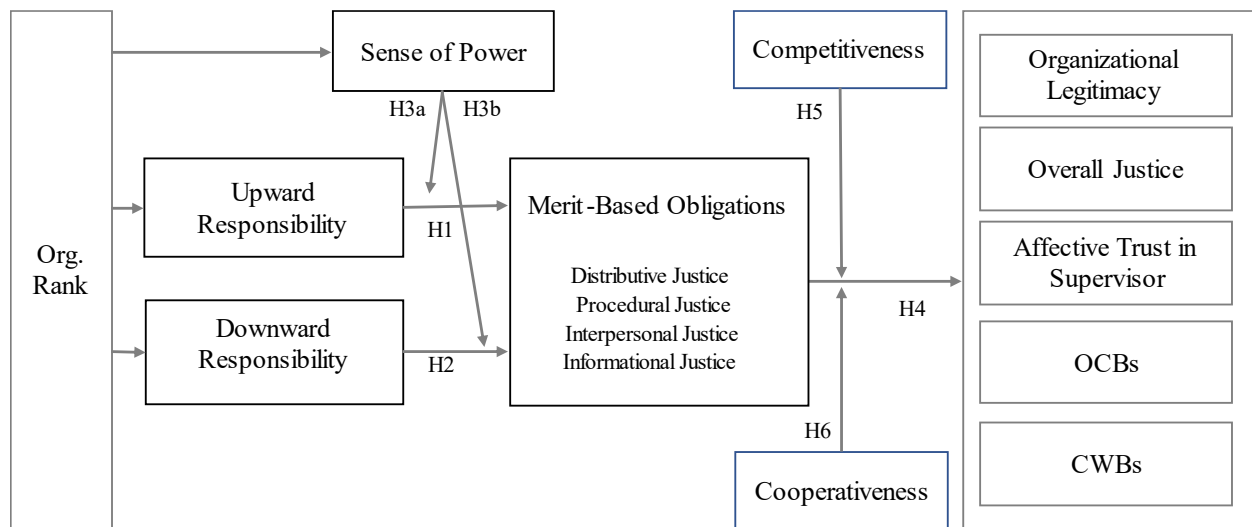
Lastly, I also consider two contingency factors – an interpersonal tight-rope - that may influence how employees respond to managers' MBOs. One underlying assumption of this theory is that a manager's orientation toward equality represents a safe path toward gaining legitimacy within their immediate team of subordinate members. This is because social equality norms promote friendship, solidarity, and group cohesion (Deutsch, 1975, 2011). However, employees' levels of cooperativeness and competitiveness (Deutsch, 1949; Deutsch, 2011) could impact their sense of organizational legitimacy regarding equity and equality norms. Thus, equity or equality norms are not inherently just to all people and their legitimacy may be contingent

upon other individual factors (Adams, 1965; Miller, 1992; Wagstaff, 1994; Henrich, 2020; Boehm, 1999).

Individuals' competitiveness tends to lead them to see situations as zero-sum and to see their fates as independent from others (Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976b, 1976b; Leventhal et al, 1980). Thus, the more competitive an individual is, the more they may prefer equity norms and dislike equality norms. In contrast, cooperativeness involves seeing one's goals and fates as aligned with those of others. Thus, the more cooperative an individual is, the more they may prefer equality norms and respond poorly to conflict-enhancing equity norms. This is important because it considers how both managers' characteristics (obligations toward merit-based equity and/or equality) interact with subordinate characteristics (competitiveness and cooperativeness) to influence the subordinate's sense of general legitimacy at work. In this way, leaders may again walk an interpersonal tightrope between maintaining solidarity and equality among members, while also facing challenges from individuals who see equality as an unjust hindrance to their social ascension.

Figure 2 depicts the theoretical process model that I lay out in the following sections. This model predicts how an employee's overall sense of organizational legitimacy is impacted by managers' sense of responsibility/obligation to merit norms (merit-based obligations, MBO). In the following section, I briefly describe my theoretical model and other factors that are included in this dissertation. Then I review the literature on Responsible leadership, and the power and sense of responsibility literature.

Figure 1 - Proposed Theoretical Model



RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP, EQUALITY, AND SOLIDARITY

There is a common colloquial understanding that becoming “the manager” involves professional expectations that changes how one relates to others. This is because being in a position of structural power means that one must allocate resources unequally to enforce norms and to forward instrumental goals. However, this may mean that they can no longer treat their co-workers as equals. For example, Lipman (2018) writes in Forbes magazine that:

“The move to new manager may well be one of the hardest transitions in business. It involves new responsibilities, new ways of relating to your co-workers, new ways of looking at the world... If you happen to be promoted to manager of a team you'd been a member of, friends may not be friends in quite the same way they were. (Or at least they won't be once the first serious corrective action needs to be taken.)”

Thus, there seems to be something unique about positions of structural power that can have a metamorphic effect on people (Kipnis, 1972). I suggest that this stems from structural powerholders' responsibility to sustain multiple stakeholder relationships. Social relationships – with one's organization or one's followers – differ in the degree that they are transactional or reciprocal (Molm, Peterson, & Takahashi, 1999). Powerholders have the responsibility to meet their transactional obligations to external stakeholders, to sustain their generalized (and relatively equal) relationships with their in-group.

Responsible Leadership and a Culture of Equal Consideration

Multi-stakeholder issues have not been addressed in the power and *sense of responsibility* literature. However, theoretical, and qualitative work on Responsible Leadership (RL) has been widely concerned with this topic. In their work, Pless, Maak, Waldman and colleagues (2012) emphasize the macro-organizational concerns involving the intersection between competing

macro-organizational stakeholders such as shareholders, customers, suppliers, employees and the like. Indeed, Waldman, Siegel, and Stahl, (2020) suggest that RL is “an orientation or mindset taken by people in executive level positions toward meeting the needs of a firm’s stakeholder(s)” (p. 5). In research on business ethics, major ethical issues such as those at Enron, WorldCom, Nike and many others are used to bolster the importance of responsible and ethical leadership. Pless & Maak, (2006, p. 99), write that organizational leaders “lead in a business environment, which undergoes a general crisis of legitimacy...and trust, which has been lost over the years of environmental disasters... accounting scandals (e.g. Enron, WorldCom, Parmalat), and ethical misconduct in various shapes and forms (e.g. Nike, Martha Stewart).” Nonetheless, general attitudes regarding the legitimacy of organizations in society may not only be determined by macro crises and the legality of behavior. Organizational legitimacy also stems from individual treatment and compensation in their day-to-day experiences at work (Tyler, 1997).

RL research has also fallen under the domains of ethical, shared, and servant leadership (Lemoine, Hartnell, & Leroy, 2019). From the perspective of these literatures, ethical and responsible leaders lead with an ethic of care for others and share their power with lower-ranking members. For example, the core factors of ethical leadership are leaders' other orientations, fair use of punishments, power sharing, providing ethical guidance, clarifying roles, and modeling integrity (Kalshoven, Den Harton, & De Hoogh, 2011). Knights & O’Leary, (2006, p. 133) write that “the moral project is one of responsibility and the heart of ethics rests in the face-to-face interaction with the Other... [the relationship] is non-instrumental and... it is about an inexhaustive care for the Other.” Responsible and ethical leadership both emphasize a relational and anti-hierarchical approach to leadership (Pless & Maak, 2004; Kalshoven, Den Harton, & De Hoogh, 2011). Some even suggest that shared leadership is “the key” to responsible leadership

(Pearce, Wassenaar, & Manz, 2014). These highly inclusive practices are excellent normative goals in organizations. However, leaders faced with diverse followers – both high- and low-performers - may have a responsibility to reduce the influence of deviant or potentially incompetent followers.

Management comes with an array of tradeoffs and paradoxical leadership behaviors (Zhang, Waldman, Han, & Li, 2015) that can be reconciled in practice. (Cameron, 2012). In their study, Voegtlin, Frisch, Walther, & Schwab, (2020) suggest that managers have three roles within and outside of their organization – expert, facilitator, and citizens. For the purpose of identifying conflicting norms within the organization, I focus on managers’ roles as an expert and facilitator. Voegtlin et al., (2020) suggest that managers’ role as an expert involves managers’ upward responsibilities to shareholders, investors, supervisors, and customers. The expert role involves instrumental goals such as structuring work, defining responsibilities, controlling work processes, encouraging compliance with deadlines and rules, and planning for the future (p., 414). Equally, employees are the primary stakeholders in managers’ role as facilitators who motivate employees, reduce conflict, and ensure the wellbeing and satisfaction of employees. I refer to these as downward-facing relational responsibilities. Vogtle and colleagues operationalized responsible leadership in terms of leaders’ ability to balance multiple roles simultaneously.

In this section, I wanted to convey that the responsible leadership literature is critically concerned with multi-stakeholder issues and how they can be reconciled. In general, the theoretical and prescriptive nature of the RL literature focuses on the inclusive nature (Pless & Maak, 2004), rather than the exclusive nature of responsible leadership. This dissertation highlights how *power* and *responsibility* coalesce into a tightrope of hierarchy-enhancing and

hierarchy-reducing responsibilities. To position my work within the literature on power, I now review the unidirectional perspective of the *power-and-sense-of-responsibility* literature.

Ultimately, I aim to emphasize how both the responsible leadership and the power-and-sense-of-responsibility literature provide an optimistic perspective regarding the relationship between sense of responsibility and inclusive leadership.

Structural Power and Unidirectional Sense of Responsibility

The nascent literature on outcomes of *structural power* and *sense of responsibility* was born to shift the consensus in the power literature away from viewing power as inherently freeing and anti-social (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Cook & Yamagishi, 1983). To contextualize my work within the power literature, I provide a brief review of the relevant psychological power literature here before diving into the nascent literature on power and sense of responsibility.

Psychological Power, Independence, and Irresponsibility. Understanding how leaders respond to power is critical for understanding how they will enact their responsibilities. Feeling a *sense of power* involves the salient perception of one's "ability to control the outcomes, experiences, or behaviors of others" (Tost, 2015, p. 30; Anderson, John, & Keltner 2012). Those who experience a sense of power feel that they "get to make the decisions" and can "get others to do what [they] say" (Anderson, John, & Keltner, 2012). The consensus in the *sense of power* literature is that sense of power is a freeing force that directs one's attention toward goal-relevant information and away from goal-irrelevant information (Guinote, 2007a, 2007b). Sense of power facilitates action (Galinsky, Gruenfeld, & Magee, 2003) toward both anti-social (Kipnis, 1972; Magee & Galinsky, 2008) and prosocial responsibilities (DeCelles, DeRue, Margolis, & Ceranic, 2012; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Tost, Wade-Benzoni, & Johnson, 2015).

Because power involves asymmetrical dependencies, it allows the opportunity for those with power to be more distant from, and less attentive to the goals of others (Magee & Smith, 2013). Those with power can act with more discretion than – and rely less on the approval of – power others. A sense of power involves a sense of psychological distance from lower-power colleagues (Magee & Smith, 2013; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003) and reduces their motivation to attend to lower-power others (De Dreu & Van Kleef, 2004). From a sense of power, people are less likely to take the perspective of others (Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006) and are less attentive and empathetic to the emotional displays of others (Wolfin, Corneille, Yzerbyt, & Förster, 2011). They engage in more stereotyping (Fiske, 1993; Georgeson & Harris, 1998, 2000; Goodwin, Gubin, Fiske, & Yzerbyt, 2000), moral hypocrisy (Lammers, Stapel, & Galinsky, 2010), objectification and dehumanization of others (Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008; Gwinn, Judd, & Park, 2013; Fiske, 1993), among other self-serving behaviors (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Thus, those with a sense of power are more likely to “turn a blind eye to the suffering of others” (Van Kleef, Oveis, Van Der Löwe, LuoKogan, Goetz, & Keltner, 2008). In conjunction, sense of power and psychological distance can lead those who feel powerful tend to be more demeaning in their “playful” teases with others (Keltner, Young, Herey, Oemig, & Monarch, 1998).

Responsible leaders must attend cautiously to the needs of stakeholders. However, a sense of power (i.e., feeling in control) can increase overconfidence during goal pursuit (Fast, Sivanathan, Mayer, & Galinsky, 2012; Sivanathan & Galinsky, 2007). Thus, those who feel powerful seek less input and tend to discount the advice of others (See, Morrison, Rothman, & Soll, 2011). Those who feel powerful tend to be less interested in understanding the goals of others – using more leading rather than diagnostic questions in their interactions with others (De

Dreu & Van Kleef, 2004). In conversation, they tend to seek out information that confirms, rather than disconfirms, their pre-conceptions (Copeland, 1994). This can lead powerful individuals to have more inaccurate views of lower ranks (Dannals, Reit, & Miller, 2020) – tending to see the opposing views as more radical or extreme than they are (Keltner & Robinson, 1997).

Structural Power and Sense of Responsibility. However, others criticize work on psychological power for being conducted in laboratory contexts rather than with real positions of power (Tost, 2015). Having structural power involves taking a stake in networks of material interdependence (Tost, 2015; Pfeffer & Salancik, 1993). Therefore, substantial research on anti-social outcomes of sense of power and perceived independence from others (Magee & Smith, 2013), without considering the interdependencies that come with structural power.

Prior research has failed to distinguish between psychological and structural power (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Anicich & Hirsh 2017). Thus, prior research has not fully acknowledged the constraints and responsibilities that come with positions of power (Tost, 2015; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Though structural power does come with greater freedom from social obligations, it also comes with countervailing responsibilities and obligations. There are certain things that those in power *must do* as a responsibility of their role as an organizational administrator (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013). Thus, structural power is a proximal antecedent to both a psychological sense of power and freedom, and to a psychological sense of responsibility to various stakeholders (see Tost & Johnson, 2019; Tost, 2015).

Though constraints on power could be seen as antithetical to power, being responsible to one's organization, community, and superiors is not an antithesis of power, but rather a reality in positions of structural power. Given these constraints, new managers have made statements such

as “Becoming a manager is not about becoming a boss. It’s about becoming a hostage” (Hill, 2021) to one’s organization and team members (Barker, 1993). From this perspective, the cannon argument “that high-power people just care less about their subordinates than vice versa, because power holders can afford to have no interest in their subordinates” (Mast, Jonas, & Hall, 2009, p. 836) seems counter-intuitive or even demonstrably false.

Structural power comes with concomitant responsibilities because others’ well-being depends upon those resources. Those in positions of power are aware of these dependencies (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019). Tost and Johnson (2019, p. 30) found that structural power increased powerholders’ tendency to endorse statements like, “I am expected to take on duties that help team members,” “I am expected to prioritize the team’s needs over my own,” and “I am expected to be generous to my team members.” In their study, structural power induced a greater sense of responsibility among participants. Those with structural power were more likely to say that they “feel a social responsibility to be helpful to these people” or that they feel that it is their “duty to look out for these individuals.”

Similarly, a sense of responsibility has been shown to improve powerholders’ tendency to seek and use advice from lower-power others. De Wit and colleagues (2017) suggest that these behaviors manifest because powerholders construe their power as an *opportunity* “to do what they find important, to perform certain tasks, to achieve specific goals” (De Wit, Scheepers, Ellemers, Sassenberg, & Scholl, 2017, p. 924). Power as opportunity activates cognition related to self-confidence and self-assuredness (Fast, Sivanathan, Mayer, & Galinsky, 2012; Sivanathan & Galinsky, 2007). In three studies, those who construed power as responsibility (rather than an opportunity) were more receptive to advice from others. Further, this effect was mediated by their tendency to see other members’ contributions as more valuable. Those with a sense of

responsibility ascribed more value to the advice of others. In contrast, those who construed power as opportunity tended to devalue others' advice.

Multi-stakeholder Issues: Beyond Care-Based Responsibility

Thus, the consensus in the nascent power-and-responsibility literature (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Scholl et al., 2022) is that sense of responsibility mitigates or even eliminates the negative effects of psychological power on anti-social behaviors. Responsibility necessarily involves decreased self-interest and more focus on obligations to meet the needs of unspecified others. However, not all responsibilities of power are care-oriented (Molinsky & Margolis, 2005; Haugaard, 2018; Clegg, 2009). However, Scholl et al., (2022, p. 88) wrote that research on power and responsibility has mostly “examined perceived social responsibility among the powerful—that is, responsibility for taking care of others.”

Empirical studies on power and responsibility rarely (if ever) specify ‘to whom’ and ‘for what’ a person is responsible (see Overbeck & Park, 2006 for an exception). That is, prior works on limitation of power use (e.g., responsibility) have focused on how power use is confined by the interests of “the group” without fully specifying what group they are referring to. For example, Keltner, Van Kleef, Chen, and Kraus (2008) write that “human groups, then are defined by the profound interdependence of their members, and... place demands upon those in power to act in ways that advance the interests of the group” (p. 156). However, in rare and extreme cases, the best interests of “the group” could involve war, conscription, subjugation, or various forms of pro-organization unethical behavior (Umphress, Bingham, & Mitchell 2010; Amit & Greene, 2012; Côté, Piff, & Willer, 2012; Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2013).

Managers have responsibilities to disparate stakeholders whose interests can be in conflict (Campbell, 2006; Friedman & Miles, 2002, 2006). The benefits of one can act as

justification for questionable behavior against others. A multi-stakeholder approach to power and responsibility is necessary to understand the constraints that managers behave under. Multi-stakeholder issues have not been addressed in the psychological literature on power and sense of responsibility. Tost (2015, p. 47) clarified this deficiency in theory when she stated:

“In developing these ideas, I’ve relied on a simplifying assumption that the powerholder is only responsible to one individual or group of individuals with common interests. Clearly, such an assumption is, over time, unsustainable in organizations... The multi-party context does, however, add a new complication: powerholders must strategize ways to meet the needs of multiple parties or determine to whom they feel most responsible. How will they make such a determination? Will they prioritize those with the greatest need? Will they prioritize those with whom they feel the greatest interdependence, or those most able to take their power away? These questions represent important avenues for future research.”

Thus, the present literature leaves us with a concept of responsibility as defined by Tost (2015). A sense of responsibility is “a feeling of obligation to act in ways that benefit others” but does not specify to whom, for what, and by what standard they are responsible (Overbeck & Park, 2006; Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013; Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). By this definition, (a) benefiting others is always a prosocial act and, (b) this is true without respect to the target of the obligations. However, many of the responsibilities of power explicitly involve concern for some “greater” goal as a characteristic of their structural role.

Sense of Responsibility in the Broader Literature

Informing the connections between structural power and responsibility requires a nuanced and micro-conception of responsibility. Structural power is often defined in terms of

one's centrality in a network of resource dependency (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993). Prior research provides evidence for the link between being in a position of structural power, awareness of others' dependence upon the powerful person, and feeling responsible for the outcomes of others (Tost & Johnson, 2019; Tost et al., 2015). Notably however, beyond recognizing other dependencies, positions of structural power are devoid of content without considering the responsibilities and expectations that come with the powerful role.

Thus, one can only understand the effects of structural power by understanding the responsibilities that come with powerful roles. Responsibility is multifaceted and has as many as six theoretically derived factors (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013). Lenk, (2007, p. 180) provides this six-facet definition of responsibility. Two facets ("who will be the judge" and "in what realm") are accounted for by contextualizing responsibility in organizational management. Thus, four of these factors are relevant for this analysis. These are summarized in the following statements: *Who is responsible? To whom? For what? In relation to what standard of judgment?* Each of these questions must be addressed to understand leaders' self-regulation in fulfillment of their various responsibilities.

Prior literature on power and responsibility has not developed a formal definition of responsibility. This is due to the lack of integration with other literatures and the conceptual breadth of the responsibility construct (Scholl et al., 2022). For example, responsibility can be an individual trait (Lee & Loeb, 2000; Lee & Smith, 1996), an attribution of cause (for good or bad outcomes, in the past or future; Bacon, 1991), or a working self-concept (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2011).

A personal *sense of responsibility* (SOR) is defined as "a sense of internal obligation and commitment to produce or prevent designated outcomes" (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013, p.

13). Further, one's personal SOR as a salient working self-concept is the most appropriate for power construal. A sense of responsibility is what has been explicitly primed in prior experimental studies (Tost & Johnson, 2019; Sassenberg, Ellemers, Scheepers, & Scholl, 2014; De Wit, Scheepers, Ellemers, Sassenberg, & Scholl, 2017). Equally, responsibility involves a feeling of obligation to benefit unspecified others (Tost, 2015). With the aim of predicting behavior, this is a prospective treatment of responsibility that emphasizes the responsible person's obligation to produce future ends (i.e., "I *must* make this happen") and not on retrospective responsibility (i.e., "I *did* make this happen"). With respect to cognitions regarding enactment of inequality, feeling that one "must make this happen" involves certain behaviors that one "should" adopt.

When powerholders' responsibilities are salient, they do not feel free to act volitionally. Rather, they feel constrained by their responsibility to conform to the expectations of others and do certain things for certain entities or be held accountable to certain standards. In this way, one's sense of responsibility constrains their freedom to follow their own moral or self-interested goals, because they have contractual obligations to various entities (Rousseau, 1998; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Edwards & Karau, 2007). Thus, one's personal sense of responsibility could force cognitions and behaviors that may or may not be in accordance with their own moral values or self-interests (Milgrim, 1963; Brief, Buttram, & Dukerich, 2001; Kelman & Hamilton, 1989). This is because there are certain things that one *should* or *must* do to fulfill a given obligation.

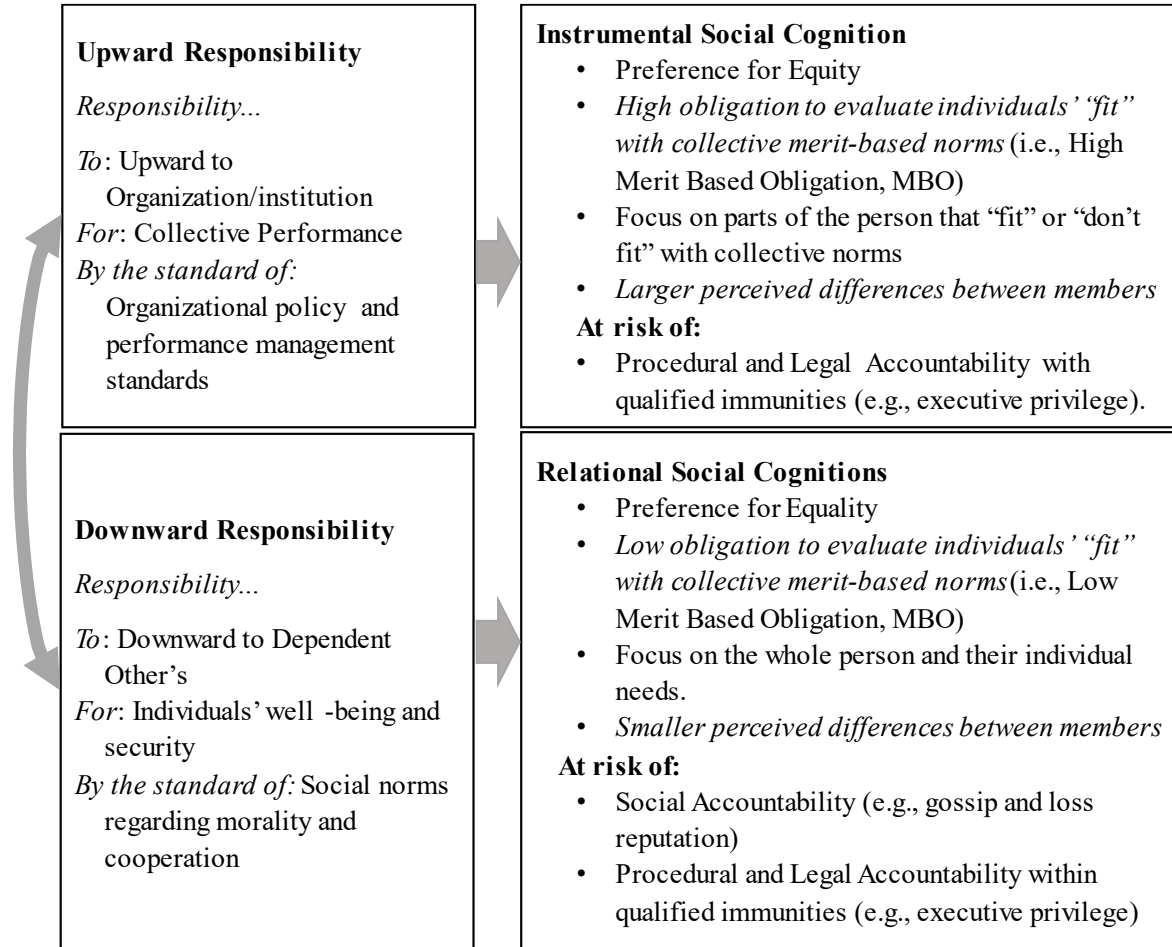
Beyond clarifying what it means to construe one's power as a personal sense of responsibility, a definition is still insufficient to answer the deeper questions of responsibility

'for what?', 'to whom?', and 'to what standard?'. Additional context is necessary to capture one's situated sense of responsibility.

RESPONSIBILITY TO WHOM? FOR WHAT? BY WHAT STANDARD?

I aim to explore powerholders' situated *sense of responsibility* and how those responsibilities influence their orientations toward merit-based equity or equality. In organizations, managers have many realms of responsibility: their responsibility to represent their profession well, their responsibility to their community, their responsibility for their own personal or familial interests, their responsibility to their bureaucratic organization, and their social responsibility to those under their care (Bovens, 1998). On the basis of parsimony, I narrow my scope to focus on those responsibilities that are inside the organization – that is, institutional and social responsibility. Each of these will be discussed in the next sections.

Figure 2 - Basic Theoretical Foundations



I contextualize power as a structural role within a bureaucratic structure (Weber, 1946; Blau, 1956). Structural accounts of power will involve both (a) accountability to clearly defined performance objectives provided by a superordinate manager and (b) the risk of mutiny or turnover among workers (Poon, 2012; Soltis, Agneessens, Sasovova, & Labianca, 2013). With the exception of 'divine-right' monarchies, all levels even the most powerful CEOs are constrained by the board of directors and shareholders that influence their work. As this example demonstrates, interdependence in organizations necessarily means that nearly all contemporary powerholders have at least some degree of "middle power" (Anichich & Hirsh, 2017; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Leaders in modern organizations are appointed by a higher authority that

‘legitimizes’ their power (Tost, 2011; French & Raven, 1959; Weber, 1947). A summary of the following arguments are presented in Figure 2.

Upward Responsibility to Institutional Norms and Collective Performance

I define sense of upward responsibility as an individual’s sense of obligation *to* the collective organization *for* organizationally relevant or collective goals *by standard of* organizational policy and procedural standards (Biggart & Hamilton, 1984; Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006). Notably, there are many contextual influences on the content of one’s sense of responsibility to the collective organization. Nonetheless, organizations are utility-focused to (a) accomplish tasks that could not be achieved by a smaller social unit and (b) to compete for survival in the marketplace. Thus, there is predictable and coherent content within upward responsibility that makes it an independent and coherent construct.

To Whom - Appointed Managers. Managers in organizations are clearly responding to a wide variety of stakeholders (Friedman & Miles, 2002, 2006; Anicich & Hirsh, 2017), but this does not mean that all stakeholders have equal ability to hold leaders accountable (Laplume, Sonpar, & Litz, 2008). “To whom” a leader is responsible is determined by both (a) how the person came into the leadership role and (b) who can hold the leader accountable. How accountability systems are defined determines the discretion that powerholders can enact within their roles.

Though leadership research emphasizes the emergent properties of leadership in teams (Lanaj & Hollenbeck, 2015), such that followers implicitly elect leaders via a process of leadership claiming and granting (DeRue & Ashford, 2010) this emergent leadership process is difficult to achieve in large-scale bureaucratic organizing. In a Weberian (1947) sense, a ‘technically superior’ organization requires a strict chain of legitimate authority involving

appointed managers rather than elected leaders. Appointed management allows owners and business leaders to select managers who will enact the will of ownership, and to create accountability systems to ensure that managers are responsible agents of ownership (Bendickson, Muldoon, Liguori, & Davis 2016a, 2016b; Mohoney, 2005). “The official who is not elected but appointed by a chief normally functions more exactly, from a technical point of view, because all other circumstances being equal, it is more likely that purely functional points of consideration and qualities will determine his selection and career” (Weber, 1921, p. 201). Further, Weber (1921 p. 199) writes that:

“Entrance into an office, including one in the private economy, is considered an acceptance of a specific obligation of faithful management in return for a secure existence. It is decisive for the specific nature of modern loyalty to an office that, in the pure type, it does not establish a relationship to a *person*, like the vassal's or disciple's faith in feudal or in patrimonial relations of authority. Modern loyalty is devoted to impersonal and functional purpose” (italics in original).

When an entrepreneur seeks to expand their business, the bureaucratic model of appointed leadership helps entrepreneurs keep control over their products as the business adds employees. Since the organization is the property of entrepreneurs and business owners, they may have a legitimate right to ensure that the business is run responsibly according to their wishes. This is the case whether it is an entrepreneur seeking to expand employment opportunities, or of human-rights organizers seeking to scale their organizations. These bureaucratic processes of appointed leadership are present in nearly all contemporary organizations. Thus, this could provide some justification for managers’ placement of ‘the organization’ before interests before those of individual employee needs.

There are only a few exceptions as contemporary organizations move away from top-down management practices to grant employees more control over their leadership. For example, some contemporary organizations are utilizing employee-driven selection and promotion practices (e.g., 360-degree feedback or leaders selected by disinterested peers; Spain, 2020 HBR). These allow for unbiased lower-power members to weed out potentially toxic leaders. Nonetheless, most practices (e.g., 360-degree feedback Waldman, Altwater, & Antonioni, 1998; Altwater & Waldman, 1998) are expensive, lengthy, and inaccessible to many (if not most) businesses. For example, Deloitte determined that it spent close to 2 million hours a year dedicated to evaluating its 65,000-plus employees – an average of 31 hours per employee (Buckingham & Goodall, 2015). Similarly, in their 2021 survey of 344 organizations (Brody, 2021), XpertHR – an HR consulting firm – found that 60% of their sample did only one for employees each year. In these appraisals, only 47% asked for employees’ input into their own evaluation, 12% asked peers and colleagues to provide input, and 7% involved feedback from direct reports. In contrast, 99% of respondents indicated that superior managers had input into employees’ performance evaluations. Thus, leaders are accountable principally to their supervisor and organization in most contemporary organizations.

One outcome of Agency Theory’s developments was that organizations wanted to ensure that managers are contractually obligated to fulfill their upward responsibilities to the institution. Bendickson, Muldoon, Liguori, & Davis’ (2016a, p. 175) review states that “Agency Theory is one of the dominant theories in strategy and especially in corporate governance.” Stemming from the shareholder perspective, Agency Theory is concerned with the separation between owners and managers of the firm (Bendickson, Muldoon, Liguori, & Davis 2016a, 2016b; Kim & Mohoney, 2005). Because the motivations of principles (e.g., shareholders, managers) and agents

(e.g., CEO, manager, employee) may not be aligned, ownership can incur “agency costs” when the manager does not enact the will of ownership (Easterbrook, 1984).

“Agency costs are one of the internal costs attached with the agents that occur due to the misalignment of the interest between the agent and principal. It embraces the cost of examining and picking up a suitable agent, collecting of information to fix performance benchmarks, watching to control the agent’s action, bonding costs, and the loss due to the inefficient decisions of the agents” (Panda & Leepsa, 2017, p. 85). To reduce agency costs, accountability and incentive systems (rewards and punishments) are created to align the interests of managers (aka. agents) and shareholders/managers (aka. principles) (Merchant & Otley, 2007). These include financial incentives for organizational performance, and ostracism or job loss for non-performance. Each of these structures act to shift managers’ sense of responsibility principally toward the goals of ownership and organizational superiors.

For What – Benefiting the Collective. Managers are not granted positions of power so that they can benefit any one individual. Rather, structural leaders’ responsibility to the organization involves successful fulfillment of administratively defined roles (Biggart & Hamilton, 1984; Hamilton & Biggart, 1985), including staffing (i.e., recruitment and retention) and task performance. For most managers, being a responsible leader/manager in the eyes of the organization involves “following the instructions of superiors and fulfilling one’s formal obligations within the organizational context” (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2011, p 130). Context is critical to this definition because organizations vary widely in ethical leadership (Brown & Treviño, 2006; Den Hartog 2015), and ethical climate (Martin & Cullen, 2006). For managers, these obligations are codified in performance management practices such as an annual review or compensation plan (Den Hartog, Boselie, & Paauwe, 2004).

This is not to suggest that managerialism is devoid of prosocial leadership (Tost, 2015). Organizations must maintain a positive environment to retain employees and to promote performance. Nonetheless, Weber makes clear managers are not appointed to be responsible to or for the security of persons per se. Rather, management involves an obligation to the faithful and loyal execution of functional tasks assigned by a 'superior' authority – such as one's organizational superiors or to the proposed collective good.

Campbell's (2012) empirically derived taxonomy of managerial/leader performance includes competencies that are both task and relational. For example, Campbell (2012) differentiates between six leadership competencies and eight managerial competencies. Here, I emphasize managerial competencies as most relevant for upward responsibility and will emphasize leadership competencies later with respect to downward responsibility. Notably, a baseline level of leadership skills (person-centeredness, initiating task structure, goal emphasis, empowerment, coaching, and serving as a role model) are also necessary to exercise managerial control effectively and to retain a qualified workforce. Thus, management for firm performance and leadership for loyalty and solidarity are related but independent processes.

Though managers are clearly responsible for a variety of performance criteria, these criteria are not all weighted equally. Rotundo and Sackett's (2002) seminal evaluation distilled performance criteria into three categories: task performance, organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB), and counterproductive work behaviors (CWB). They surveyed managers in organizations and asked them to rank each of these factors from most to least important. They found that nearly all managers placed task performance as the primary performance criterion, the absence of counter-productive work behaviors secondarily, and organizational citizenship behaviors tertiarily. That is, (1) do your job, (2) don't do anything wrong, and least of all (3) be a good

citizen who fosters a supportive a positive work environment. Indeed, their empirical results indicated that task performance and counterproductive work behaviors explained between 51% and 64% of the variance in overall performance, while OCB explained between 4% and 20% of the variance in overall performance. Thus, a manager's responsibility to their organization is primarily achieved via instrumentally focused leadership behaviors such as monitoring performance, capitalizing on profitable opportunities, and bolstering individuals' performance (Antonakis & House, 2014). Thus, managers have responsibilities *to* their organization *for* their team's task performance.

By What Standard - Procedural and Legal Accountability. Further, all persons in organizations are held to some administrative standard (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006). At the risk of joblessness, poor performance reviews, or loss of power, members are expected to fulfill their responsibilities to the organization. Organizations are principally concerned with managers acting in the best interests of organizational stakeholders – namely the board of directors and shareholders – and use reward and punishment systems to align managers' interests with those of stakeholders (Bendickson, Muldoon, Liguori, & Davis 2016a, 2016b). To do so, Managerial Control and Accountability Systems are put in place to communicate managers' objectives, the strategies used to achieve those objectives, and most importantly, to ensure that nothing goes wrong (Merchant & Otley, 2007). Thus, "Accountability-oriented control systems predominate at managerial levels of most organizations, they are in use even at the lowest organization levels... They reward good performance, such as with bonuses, promotions, and praise. They punish poor performance, such as with criticisms, the absence of assignments of rewards being given to others, and, at the extreme, demotions and dismissals" (Merchant & Otley, 2007, p. 792).

Violations of upward responsibilities fall into a different category of accountability than those of downward responsibility (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006). Consider, for example, the concepts of executive privilege (Cox, 1974; Rozell, 1994), qualified immunity (Baude, 2018; Schwartz, 2017), and golden parachutes (Lambert, & Larcker, 1985; Fich, Tran, & Walkling, 2013). These are all helpful examples of the administrative immunities that protect officials from punishment when enacting one's upward-facing responsibilities. There are certain hazards associated with exercising power and people in power often receive a disproportionate amount of criticism.

Thus, “qualified immunity balances two important interests—the need to hold public officials accountable when they exercise power irresponsibly and the need to shield officials from harassment, distraction, and liability *when they perform their duties reasonably.*” (Pearson v. Callahan, U.S Supreme Court 2009; italics added). In some cases – as with the president – leaders are given a right to defy social norms regarding honesty and openness as a ‘legitimate’ part of their role (Rozell, 1994) or due to their social reputation (Hollander, 1958). In this way, it is accepted that not all exercises of power are normatively desirable but can be a practical necessity. Therefore, protections are enacted to protect leaders and managers from negative accountability for performing the basic functions of their job.

Similar exemptions are made for CEOs. Agency theory holds that CEOs are too risk averse, and therefore, organizations provide incentives that promote risk taking by the organization (Kim & Mohoney, 2005). For example, golden parachutes refer to a contractual guarantee that the executive will receive a hefty sum of money if they are dismissed from their role. Golden parachutes are used to communicate to executives that “no matter what happens, you’ll receive a hefty reward when you leave.”

If a company fails to meet its financial targets, the CEO may lose their job. In contrast, if a company is known for grinding its workers with notoriously low wages and long hours, there may be moral outrage but there are few legal or procedural remedies. To exemplify the precarious nature of accountability and upward responsibilities, consider the following utilitarian examples regarding acceptable means for fulfilling upward responsibilities. The scenario is this: a CEO is faced with concerns that the organization is failing to meet its financial targets and, therefore, decides to lay off a sizable portion of the labor force (e.g., 11,000 employees).

Reasons provided for this layoff could include:

- A) The company has turned large profits in recent years. However, despite making a profit, the company failed to reach its financial targets and the CEO is concerned about the views of investors. Thus, the company decides to “right size” and lays off 11,000 employees to save profits and maintain face with investors and the board of directors.
- B) The company has not turned a profit in recent years and has struggled to meet its financial targets. The CEO is concerned that the company will go out of business if it does not reduce its labor force. Thus, the CEO is concerned that he must make a choice between the company going out of business and every employee losing their job or laying off a large part of the labor force. The company has decided to lay off 11,000 employees to protect the organization and the jobs of most employees.

Example A is a real-life example of the company Meta’s announcement to lay off a substantial portion of its workforce in November of 2022 because they didn’t make enough profit (Allyn, 2023; Marr, 2023). On the basis of upward responsibility, both solutions A and B are acceptable because they are looking out for the best interest of the company and ‘the collective.’

However, the media response to this layoff makes it clear that people have strong moral responses regarding this harm that is motivated by profit rather than a sense of responsibility to care for employees. Thus, in this case, the ends may not justify the means to most people because the reasons are not normatively desirable. In contrast, solution B is more normatively accepted as a legitimate reason to lay people for several reasons. First is that solution B involves a sense of downward-facing responsibility and a prosocial motivation to protect the jobs of much of the workforce – though at the unfortunate cost of 11,000 jobs. Many people may see this is example B as accepted because the reasons provided were normatively desirable (Haugaard, 2018). Similarly, B may be exempt from accountability because the CEO had no other choice and may not be seen as morally responsible (Folger, 1987).

Nonetheless, the most compelling part of this example is that, in either case, there are no legal or organizational accountability systems to hold behavior A to account. Rather, there is only social and media backlash: social accountability without legal accountability (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006). This is because procedures and laws must allow for instances of B – where layoffs are potentially normatively desirable – and therefore, accommodate instances of A. That is, there are fewer procedural accountability systems for moral transgressions in executing upward responsibility are absent due to “the need to shield officials from harassment, distraction, and liability *when they perform their duties reasonably.*” (Pearson v. Callahan; italics added). However, determining what is acceptable and reasonable may depend upon each individual’s system of values.

This is all to suggest that, contrary to the current power-as-responsibility literature, leaders in organizations most often see their responsibility as being primarily to the organization for their team’s task performance and not necessarily to those under their care. Further, when

one's personal sense of responsibility to the organization is salient, I suggest that they are more likely to engage in calculative, evaluative, and instrumental cognitions that lend themselves to utility-based rather than care-based ethical decision-making strategies.

Downward Responsibility to Dependent Individuals

Upward responsibilities to the shareholders or one's superordinate leader are certainly important to understanding power and responsibility. Notably, however, this view has not been widely espoused in recent years as "shareholder primacy" (Freedman, 1970) has given way to a broader stakeholder perspective (Friedman & Miles, 2002, 2006). This is critical because stakeholder theories of leader responsibility suggest that "responsible leadership is about building trust and cultivating sustainable *relationships* toward different stakeholders" (Maak & Pless, 2006, p. 106, italics added). From this perspective, responsibility to shareholders or 'the collective' may involve amorphous or ambiguous relational content. Effective leadership is built upon trusting dyadic relationships between leaders and followers (Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997; Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995) characterized by reciprocity, fairness, and mutual trust and vulnerability (Mayer, Davis, & Schoorman, 1995; Colquitt, Baer, Long, & Halvorsen-Ganepola., 2014).

To whom – Elected Leaders. I define downward responsibility as a sense of obligation *to* dependent lower-ranking members *for* their security and well-being by the *standards of* social-accountability. Whereas prior work on power and responsibility has not fully acknowledged the breadth of responsibilities that come with positions of structural power, the pro-social and relational aspects of downward responsibility have been discussed (Tost, 2015; Tost et al., 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019). This is in line with prior work seeing responsible powerholders as having "a duty to protect team members' interest" or to "take on duties that help team members"

(items from Tost & Johnson, 2019, p. 30). Downward-facing responsibility has been more central to research on the psychological effects of structural power because *relational* concerns are more salient than collective benefits (Leary & Baumeister, 1995).

Most (if not all) leaders in contemporary organizations are appointed as principal agents of ownership and management. This hierarchical arrangement could seem as though the concerns of lower-ranking employees are not of concern. Though this may be the case in some industries involving simple mechanistic tasks (e.g., manufacturing; Taylor, 1910/2004), these “new hierarchical authority structures were nonetheless inherently democratic, despite more elaborate social structures and larger groups” (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008, p. 188). In some instances, employees can still have substantial ‘control’ over their superordinate leaders. Magee & Galinsky (2008, p. 17) write that “employees that are responsible for critical and non-substitutable core procedures can hold power over middle managers, whose performance depends on the successful completion of various procedures by their employees.” Thus, there is nearly unanimous consensus that employers are responsible and accountable to their employees, followers, and subordinates.

For What – Individual Constituents. Principally, leaders are granted leadership because they can reduce individuals’ uncertainty and provide them with a sense of security (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002). Whereas upward responsibility would relate to the leader’s concern for the collective safety, downward responsibility involves concerns for *individuals’* safety within the group. That is, managers are not only required to initiate structures that benefit the collective, but also be considerate of the needs of everyone under their care (Lord, Piccolo, & Ilies, 2004). Earlier in our evolutionary history, anthropologists suggest that humans lived in small egalitarian bands of about one hundred and fifty members (Dunbar, 1998) and these bands lacked powerful

centralized leadership (Boehm, 1999, 1993). However, centralized leadership structures become especially important in times of crisis or uncertainty such as war or famine. At these times, individuals' uncertainty is extremely high, and members grant power to leaders to reduce threats of uncertainty (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002; Huang, Xu, Chiu, Lam, & Farh, 2015; Schoel, Bluemke, Mueller, & Stahlberg, 2011). An organization's legitimacy may lie in each person's sense that their individual needs will be considered by those in power.

Whereas upward responsibilities refer primarily to managerial competencies and task obligations, downward responsibility involves leadership competencies and relational obligations (Sanders & Schyns, 2006; Sullivan et al., 2003). Campbell and Wiernik (2015) review of workplace performance identified two disparate sets of competencies for management and for leadership. Management is "distinct from leadership as *interpersonal* influence, [which] includes... generating, preserving, and allocating the organization's resources to best achieve its goals." (p. 53, italics added). In contrast, they view "Leadership refers to the interpersonal influence process" (p. 54). In order, they list leadership competencies as follows: consideration and person-centeredness, initiating structure, goal emphasis, empowerment, coaching, and role modeling.

Importantly, again, there is conceptual overlap between managerial (upward) and leadership (downward) responsibilities within the competencies they provide. Access to work has been declared a basic human right by the United Nations in their Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 23), and people can – but may not always – derive a sense of meaning from completing tasks that benefit others (Rosso, Dekas, & Wrzesniewski, 2010). Further, in all cases, leaders are granted power to fulfill a certain goal or purpose (House & Aditya, 1997). Thus, task support (e.g., clarifying roles, explaining work methods, technical support, one-on-

one coaching; Campbell & Wiernik, 2015) are still a crucial component of downward responsibility.

However, whereas upward responsibility involves task performance primacy, downward responsibilities place relational needs first: that is, to benefit an individual rather than a nebulous collective or idealized goal. As evidence, consider the findings of Lord, Piccolo & Illies (2004). They summarized their results in stating that “Results revealed that both Consideration (.48) and Initiating Structure (.29) have moderately strong, nonzero relations with leadership outcomes. Consideration was more strongly related to follower satisfaction (leader satisfaction, job satisfaction), motivation, and leader effectiveness, and Initiating Structure was slightly more strongly related to leader job performance and group–organization performance.” Thus, when it comes to satisfactory support for employees, individual consideration explained 2.5 times as more variance (~23%) than initiating structure (~8%) in followers’ satisfaction with their leader.

Thus, followers grant power to leaders principally to reduce their own uncertainty (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002; Tyler & Lind, 1992) by providing meaningful tasks (Antonakis & House, 2014), that benefit others (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). This uncertainty is reduced to the degree that leaders are considerate of the individual’s needs and security. This idea is central to leadership theories such as Relational Leadership Theory (Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000; Uhl-Bien, 2006) and Leader-Member Exchange (Graen & Uhl-Bien, 1995; Uhl-Bien, Graen, & Scandura, 2000), which focus on the centrality of follower’s trust in leaders. Effective leader-follower relationships involve emotional bonds of trust and mutual vulnerability (Colquitt et al, 2014) that are built on perceptions of justice and fairness that reduce uncertainty (Lind & Van den Bos, 2002). When members trust that their leaders will be considerate of their needs, they can feel safe to shift their efforts away from threat vigilance and toward task performance. In

contrast, when members are uncertain about their safety and sense of belonging, this reduces their physical and psychological well-being and leads to withdrawal from their work (Matta, Scott, Colquitt, Koopman, & Passantino, 2017).

Thus, the content of downward responsibility is broad and captures both relational and task elements. Yet, the relational elements take primacy in the context of effective leadership (Uhl-Bien, 2006; Cunliffe, & Eriksen, 2011; Brower, Schoorman, & Tan, 2000) from the followers' perspective (Lord, Piccolo, & Illies, 2004). In broad terms, downward responsibilities could involve “performing well by doing good” whereas upward responsibilities involve “doing good by performing well” (Waldman & Siegel, 2008).

By What Standard – Social and Moral Accountability. The standards of accountability for downward-facing responsibilities are notably *different in kind* from those of upward responsibility. In most cases, subordinate employees or followers lack the ability to instate or influence the administrative outcomes of their boss. In contrast, accountability standards for downward-facing responsibilities apply to members of all ranks. Thus, the same accountability standards for downward responsibilities apply to members of all ranks. Care and reciprocity are universal concerns (Goulder, 1960; Blau, 1964; Graham, Nosek, Haidt, Iyer, Koleva, & Ditto, 2011; Atari, Haidt, Graham, Koleva, Stevens & Dehghani, 2022). However, those of high power are held to these standards *to a larger degree*.

Social accountability rests on the actions of followers that influence the reputational outcomes of authority figures. “Social accountability employs both institutional and noninstitutional tools” (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006, p 10) to expose wrongdoing via gossip, formal complaints, or even the media in extreme cases (Keltner, Van Kleef, Chen, & Kraus, 2008). These reputation costs can be extreme in rare instances where a manager’s abusive

behaviors are broadcast nation or companywide. Leaders are expected to behave in normatively appropriate ways that would be lauded or desired by all members (Van Knippenberg, 2011). If not, this may invoke moral emotions such as anger and contempt from subordinate employees (Hutcherson & Gross, 2011; Haidt, 2003) or societal media in high-profile cases.

“Modern societies still evaluate leadership against egalitarian ‘hunter-gatherer’ standards such as fairness, integrity, competence, good judgment, generosity, humility, and concern for others, and they regard such attributes as dominance and selfishness as the antithesis of leadership” (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008, p. 188). Egalitarian groups often ostracize aggrandizing individuals who seek dominance in the group (Boehm 1999). Social norms (Grahm, Nosek, Haidt, Iyer, Koleva, & Ditto, 2011; Wright, 2005) are accountability mechanisms that evolved to support cooperation. “Reputation... emerged as a mechanism by which group members regulate the distribution of power within their group...[and] Because so many acts of reputation transmission occur when the target of the communication is not present (e.g., gossip), high-power individuals have little or no control over how their reputations are constructed, save by acting in ways that fit the expectations of low-power individuals” (Keltner, Van Kleef, Chen, & Kraus, 2008, p. 165).

Nonetheless, in general, followers often “confront general difficulty when trying to make rulers obey the law.” (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006, p. 7). Whereas citizens can hold elected officials politically accountable by not electing them back into office (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006), these avenues are not available to employees of private institutions. Due to procedural protections for those in power, “the main resource available for social control is the intensity and visibility of ‘voice’ and that most social controls expose wrongdoings but do not have mandatory effects. For these reasons, some authors have regarded such mechanisms as window-dressing

rather than as real checks on power. [Nonetheless] they can still have ‘material consequences.’”
(Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006, p. 16).

Thus, as noted in reference to concepts like executive privilege (Cox, 1974; Rozell, 1994), and principle-agent challenges with appointed leaders (Hollander, Edwin, Fallon, & Edward, 1977; De Cremer & van Dijk, 2008), leaders are subject to social accountability mechanism but may be procedurally and legally protected in transgressions of downward responsibilities.

INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND HIERARCHY ENHANCEMENT

Organizations are interdependent structures aimed at fulfilling goals that go beyond those of any one individual (Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). Institutions are systems “of rules, beliefs, norms and organizations that together generate a regularity of (social) behavior” (Greif, 2006, p. 30;) to fulfill a valued objective. Ultimately, effectively organizing requires identifying a valued goal and determining the skills, norms, and other characteristics that are necessary to accomplishing that goal. This involves identifying the characteristics that are most aligned with the goal and ranking them from most to least compatible with the goal (Carver & Scheier, 1982). Further, it is a leader’s responsibility to create reward and punishment systems to influence others to align themselves with those goals and social norms. Reward and punishments are essential (and functional) for administering group norms that promote group cooperation (Atran & Henrich, 2010; Balliet, Mulder & Van Lange, 2011). This ranking is normatively neutral. However, it requires pro-group justifications that can be hard to maintain when applied to social targets.

In self-managed groups, these norms are determined by the group itself who then implicitly elects a leader based on their ability to further the will of the group (DeRue & Ashford, 2010). Leadership is largely granted to individuals who are the most competent (Rubin, Bartels, & Bommer, 2002; Wolff, Pescosolido, & Druskat, 2002), generous (Wellman, 2017; Van Vugt, 2006; Von Rueden, Gurven, Kaplan, & Stieglitz, 2014), and embody group norms (Van Knippenberg, 2011). Large organizations involve a scaling up of these logics utilizing hierarchical structures and appointed leaders to legitimate and enforce norms that are often determined by higher authorities (Weber, 1946).

One good example of institutional responsibilities is the case of schoolteachers. Teachers both have an obligation to care for the well-being of the children under their care, but they are more expected to help foster educated and capable citizens. A teacher who is concerned about a student feeling secure and safe within the classroom may tend to grade less harshly and not compare lower-performing students to higher-performing students. In contrast, however, a teacher who is concerned about educating future citizens may take their institutional responsibilities more seriously. Indeed, lower-performing students could act as a threat to their goal of fostering high-performers. They may feel that more difficult course materials and harsher grading may be warranted to convey how the student stacks up – who is “on top” and who is “on bottom” – when it comes to meeting her personal expectations. Doing so is aimed at motivating individuals to conform with the powerholders’ constructed social expectations, rather than principal concern for the individual’s well-being, security, and friendship.

Organizational leaders are regarded as constructive contributors to their communities on average. Organizational leaders have the responsibility to direct individual behavior toward collective and instrumental ends. They create employment opportunities, wealth, and products and services that are utilized by various stakeholders. For this reason, some say that entrepreneurs and organizational leaders have a social responsibility to maintain and/or improve their organizations over time. This was an influential argument made by the noble-prize-winning economist Milton Friedman. Friedman (1970) provided support for his claim that “the social responsibility of business is to increase its profits.” Friedman’s arguments draw from the logic that competition promotes innovation, provides for individuals’ needs, and improves overall social utility (Smith, 1776; Mill, 1861). From this perspective, organizational and societal leaders are charged with the upward responsibility to protect their businesses and the jobs they create by

providing better services to their markets than their competitors. By doing so, they compete to sustain the employment of their workers and to better fulfill the needs of individuals in society. Nonetheless, this perspective has been widely criticized for its overly economic approach to ethical business (Waldman & Galvin, 2008; Miska, Hilbe, & Mayer, 2014; Voegtlin, Patzer, & Scherer, 2012) that places collective ends before the needs of individuals.

The military is also a good example of ‘responsibility and organization’ because it is explicitly intended for the protection and security of the nation’s citizens from out-group threats (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008). From an evolutionary perspective, “leading and following are strategies that evolved for solving social coordination problems in ancestral environments, including in particular the problems of group movement, *intragroup peacekeeping*, and *intergroup competition*” (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008, p. 182, italics added). In rare instances of severe threat where the safety of the collective was at risk, then a paucity of individual consideration could be referred to as prioritization.

For nations, a successful military is required at all costs, including forcing citizens into military service (i.e., conscription) and strict laws to punish desertion. Justified based on ‘collective’ benefit to the in-group, the military organizes and behaves toward soldiers in a way that would never be normatively accepted in ordinary organizations (e.g., drill sergeants in boot camp). The military is a high reliability organization (Roberts, 1990; Roberts & Bea 2001) that performs in life-or-death scenarios requiring perfect communication, coordination, and most of all, discipline. The mission of the military is purely technical. The conduct and organization of the military is accepted based on the need for national security.

Consider two quotes to exemplify the connection between the responsibility to the collective and the hierarchical organization of the military. First, is a quote from Sun Tzu's *Art of War*, a book that is prescribed by the US Military Academy at West Point.

“The commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage, and strictness. By method and discipline are to be understood the marshaling of the army in its proper subdivisions, the gradations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military expenditure.” – *Sun Tzu, Art of War*

Second, is the mission statement of the US Army. The mission of the army is:

“To deploy, fight, and win our nation's wars by providing ready, prompt, and sustained land dominance by Army forces across the full spectrum of conflict as part of the joint force. The Army mission is vital to the Nation because we are the service capable of defeating enemy ground forces and indefinitely seizing and controlling those things an adversary prizes most – its land, its resources, and its population.”

Though it may not apply to civilian contexts, responsible organizing by a Combat General involves executing cold strategies to accomplish the task with as few in-group lives lost as possible – even at the cost of lives on an opposing side. This requires swift action, compliance, and submission at the risk of lives. The decisions of combat generals are made principally on the national interests and are made without regard for individual persons (Weber, 1946). Making these decisions is a core responsibility of power because they are decisions that only they have the authority to make (Scholl et al. 2022). Contemporary organizations are beginning to utilize more decentralized structures to address complex problems (Mathieu, Hollenbeck, van Knippenberg, & Ilgen 2017; Child & McGrath 2001; Heckscher & Donnellon,

1994; Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cohen, 2012). However, even supporters of egalitarian social structures (Boehm, 1993, 1999) recognize the “technical superiority” of centralized authority in military contexts (Schoel, Bluemke, Mueller, & Stahlberg, 2011; Weber, 1946).

Nonetheless, in organizational contexts, managers are focused on fulfilling their goals and responsibilities (Guinote, 2007) and create reward and punishment systems that influence others to align themselves with those goals. Though few managers or executives are solely interested in personal profit, the instrumental aspects of the business are purely technical and performative means of survival. “People in positions of power are able to set agendas, norms for discussion, rules for behavior, and standards for thought and opinion, all of which constrain the psychological freedom experienced by individuals lower in the hierarchy and help maintain the current power hierarchy” (Magee & Galinsky, 2008, p. 25). Those in positions of power often protect the status quo (Maner, Gailliot, Butz, & Peruche, 2007; Keltner & Robinson, 1997) and can influence the tone for the values, structures, and accountability/reward systems that enforce the codes they espouse.

Considering natural inequalities of ability and effort, accomplishing this goal often involves “rational” organization that divides individuals into high- and low-performers in order to productively allocate scarce resources (Lepak & Snell, 1999; Capelli, 2008; Weber, 1946; Simon, 1991). The strategic human resources management (SHRM) literature has developed Human Resource strategies to optimize task performance. “An increasing body of work contains the argument that the use of *High-Performance Work Practices*, including comprehensive employee recruitment and selection procedures, incentive compensation and performance management systems, and extensive employee involvement and training, can improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of a firm's current and potential employees, increase their

motivation, reduce shirking, and enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm” (Huselid, 1995, p. 635, italics in the original). High-performance work practices (HPWPs) include several policies aimed at improving employee commitment to the organization, including health benefits, above-market compensation, policies to increase opportunities for individuals to contribute, and training and development. However, some of the most technically effective strategies involve differentiated HR architectures (Lepak & Snell, 1999) that separate high- and low-performers to “enhance retention of quality employees while encouraging nonperformers to leave the firm” (Huselid, 1995, p. 635).

Toward this end, there has been concern regarding leniency biases among managers who are reluctant to use the lower spectrum of performance ratings (Villanova, Bernardin, Dahmus, & Sims, 1993). Leniency biases may reduce inequalities among coworkers (Grund & Przemek, 2012). However, economic logic suggests that lenient ratings that fail to differentiate between (and reward or sanction) high and low performers would lead to lower employee motivation and performance (Berger, Harbring, & Sliwka, 2012, p. 54). Avoiding this challenge has acted as justification for some concerning performance management practices. Some firms have adopted “forced distribution” performance management systems that mandate that supervisor rank performers from best to worst. Former CEO of General Electric’s Jack Welch is infamous for his “rank-and-yank” strategy to assign employees into either the top 20%, the middle 70%, or the bottom 10%. After performance evaluations, the bottom 10% of workers were systematically fired. This system yielded swift performance improvements (Scullen, Bergey, & Smith, 2005) and was adopted by 20% of Fortune 500 firms (Sears & McDermott, 2003).

In their experimental study, Berger, Harbring, and Sliwka, (2012) found that forced ranking performance evaluations improved productivity up to 12% compared to non-forced

ranked systems. However, these competitive systems can be counterproductive for organizations if they discourage collaboration among members (Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000; Blume, Baldwin, & Rubin, 2009). In Berger et al.'s (2012) study, forced distributions were detrimental to performance when members had the ability to sabotage their coworkers in these competitive systems. Forced ranking systems involve zero-sum tournaments (Lazear & Rosen, 1981) where not all members can win. Taking rating reliability, selection validity, and voluntary turnover into account, Scullen, Bergey, & Smith, (2005) found that forced ranking improves firm performance in the short run, but hurts performance in the long run.

Overall, each of these endorsements of inequality – such as in military, educational, and organizational hierarchy – are justified on utility-based concern for some ‘greater good’ for which those in power are responsible. These types of judgments can be meaningfully distinguished from relationally pro-social behaviors - actions that benefit others in a relational sense (Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, & Penner, 2006). Although prosocial behavior and utility-based judgments both relate to enhancing others’ welfare, prosocial relational acts differ from macro-utility judgments in that the former does not necessarily seek the ‘greatest good’ for the ‘greatest number.’ For example, incarcerating a criminal to prevent them from committing further crimes may ‘maximize’ the greatest good by protecting society, but reduces the criminal’s welfare. From a more achievement-oriented perspective, this same logic is used as justification for firing an employee who is failing to fulfill the goals of their organization. Nonetheless, organizing toward some greater good can be undermined if managers fail to attend to localized care for their workers. Concerns for ‘greater goods’ often act as justifications for social dominance (Pratto, Stallworth, & Conway-Lanz, 1998), merit-based inequality (Son Hing

et al., 2011) and anti-social or pro-organizational unethical behavior (Amit & Greene, 2012; Côté, Piff, & Willer, 2012; Gino, Ayal, & Ariely, 2013).

Organizations must be perceived as legitimate in order to maintain a loyal workforce who will stay with the company (Thomas, Walker, & Zelditch, 1986, p. 338-339). Individual perceptions of legitimacy have been defined as a “subjective perception of the fairness or justice of the distribution of socially distributed outcomes” (Major & Schmader, 2001, p. 180). Successful task-focused organizing involves administrating outcome inequalities based on natural or emergent differences in task performance. However, if the system of inequality is viewed as unfair or biased, this can undermine this aim. In organizations, a manager who unfairly distributes promotions, pay raises, or benefits could undermine the legitimacy of the wider organizational hierarchy.

Evidence suggests that feeling responsible for a group’s outcomes may accentuate *social* prioritization and amplify the *perceived distance* between high-ranking and low-ranking performers (see DeWall, Baumeister, Mead, & Vohs 2011, for a similar argument made for self-regulation during task pursuit). Powerholders may be perceived as ‘corrupt’ if they exert their prototypes and *form more exaggerated social judgments*, which contrast with their lower-power counterparts. Similar, but different from, prior work on power and task-pursuit (Guinote, 2007a, 2007b 2017; Slabu & Guinote, 2010; Smith, Jostmann, Galinsky, Van Dijk, 2008; DeWall, Baumeister, Mead, & Vohs 2011), I suggest that feeling responsible for a given outcome accentuates *social* prioritization toward that end and amplifies the perceived distance between “high-fit” and “low-fit” performers. Thus, those categorized as “high-value” will be seen as “very high-value” and those categorized as “low-value” will be seen as “very low-value” compared to lower-power others. This could lead employees to see managers as biased if their

polarized perceptions lead them to treat some employees differently than others (Yu, Matta, Cornfield, 2018).

LEGITIMACY, EQUITY, AND INEQUALITY

In this section, I review the literature on legitimacy in organizations. Organizational leaders are obligated to create legitimate social systems that others want to participate in. However, exactly what makes a leader or institution “legitimate,” is not perfectly agreed upon because there are multiple inputs into legitimacy judgments – including instrumental, relational, moral, and social-contextual factors (see Tost, 2011 for a review). This dissertation seeks to integrate the social psychological literature on power (Guinote, 2007) with structural aspects of institutions involving multi-stakeholder responsibilities (Drori & Honig, 2013; Suchman, 1995; Anchich & Hirsch, 2011). Thus, I integrate the social psychological literature on legitimacy (Tyler & Lind, 1992) with multi-stakeholder theories of institutional legitimacy (Drori & Honig, 2013). I discuss how these perspectives invoke contradictory obligations involving equal and unequal (i.e., more discriminant) evaluations of others. Specifically, one involves the discrete allocation of scarce rewards according to merit, and another involves reinforcing the social value of others via norms of equality.

In short, I suggest that the factors involved in sustaining legitimacy are not perfectly clear because organizations must sustain multiple forms of legitimacy (instrumental and relational) within multiple stakeholder relationships: in both their immediate team and the wider organization (Drori & Honig, 2013). Ultimately, I suggest that legitimacy stems from *individual benefice* such that members see authorities as legitimate to the degree that they grant the individual *social value* (Tyler & Lind, 1992) or a personal esteem (Leary & Baumeister, 2000; Leary, 2012). Importantly, I suggest that perceptions of social value are determined by both interpersonal treatment (Tyler & Lind, 1992; Bies & Moag, 1986; Leary & Baumeister, 1995), and material outcomes (Berger et al., 1972; Festinger, 1954; Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star

& Williams, 1949; Adams, 1965). This view of legitimacy as stemming from social value broadly - rather than *either* from fair procedures (Tyler, 1989; Tyler & Lind, 2001) *or* favorable outcomes (Tost, 2011; Major & Schmader, 2001) - helps to reconcile instrumental and relational forms of legitimacy as relating wholistic legitimacy judgments (Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2001; Tyler & Caine, 1981)

What is Legitimacy?

For the purposes of this dissertation, I am concerned with overall legitimacy as “a psychological property of an authority, institution, or social arrangement that leads those connected to it to believe that it is appropriate, proper, and just.” (Tyler, 2006, p. 375). Broadly, legitimacy involved “the belief that authorities are entitled to be obeyed” (Tyler, 1997, p. 323). Legitimacy is a critical concern for leaders (Case & Manor, 2014). When leaders are legitimate, members suspend their own judgment and adopt the values of the leader or organization regarding right and wrong (Kelman & Hamilton, 1989). Thus, when members feel that their organization is “appropriate, proper, and just,” this reduces fear of exploitation and fosters employees who are intrinsically motivated to work toward the collective benefit (Tyler and Blader, 2003).

The social psychological literature on legitimacy has always been closely tied to the organizational justice literature. Legitimacy judgments involve instrumental, relational, moral, and social-contextual factors (see Tost, 2011 for a review). The organizational justice literature has closely scrutinized how material outcomes (Adams, 1965; Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star & Williams, 1949; Festinger, 1954), interpersonal treatment (Tyler & Lind, 1992), moral judgments (Folger, Cropanzano, & Goldman, 2005; Schminke, Ambrose, & Noel, 1997; Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, & Schminke, 2001), and cultural factors (Leung, 2005) influence

judgments of overall justice (Ambrose, Seabright, & Schminke, 2002). Nonetheless, justice and legitimacy are separate constructs (Tost, 2011). This is because legitimacy can be exogenous to the individual if they are granted authority by an institution or group. The fact that “subordinates are more likely to tolerate certain levels of procedural injustice by strongly endorsed or authorized allocators” (Hegtvedt & Johnson, 2000, p. 306), does not necessarily indicate that the authority is fair.

People care about fair treatment because it signals their social value in the group (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1989), and reduces uncertainty at work (Van den Boss & Lind, 2002; Lind & Van den Bos, 2002). Being treated fairly involves being treated with dignity and respect (i.e. interactional justice; Bies & Moag, 1986; Greenberg, 1993), receiving one’s “fair share” (i.e. distributive justice; Adams, 1965), being given the opportunity to perform (i.e. contributive justice, Roberson & Scott, 2022), being involved in decisions regarding one’s own fate (i.e. procedural justice; Thibaut & Walker, 1975), and knowing that those decisions will be made *without bias* (i.e. a facet of procedural justice; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Mullen & Skitka, 2006; Tyler, 1989). When employees are certain that they will be treated fairly, then they can feel safe investing their identity into their organization and will become engaged with their work (Tyler & Blader, 2003).

Nonetheless, the social psychological literature on legitimacy differentiates between two forms of legitimacy – instrumental and relational. “These two dimensions of legitimacy judgments are not mutually exclusive” (Tost, 2011, p. 691). However, I highlight how they are related and inform overall legitimacy judgments.

Instrumental Legitimacy. In their introduction of these concepts, Tyler and Lind, (1992) define instrumental legitimacy as involving, “*instrumental concerns* in the sense that disputants

are thought to view procedures as means to the end of improving either their own outcomes or their relationship with the person with whom they have a dispute.” (p. 138, italics in original). “An instrumental perspective on legitimacy predicts that entities will be judged as legitimate when they are perceived as promoting the material interests of the individual” (Tost, 2011, p. 690). Instrumental perspectives are often paired with Adams's (1965) Equity Theory, which proposes that unequal outcomes are legitimate to the degree that they reflect individual contributions toward group goals.

Scholars disagree regarding whether legitimacy is a property of outcomes (Tost et al., 2011), or of procedures (Tyler, 2000, 1997). For example, placing other accepted definitions aside, Tost (2011) utilizes the definition of legitimacy outlined by Major and Schmader, (2001, p. 180): that legitimacy involves “subjective perception of the fairness or justice of the distribution of socially distributed outcomes.” Tost (2011) also cites Weber, Mummendy, and Waldzus (2002) who define illegitimacy as “the violation of group entitlements to certain outcomes or a certain status position” (2002: 451). Thus, by this distributive definition of legitimacy, organizations and leaders are legitimate to the degree they distribute outcomes that reflect an individual’s outcome entitlements given their contributions to the group (Adams, 1965). I suggest that instrumental models of legitimacy are primarily concerned with *outcomes* (material and social) whereas relational models are more concerned with interpersonal *processes* (Tyler & Lind, 1992).

Relational Legitimacy. In contrast, relational legitimacy relates to the distributions or more symbolic resources such as social status and interpersonal treatment (Tyler & Lind, 1992; Tost, 2011; Major & Schmader, 2001). “Relational models of legitimacy hold that legitimacy emerges from the extent to which a social entity communicates to the individual that he or she is

accorded respect, dignity, and status within the group context and through group membership... From a relational perspective, an entity is seen as legitimate when it affirms individuals' social identities and bolsters their sense of self-worth (Tost, 2011, p. 690). "It is becoming increasingly clear that the key to authoritativeness and legitimacy lies not in judgments about the decisions of an authority, but rather in judgments about the procedure, the process, and the quality of interaction that characterize encounters with authority" (Tyler & Lind, 1992, p. 162).

In their introduction of their Relational Model of Authority, Tyler and Lind (1992) suggest that relational legitimacy is driven primarily – but not singularly – by procedural justice judgments stemming from individual's (a) sense that they were treated with dignity and respect, and (b) decisions were unbiased and impartial. When members are treated kindly and impartially, then outcomes inequalities can simply reflect instrumental concerns and not necessarily reflect upon the individual's sense of belonging and social value (Tyler, 1989). As I stated above, I suggest that legitimacy stems from *individual benefice* such that members see authorities as legitimate to the degree that they grant the individual *social value* (Tyler & Lind, 1992; Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972) or personal esteem (Leary & Baumesiter, 2000; Leary, 2012).

Prior work on the relational model has drawn on the group value model of procedural justice (Tyler 1989) which suggests that an individual's sense of social value is derived from the degree to which they are treated with the same degree of respect and esteem as other members. The foundation of the group value model is that the inputs that are considered relevant to decision-making procedures communicate the underlying values that authorities have. When members are awarded social esteem and respect in the eyes of an authority figure, they feel like valued members of the team (Tyler & Blader, 2003). This sense of social esteem and belonging

could constitute the ‘instrumental’ benefits that stem from fair procedures and interpersonal treatment.

Legitimacy of Overall Treatment. It's also crucial to assert that perceptions of *social value* are affected by *both* interpersonal treatments *and* material outcomes (Tyler, 1989).

Distributive justice inequalities are still relevant to relational models of legitimacy because an individual's sense of social value is also determined by material outcomes (Berger, Cohen, & Zelditch, 1972; Tyler, 1989). In a sense, resource allocations still fall into a category of one kind of interpersonal treatment. In an instance of fair and ‘impartial’ procedures, members who consistently lose out on material outcomes are *less* likely to see those procedures as legitimate because their material outcomes demonstrate their lack of value.

However, justice judgments also shift and are updated with each interaction and resource allocation. Though distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational, justice may be highly uncorrelated in discrete resource distributions, these judgments become integrated over time into an overall justice judgment (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005). Procedures that seem fair at first, but constantly rule against oneself are not legitimate in the sense that they provide no instrumental (material or social) value. This is because consistently lacking material outcomes also conveys social value relative to others (Festinger, 1954).\

From this perspective, most inequalities threaten an overall sense of legitimacy because (both material and interpersonal) inequality demonstrates degrees of social value within groups. Ultimately advocating for material inequalities as being legitimate, but interpersonal and procedural inequalities as being illegitimate invokes contradictions with respect to the relational model of legitimacy and social value. Having contradictory institutional logics – e.g., both equal

and unequal – tends to lead individuals to be more likely to question the legitimacy of the institution (Seo & Creed, 2002).

In this next section, I will highlight how the justice literature discusses justice rules relating to equity and equality. Specifically, I will discuss how the justice literature discusses how justice facets (i.e. distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational) “ought” to be distributed (Leventhal, 1980; Leung, 2005). The aim of this section is to demonstrate the tightrope of equity and equality that becomes the responsibility of structural power holders to maintain.

The Legitimacy of Equality and Merit-based Inequality: Justice Allocation Rules

To best understand the tightrope of equity and equality, it is helpful to consider the history of the organizational justice literature (see Greenberg, 2011 for a review). There has been considerable debate regarding the dimensionality of organizational justice judgments. Originally, justice judgments were viewed as being driven singularly by distributive justice concerns regarding favorable outcomes (Homans, 1961; Adams, 1964). Over time, justice was broken down into two concepts – distributive justice and procedural justice (Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Then, it was broken down into a popular tripartite framework involving distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986). The current consensus is that there are four discrete justice concepts (Colquitt, 2001). These are distributive justice (Adams, 1965; Homans 1961), procedural justice (Leventhal, 1980), interpersonal justice, and informational justice (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001). Nonetheless, others still argue that justice concepts are highly related and can still be representative of a singular overarching “overall justice” judgment (Ambrose & Arnaund, 2005; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). Indeed,

overall justice items demonstrate strong internal consistency (Colquitt, 2001) and good model fit (Ambrose & Arnaund, 2005).

For the purposes of my theorizing, I will rely on a two-factor framework of justice that differentiates between distributive and procedural justice. Specifically, I side with Tyler and Lind (1992; Tyler & Bies, 1990) who treat impartiality (procedural justice, Leventhal, 1980) and interpersonal treatment (i.e. interactional justice, dignity, and respect; Bies & Moag, 1983) as facets of procedural justice that influence perceived social value. In general, I take a stance that is closer to the literature on overall justice (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005). As I detail in a new section headed as “Legitimacy – Equity and Inequality,” there is a long history of disagreement regarding the number of facets that should be considered in justice research. Indeed, Tyler and Lind (1992, p. 122) wrote that “as research has accumulated, it has become evident that fairness judgments concerning informal social process are so similar in cause and consequence to fairness judgments concerning formal decision-making procedures that they can be considered simply to be different manifestations of the same type of justice judgment.”

From the perspective of Tyler and Lind (1992), detailed explanations, advanced notice and feedback, and participative leadership are all subsumed under procedural justice, even though they are clearly parts of interpersonal and informational justice by today’s standards. This stance is no longer the consensus in the justice literature because it now recognizes four distinct factors (Colquitt, 2001). Nonetheless, though four justice facets may be easily discernable in a single interaction, Ambrose and colleagues argue that justice events become aggregated over time into an overall justice judgment. Thus, just because all four facets of justice can be distinguished, this does not imply that a facet-based approach is appropriate for all studies (Ambrose, & Schminke, 2007; Ambrose, Wo, & Griffith, 2015; Holtz & Harold, 2009).

I say this to suggest that my main interest is not in how each facet is different. Rather, I am especially interested in how justice facets are similar, are not pure, and do overlap. A good example of this is the distribution of opportunities. In general, people suggest that equal opportunity to perform is an element of procedural justice (Wagstaff. 1994). However, the distribution of opportunities such as training, development, networking inside and outside of the organization, access to company events, and the like are all elements of DJ that limit the opportunities of some members more than others. Thus, the idea that some members deserve more opportunity than others is an element of DJ that reduces PJ within the group. DJ often involves material outcomes that are observable, accumulate over time, and act as input into future opportunities. Thus, those items that are not easily categorized into one facet are, potentially, the resources that are most relevant to my theory.

A similar example could be how managers feel influence should be distributed among members. On the one hand, it seems obvious that some members should be more influential than others. However, having ‘process control’ (Thibaut & Walker, 1975) and influence over the processes that lead to outcomes is an element of PJ. If some members have more influence than others, then this could indicate that some members have more process control than others. Thus, treating influence or opportunities as strictly DJ or strictly PJ obfuscates the potential overlap between these dimensions with respect to some resources. Similarly, consider the distribution of health benefits. On the one hand, health benefits clearly fall into the category of DJ. However, unequally distributing health benefits means that leaders are more concerned about the well-being of some members more than others. Thus, an unequal distribution of health benefits is like an interpersonal injustice in the sense that not all members are awarded the same level of concern, being more empathetic to some employees than one is to others. Lastly, invitations to

company events could be considered an element of DJ. However, inviting some members but not others involves effectively ostracizing members by not allowing them to attend. Thus, this is also an example where DJ and IJ are highly similar. Indeed, there are many resources that blur the lines between DJ and other justice facets within a discrete allocation. This is also critical because, I am interested in overall judgments regarding (a) an obligation to enact inequality, and (b) employees' perceived overall legitimacy of the treatment resulting from their leader's attitudes toward inequality.

Distributive Justice. The distributive justice literature recognizes multiple resource distribution rules (equity, equality, and need, see Leventhal, 1980, 1976a, 1976b). Less research has considered the need dimension than has compared equity and equality rules (Leventhal, 1980). However, for the purposes of this dissertation, I focus on equity and equality. This is because a critical element of procedural justice is an equality of opportunity to perform (Roberson & Scott, 2022; Wagstaff, 1994). Parks, Conlon, Ang, & Bontempo, (1999) write that the "Equality rule suggests that people should be rewarded equally—each should receive the same, or have the same opportunity to benefit." Similarly, Wagstaff (1994, p. 143) writes that "equal opportunity to choose those actions which are considered meritorious in society is fundamental to the idea of desert." Thus, I lump equality and need dimensions together in the sense that equality of opportunity involves a deficit-based approach to creating equality of opportunity. That is, everyone must have their needs met to have equal opportunity to perform well.

By far the most prolific theory of distributive justice has been Adams (1965) Equity Theory. Indeed, equity has been one of the most influential theories in management and organizational justice (Miner, 2003). Equity Theory advocates that outcomes be distributed

unequally based on individuals' inputs to collective goals (a.k.a., merit). Some suggest that merit-based equity "is considered by many to be an ideal justice principle because only relevant inputs (e.g., abilities) should be considered and irrelevant factors (e.g., ethnicity, gender) should be ignored when distributing outcomes" (Son Hing et al., 2011 p. 433). Equity Theory has been used to explain individual-level outcomes (Greenberg, 2011) such as employee justice perceptions, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions (Poon, 2012; Soltis, Agneessens, Sasovova, & Labianca, 2013).

Equity Theory is a foundational social exchange theory (Cook & Emerson, 1978; Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013; Greenberg, 2011). Broadly, social exchange theory utilizes economic logic and language to describe social behaviors (Blau, 1964; Homans, 1961). Specifically, social exchange theory suggests that individuals have finite emotional resources that must be invested in profitable and enjoyable relationships (Homans, 196; Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997). Adams' (1965) proportionality principle suggests that each member should be compensated in proportion to their contribution to the group's success (a.k.a. merit). Specifically, individual merit is determined by comparing the ratio of one's own input (e.g., performance) to output (i.e., rewards) ratios with those of comparable other – e.g., coworkers in comparable jobs, or one's own job compared to a similar job at another firm.

People have an array of relational dynamics across contexts and do not seem to seek perfect communal sharing in all relationships. For example, Fiske's (1991) relational models theory suggests that people have four relational modes – communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching, and market pricing. Thus, in some contexts (e.g., when working with a contractor) individuals may prefer to have more transactional relationships with clear input-to-output ratios and returns on one's investments at work. Evidence suggest that people tend to

prefer more communal relationships with established in-group members, but prefer more transactional exchange-based relationships with out-group members (Molm, 2003; Cook, Cheshire, Rice, & Nakagawa, 2013).

Importantly for this analysis however, endorsements of merit-based equity ranking involve implicit support for social inequalities and of social dominance. “According to social dominance theory (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999), meritocracy is a hierarchy-enhancing ideology that serves to maintain inequality across social groups” (Son Hing et al., 2011, p. 434). In practice, the equity principle involves judgments that people vary in their deservedness and *should* be given unequal treatment with respect to outcomes. The foundational premise of Equity Theory is that individuals are not equal in terms of inputs. Thus, equity norms as outlined by Adams, (1965) can involve an implicit endorsement of inequality and of social dominance (Son Hing et al., 2011; McCoy & Major, 2007). However, individuals often feel a sense of injustice when they are deprived of benefits compared to their peers (i.e., relative deprivation; Walker, & Pettigrew, 1984; Smith & Pettigrew, 2015). Equally important is that past material inequalities create inequalities of opportunity when some have access and others do not.

Procedural Justice. The literature’s recommendations on justice rules regarding procedural and interpersonal justice are the opposite, however. Procedural justice involves whether procedures are applied (a) consistently across time and people, (b) without bias or favoritism, (c) based on accurate information, (d) are representative of the needs and values they are intended to serve, (e) conducted in accordance with moral and ethical virtue, and (f) provide a means of correcting for unfair outcomes (Leventhal, 1980). Similarly, procedural justice related to the degree to which a leader gives a subordinate “process control” by providing them voice and the ability to influence the processes that determine their fate (Thibaut & Walker,

1975). According to Tyler & Lind, (1992, p. 162), “the key to authoritativeness and legitimacy lies not in judgments about the decisions of an authority, but rather in judgments about the procedure, the process, and the quality of interaction that characterize encounters with authority”

Scholars agree people should be treated equally “under the law” in terms of procedures, dignity, and respect. “Procedures must also be neutral and treat every person equally. Finally, procedures must share control by providing opportunities for participation” (Gilliland & Hale, 2005, p 428). Procedural and interpersonal concerns are pervasive and less discreet than individual distributions of material resources. Therefore, how individuals are treated during the decision-making process seems to be weighted more heavily in assessments of self-esteem than are outcomes (Tyler & Lind, 1992; Leary & Baumeister, 1995). This has led some to conclude that procedural and interpersonal justice are most critical to judgments of overall legitimacy. Being treated without bias and having equal opportunity to perform assures that one may not have a favorable outcome this time, but that does guarantee that their outcomes will be unfavorable in the future.

Indeed, outcome inequalities may be tolerated when everyone is held to the same standards of judgment (Folger, 1977; Folger, Rosenfield, Grove, & Corkran, 1979). This is because assigning the same rules and standards to all individuals equally reduces the need for social comparison processes (Festinger, 1954) to evaluate one’s own social value. Rather, equal application of rules involves an equality of consideration under the law (Thibidaut & Kelly, 1975). When all members are considered equally, then unfavorable outcomes cannot be said to be due to individual malice or disliking (Folger, 1977). Rather, when members are treated with procedural and interpersonal justice, but receive unfair outcomes, they tend to have lower self-esteem and internalize their failings as their own (Folger, 1977), rather than due to the

(il)legitimacy of the institution. In this way, sustaining procedural justice and interpersonal justice is part of a legitimating processes (Tyler & Lind, 1992) that shifts outcome responsibility onto individuals (Brockner, Fishman, Reb, Goldman, Spiegel, & Garden, 2007).

There is one caveat that makes equality of procedural justice easy to enact, however. Theoretically, symbolic resources such as respect, esteem, and dignity are infinite resources that are not depleted. Thus, the idea that everyone can and should be treated with an equality of dignity and respect is intuitive in the sense that they are not obviously scarce. However, there are some important qualifications to this. First, individual psychological resources are often viewed as scarce or limited (Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014; Liao, Lee, Johnson, & Lin, 2021). Being other-oriented often involves deliberate care for others. However, self-control can be depleted by deliberate actions (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, & Tice, 2018) and evidence demonstrates that consistently enacting fair procedures is exhausting (Johnson, Lanaj, and Barnes, 2014). Thus, there is wide acknowledgement in the leadership literature that managers frequently form stronger relationships with some employees than with others (Yu, Matta, & Cornfield, 2018). Thus, equality of consideration with respect involving consistent procedures is difficult to achieve because symbolic resources can be *functionally* scarce (also see Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014). However, to the degree that personal psychological resources are scarce – *as structural power holders often experience* – elements of procedural and interpersonal justice may begin to fall into more market dynamics (Adams, 1965; Yu, Matta, Cornfield, 2018).

Individual and Cultural Differences in the Legitimacy of Equity

Equity Theory recognizes two types of inequity: under-reward and over-reward. However, this dissertation is focused on the implications of managers' sense of merit-based equity obligations rather than individual level outcomes of reward inequity. Thus, a detailed

review of individual-level responses is beyond the scope of this dissertation (see Greenberg, 1982; Mowday & Colwell, 2003 for reviews).

Nonetheless, there are at least two noteworthy points here. First, the vast majority of studies supporting Equity Theory focused on outcomes of *under-reward* (see, Greenberg, 2011) and its consequences on outcomes like turnover intentions (Poon, 2012; Soltis, Agneessens, Sasovova, & Labianca, 2013), stealing from the company (Greenberg, 1993), and reduced job satisfaction (Usmani & Jamal, 2013; Bakhshi, Kumar, & Rani, 2009; Al-Zu'bi, 2010). In Greenberg (1993) for example, employees who felt that their compensation was *less* than they deserved were more likely to steal from the company as retribution for the injustice.

Equity Theory also suggests that people will increase their performance (input) to match the outcome when they are over-rewarded (Dunette & Jorgenson, 1972; Greenberg, 1988; Greenberg & Ornstein, 1983; Sturman & Thibodeau, 2001). However, in contrast to under-reward, research on *over-reward* has found very inconsistent results (Greenberg, 2011; Rivera & Tedeschi, 1976). Thus, reactions to reward inequities are more so driven by a sense of deprivation and entitlements among low-performers (Walker, & Pettigrew, 1984; Smith & Pettigrew, 2015) rather than a justice response to a lack of perfect proportionality.

Individuals and organizations vary in their degree of emphasis on merit-based equity and equity-based reward structures (see Fischer & Smith, 2003 for a review; Leung & Bond, 1984). Thus, individuals and cultures vary in the degree that they see inequalities as legitimate. For example, Bougon and Maruyama, (1976) found that Dutch students in their sample tend to prefer *lower equity ratios* (that is, more input per outcome) compared to American students who allowed for larger merit-based inequalities (Bougon, & Maruyama, 1976; Harris, 1980). This suggests that there is considerable cultural variability in how much inequality is accepted based

on merit (Henrich, Heine, & Norenzayan, 2010; Boehm, 1999). Similarly, evidence from Feldman (1968) suggested that Americans were more motivated to restore equity than individuals from Greece or France (but also see Gergen, Morse, & Bode 1974; Bolino & Turnly, 2008, p. 32). Thus, the individuals' endorsement of the equity principle of justice can vary due to the sociocultural context.

It is notable that the implications of the proportionality principle for inequality can be quite severe if one considers the distribution of task performance in some ambiguous and complex domains. Research suggests that social *perceptions of equity* follow a *linear* trajectory rather than a proportionate one (Harris 1980). However, this does not easily transpose onto all workplaces. Aguinis and O'Boyle (2014) argue that individual *performance* follows an *exponential* distribution in patenting and publishing. That is, those who are more productive are exponentially more productive than their competitors. Thus, there may be a disconnect between linear social perceptions of equity (Harris 1980), and exponential concrete performance in some domains (Aguinis & O'Boyle, 2014). If performance follows an exponential distribution, then Equity Theory could be used to justify large inequalities in income and influence. As Cook and Hegtvedt, (1983, p. 223) noted, the group may adapt to accommodate an equity norm to appease outlying group members who would prefer equitable distributions that favor them.

Merit-Equity as Justification for Inequality Enhancement

Several scholars have raised concerns regarding equity endorsement as an inequality-legitimizing belief (McCoy & Major, 2007; Castilla & Benard, 2010). Merit-based equity is often invoked in instances where politicians oppose affirmative action, limiting international reconciliations, or advocate for overt force and punishments. In reference to these, Ho, Sidanius, Pratto et al., (2012, p. 583) write that, "In such rhetoric, other priorities, such as 'fairness,

meritocracy,' or 'national security,' are invoked rather than overt references to the inferiority of outgroups or the justness of dominance." A monumental amount of work demonstrates the importance of social equity and proportionality as a legitimate justice principle (Greenberg, 2011; Lawler, 1968; Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987). Those in positions of power tend to see inequalities as just and legitimate, whereas those lower in power tend to view it as illegitimate (Robinson & Bell, 1978). As references, items from the social dominance orientation scale include "Some groups of people are just more worthy than others" and "it's probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom" (Ho, Sidanius, Pratto et al., 2012, p. 584).

Notably, merit justifications are often used to the benefit of those with rank because some believe that,

"Those who have status, wealth, and power deserve their rewards and the poor deserve their fate due to a lack of hard work. People who more strongly desire group-based dominance—those with a higher social dominance orientation (SDO)—are more likely to endorse beliefs associated with merit: a belief in a just world (people get what they deserve in life), the Protestant work ethic, the belief that equal opportunity exists for all groups, and the notion that income reflects people's competence." (Son Hing, Bobocel, Zanna, Garcia, Gee, & Ozrazietti 2011, p. 434).

Thus, a belief in merit and equity can cause others to internalize their rank as fair and legitimate even when meritocratic prototypes are biased (McCoy & Major, 2007).

The foundation of a fair meritocracy is that all members are considered equal and have an equal opportunity to contribute (Roberson & Scott, 2022; Mijs, 2016; Alon & Tienda, 2007; Rawls, 1971). Fair meritocracy implies that hard work will yield proportionate rewards (Furnham, 1984;

Christopher, Zabel, Jones, & Marek, 2008). Under these conditions, the only differentiating factor between individuals would be effort and/or performance. However, decisions regarding what inputs are deserving of merit outcomes are *rarely value-neutral* and allow for constructed biases and market dynamics to emerge.

HYPOTHESES: RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP AND THE TIGHTROPE OF EQUITY AND EQUALITY

So far, I have defined upward responsibility as an individual's sense of obligation *to* the collective organization *for* organizationally relevant or collective goals *by standard of* organizational policy and legal standards (Peruzzotti & Smulovitz, 2006). Further, I defined downward responsibility as a sense of obligation *to* dependent-lower-ranking members *for* their security and well-being by the *standards of* social accountability. Most importantly, again, is that these responsibilities exist simultaneously and are related to one another. That is, managers who fail to fulfill their upward or downward responsibilities may not earn credibility and will not be able to effectively direct the efforts of their team or retain team members (Waldman, Siegel, & Stahl, 2020) Nonetheless, each involves the primacy of different stakeholder concerns and will influence who receives priority in managerial decision making (Voegtlin, et al., 2020).

In the following paragraphs, I develop my formal process model regarding how managers' personal sense of responsibility to their organization and to their employees influence their orientations toward different justice principles. Overall, I delineate an array of factors that amplify and attenuate powerholders' ability to legitimate the social structures they instate. A synopsis of these predictions can be found in Figure 2, which was presented at the introduction of this dissertation.

Responsibility and Allocation Preferences

A manager's sense of upward and/or downward responsibility will influence how they treat employees at work. On the one hand, downward-facing responsibilities involve *equal treatment* with respect to consideration and mutual respect: as would be expected in friendly interaction. Thus, in consideration of one's downward-facing responsibilities, managers may feel

that they should treat all members equally. On the other hand, upward-facing responsibilities regarding efficient resource allocations require the *unequal treatment* of individuals with respect to outcomes along market supply and demands. Leader consideration is conceptually different from providing favorable outcomes (one can be respected but not earn their reward). Thus, a manager could simultaneously sense that they *should* consider members equally with respect to some justice facets *and* that they *should* allocate resources equitably with respect to others. Nonetheless, consideration (i.e., procedural and interpersonal justice) and allocations are *both* forms of treatment that influence one's sense of social value. This yields a paradox of equal and unequal treatment.

Below, I draw on Allocation Preferences Theory (Leventhal, 1976a, 1976b; Leventhal et al., 1980) to describe how managers' distributive justice orientations vary across different domains of responsibility. Importantly, distributive justice involves perceptions of fairness regarding how tangible (e.g., pay or opportunity) or intangible (e.g., status or respect) resources are allocated in a group (Foa & Foa, 1974; 1980). In contrast, allocation preferences involve individual differences in the tendency to endorse equitable (i.e., inequality based on merit or deservedness) or equal distributions of rewards. Endorsing an *equity principle* suggests that social rewards should be distributed unequally because not all members provide equal inputs to the group (Adams, 1965). Endorsing an *equality principle*, in contrast, suggests that social rewards should be distributed equally among group members regardless of efforts (Deutsch, 1985, 1975).

People's allocation preferences vary across domains (Leventhal, 1976). Greenberg (2011, p. 277) writes that "One of the most strongly established findings in this regard is that people prefer equitable outcomes when interacting in formal organizational relationships, whereas they

prefer equal distributions or ones based on need when interacting with individuals with whom they have close personal relationships.” Evidence suggests that people prefer to allocate resources equally among their friends, and an equity rule among non-friends (Morgan & Sawyer, 1967; Benton, 1971; Greenberg, 1983). They prefer to share equally with those who are like them (Greenberg 1978), roommates (Sondak, Neale, & Pinkley, 1999), spouses (Jasso & Rossi, 1997), or those whom they will need to interact with in the future (Greenberg, 1979; Shapiro, 1975).

Individuals’ tendencies toward equity or equality rules are based on self-interested goals (Cook & Yamagishi, 1983). For example, lower socioeconomic status individuals tend to prefer equality rules, whereas those in power prefer unequal equity distributions (Tallman, & Ihinger-Tallman, 1979). Equitable but unequal outcomes are often preferred by high performers (Greenberg, 1978b), those who are equity sensitive or feel entitled to larger outcomes (Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987), and those high on social dominance orientation (Pratto, Stallworth, & Conway-Lanz, 1998). Some researchers suggest that equity-based compensation is essential for retaining their most hardworking and talented performers (Gupta & Shaw, 2014). Organizations that seek to add “high status” members to their team are unlikely to endorse equality norms.

In interactions among strangers, the allocation rules (equity or equality) that promote self-interested goals are often chosen (Austin, 1980). People adapt their allocation preferences to maintain a social image. When politeness, modesty, or reputation maintenance are the aim, people tend to endorse an equality orientation (Schwinger, 1980; Austin, 1980; Greenberg, 1983; Leventhal, Michaels & Sanford, 1972; Reis & Gruzen, 1976), unless the group prefers an equity principle (Leung & Bond, 1984; Reis & Gruzen, 1976).

“When concern for preserving harmony in a group is paramount, distributions of equal amounts may be deemed appropriate in order to minimize perceived relative deprivation and emphasize members' ‘common fate’...thus promoting solidarity... however, findings also suggest that when sizeable differences in levels of performance exist among group members, subjects prefer using a distribution rule that simultaneously rewards superior performance while keeping all members satisfied enough to prevent strong negative feelings” (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983, p. 223)

Thus, when it comes to generating social solidarity that responsible leadership scholars espouse (Maak & Pless, 2006), the equality principle seems to be the most effective. At a minimum, norms of equal consideration are necessary to maintain a sustainable level of social solidarity in the group. However, Cook and Yamagishi (1983) clarify that people and groups use more than one rule – *both* an equity rule *and* an equality rule – when making resource allocations. This is because there are many resources that are allocated in groups – i.e., outcomes, procedural treatment, information, etc. – and individuals can endorse equality norms on some bases, and equity norms on others. Each of these then contributes individually to employees’ overall legitimacy judgments. Thus, group allocation preferences involve a negotiation to appease both (a) the appropriate level of concern for group equality, and (b) the amount of social inequality allowed for social prestige and merit ranking.

Sense of Upward Responsibility, and Merit-Equity Obligations (MBO)

Managerial responsibilities come with certain obligations and, therefore, behaviors that “*should*” be conducted to fulfill those obligations. New managers often struggle in their transition from individual contributors into managerial roles with greater structural power and responsibility. Many managers can feel uncomfortable with conducting employee evaluations

(Villanova, Bernardin, Dahmus, & Sims, 1993). This is especially the case when performance evaluations have a real-world impact on employees. For example, Smith, Harrington, & Houghton, (2000) found that managers who said that their organization considers performance appraisal an important part of a supervisor's duties reported higher levels of rating discomfort. Further, this discomfort did not decline with years of managerial experience. However, becoming a manager comes with responsibilities that *involve a shift, therefore, from a non-evaluative paradigm among lower-power members to an obligation to enact evaluative equity norms* (Rucker, Galinsky, & Magee, 2018). Managers who feel obligated to the organization, therefore, will endorse equity norms even if it is not in their a-priori character.

Considering this responsibility, structural leaders may feel they must enforce merit-based equity norms to promote these ends. This involves (a) identifying standards, (b) measuring adherence to those standards, and (c) rewarding individuals based on their relative adherence to the standards. In most, if not all, organizational settings this principally involves task performance but also involves adherence to norms that maintain a positive climate. When it comes to utilizing resources to accomplish a goal, *equitable* allocations are necessary to make examples of the best and worst performers. Leventhal et al. (1980, p. 177), notes that “giving more rewards and resources to better performers facilitates group productivity” by signaling the benefits of adhering to standards and the opportunity costs of failing to meet standards.

Allocation preferences theory (Leventhal, 1976b, 1976a; Leventhal et al., 1980), suggests that equitable allocations enhance group performance in several ways. They do so by “(a) ensuring that workgroup members who are most useful to the system get the resources they need to be successful, (b) incentivizing high performers to remain in the organization, and (c) reinforcing high performers to help sustain their effort.” (Yu, Matta, & Cornfield, 2018, p. 5).

Investing resources into high return-on-investment (ROI) employees (Lepak & Snell, 1999) is the most effective use of organizational resources – a metric that managers are judged by. Some suggest that high-performers are indeed exponentially more productive than their lower-performing counterparts (Aguinis & O’Boyle, 2014; Aguinis, O’Boyle, Gonzalez-Mulé, & Joo, 2016), and managers must retain these employees as part of their obligations to the organization. Organizations often pay high performers more for fear that they will leave to competing firms. Firms that utilize merit-based structures are more effective at retaining top talent (Shaw & Gupta, 2007).

Tziner and Murphy (1999) also provide some support for the connection between sense of obligation to the organization (aka. upward responsibility) and enhanced equity endorsement. They found that managers with high affective commitment to the organization (e.g., “I am proud to be a part of this organization,” Mayer & Schoorman, 1992) discriminated more between high and low performers. That is, they saw high-performers in a very positive light and low-performers in a more negative light. Thus, the above evidence suggests that managers who feel responsible for the collective organization may be more likely to endorse merit-based equity norms and to discriminate more between high and low-performers.

The cooperative norms underscored by the responsible leadership literature may indicate that managers *should* treat members with an equality of consideration. However, the managerial responsibility to allocate resources efficiently may compel them to feel that they *should* treat members unequally with respect to outcomes.

Hypothesis 1: Managers' sense of upward responsibility will be positively related to their sense of Merit-Based Obligation (MBO) that they should favor high performers when

administering distributive justice (DJ-MBO), interpersonal informational justice (IJ-MBO), and procedural justice (PJ-MBO).

Sense of Downward Responsibility and Equality Obligations

Structural powerholders' sense of downward responsibility to dependent employees may lead them to feel that they *should* endorse norms of equal treatment. A sense of downward responsibility to those under their care may invoke a “no one gets left behind” operating procedure to ensure that each person has equal access to performance-enhancing resources at work (Roberson & Scott, 2022). Failing to do so may invoke team concerns regarding the manager's attention to the security of their team members – looking out for some members more than others – and could reduce members sense of psychological safety at work (Edmondson, 1999; Edmondson & Lei, 2014). Organizational employees can rarely remove threatening leaders from power. However, managers are beholden to their subordinates when it comes to their reputation among the team. Given the possibility that they may be held accountable by employees for unequal treatment (e.g., via gossip), a sense of downward responsibility may lead to equality sense of obligations toward equality to (a) maintain a positive reputation among employees, (b) avoid concerns of favoritism, and (c) to maintain solidarity among members.

Leaders' sense of downward responsibility may lead to risk-averse and easily justified treatment across lower-power members. Lerner and Tetlock (1999) note that sense of responsibility can lead more so to justifiable decisions than optimal decisions. If managers' behaviors or attitudes vary across members of their group, these differences require further justification than an equality condition. This may dissuade them from emphasizing or acknowledging performance differences between people. For example, Scott, Garza, Conlon, and Kim (2015) found that identity and reputation maintenance motives were the most potent

predictor of managers' justice enactment at work. In their study, they found that managers who were motivated to be seen as a competent manager were less likely to base distributive decisions “based on [their] subordinate’s effort and contribution” (p. 1579). Notably, considering concerns regarding justification, managers may tend toward more equal distributions to avoid the need to justify large differences between members.

A sense of downward responsibility is also likely to invoke equality endorsements to avoid conflict, social comparisons, and senses of deprivation among members (Stouffer et al., 1949; Walker & Pettigrew, 1984). When inequalities exist in groups, members tend to engage in social comparisons to determine the relative deservedness of higher-ranking members (Festinger, 1954). Inequalities will only be accepted when members see themselves as less deserving than advantaged members. Nonetheless, relative deprivation can invoke a sense of anger (Mackie, Devos, & Smith, 2000) and injustice from members who see themselves as unduly disadvantaged. Members who feel disadvantaged are more likely to sabotage the job performance of unsympathetic members (Olson, Roese, Meen & Robertson, 1995) or go on strike (Smith Cronin, & Kessler, 2008). Inequalities can also impact individual-level outcomes for lower-ranking members. For example, those who feel disadvantaged tend to feel more anxiety and depression (Keith, 1997; Keither & Schafer, 1985; Keith & Schafer, 1987). Thus, a sense of downward responsibility will make leaders more sensitive to inequalities within their group to protect the interests of lower-ranking members. This is in line with prior work finding that responsibility leads managers to allocate more resources toward the lowest-ranking members (Ulber, Hamann, & Tomaselli, 2017; Blake & McAuliffe, 2011; Sheskin, Bloom, & Wynn, 2014).

Lastly, concerns about managerial favoritism are one of the longest-standing concerns in managerial leadership (Henrich, 2020; Weber, 1946). Managers who see 20% of their employees as doing 80% of the work will put substantial investment into rewarding and incentivizing high performers and invest less in ‘low ROI’ members (Lepak & Snell, 1999). However, managers who have strong relationships with some followers and not others, can invoke claims of favoritism that could threaten group functioning. Yu, Matta, and Cornfield (2018) suggested that managers may endorse equality to promote group solidarity. They write that “this is especially effective for minimizing feelings of jealousy and mutual antagonism, thereby fostering group harmony and solidarity, which is important for teamwork (Deutsch, 1985; Leventhal, 1976b)” (p. 1161).

Thus, upward responsibility to allocate resources efficiently may compel them to feel that they *should* treat some members better than others. However, downward responsibility to maintain a safe and cooperative environment may lead managers to feel that they *should* treat members as equals.

***Hypothesis 2:** Managers’ sense of downward responsibility will be negatively related to their sense of Merit-Based Obligation (MBO) that they should favor equality when administering distributive justice (DJ-MBO), interpersonal informational justice (IJ-MBO), and procedural justice (PJ-MBO).*

HYPOTHESES: SENSE OF POWER, ACTION, AND AMPLIFIED PERCEPTIONS OF INEQUALITY

Sense of Power Aids Responsibility Fulfillment

Moving beyond the responsibilities of power, managers' personal sense of power will impact (a) how responsive they are to their responsibilities, and (b) their ability to enact unbiased procedures that legitimate inequalities at work. When managers feel powerful, this should amplify goal-related cognitions such as sense of obligation toward merit and equality. This is because a sense of power directs attention to goal-relevant (instrumental) information (Guinote, 2007a, 2007b, 2017), and increases one's sense of confidence in their attitudes (Fast, Gruenfeld, Sivanathan, & Galinsky, 2009). Thus, managers who feel powerful may be more attentive to and zealous about their attitudes related to responsibility fulfillment – such as those related to equity and equality. Sense of power increases attention to goal-relevant information and reduces concerns for social threats (Guinote, 2007, 2017; Galinsky et al., 2003; Keltner et al., 2003). Power involves a network of cognition and behaviors (Smith & Galinsky, 2010) that activates goal-directed behavior (Galinsky et al., 2003; Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008; Guinote, 2007b; Smith & Trope, 2006).

Prior work has not directly tested how power may amplify attitudes such as those related to equity and equality. However, there is broad support that sense of power amplifies existing predispositions. For example, DeCelles, DeRue, Margolis, & Ceranic (2012) investigated the role of psychological power in moral awareness. In two experiments, they demonstrated that power amplifies one's sense of moral identity and awareness. Though power is often portrayed as having a causal association with pro-self-behaviors (Gruenfeld, Inesi, Magee, & Galinsky, 2008; Kipnis, 1972), they argued that sense of power's core outcome is to amplify individuals'

predispositions. That is, “power might not directly impact behavior but might rather activate individuals’ underlying traits or attributes” (p. 682). In their study, priming power amplified individuals’ predispositions. Those with low moral identity were more selfish and deviant (e.g., taking extra breaks, lying, leaving early) were more prone to these behaviors from a sense of power (Study 1). Further, those with low moral identity had reduced moral awareness in a dictator game when they felt powerful. However, in contrast, those with a high moral identity had enhanced moral awareness when they felt powerful. Thus, their evidence supports that there is a person-by-situation interaction that amplifies predispositions.

Chen, Lee-Chai, and Bargh (2001) also found support that psychological power amplifies individual’s predispositions. In their experimental study, they tested the interactive effects of participants sense of power and their communal or exchange orientations (Clark & Mills, 1979). Those with a communal orientation are more other-oriented and “take other’s needs and feelings into account” when making decisions (p. 176). In contrast, those with an exchange orientation “generally expect something in return” when they provide services to others (p. 176). In their study, they found that power made communal participants more communal compared to the control condition. They were more considerate, *gave their partners less demanding tasks*, expressed fewer racist attitudes, and tended toward more socially desired behaviors broadly. Similarly, but in contrast, power also amplified the tendencies of exchange-oriented individuals. It leads them to demand more of others and express fewer socially desirable attitudes. In conclusion, they suggest that power operates in “Person X Situation model, in which power is a situational variable that can... elicit self-interested behavior, or positive effects, such as encouraging socially responsible conduct, depending on the nature of the goals people associate with” power (p. 172).

These works have tended to juxtapose either pro-self *or* pro-social orientations within their studies. However, in the context of multi-stakeholder responsibilities, sense of power should amplify the effects of both upward and downward responsibilities. “Consistent with the situated focus theory of power (see Guinote 2007a), power enhances the expression of any traits, states, or desires that emerge as individuals interact with the environment” (Guinote, 2017, p. 365). Thus, sense of power and sense of responsibility may increase the relationships between responsibility and related attitudes. If fulfilling different responsibilities are connected to different attitudes toward justice (Leventhal, 1976b, 1976b; Leventhal et al, 1980) then sense of power may increase managers' sense that they *should* treat members equally and/or that they *should* treat members unequally.

Hypothesis 3a: *Sense of power will moderate the positive relationship between Sense of Upward Responsibility and managers' MBO for justice facets such that the relationship will be more positive when sense of power is high.*

Hypothesis 3b: *Sense of power will moderate the negative relationship between Sense of Downward Responsibility and managers' MBO for justice facets such that the relationship will be more negative when sense of power is high.*

HYPOTHESES: FOLLOWERS PERCEPTIONS OF LEGITIMACY

The Main Effect of Equity and Equality

Ranking structures may help in the aggregate. Individuals use social hierarchies to determine the appropriateness of their attitudes, behaviors, and values (Festinger, 1954). One reason that people seek group membership is as a source of self-validation (Festinger, 1954). Notably, this self-validation can involve both positive and negative validation. For example, self-verification theory (Swann, 2012) and behavioral-plasticity theory (Brocker, 1988), and dominance complementarity theory (Tiedens & Fragle, 2003) all suggest that some individuals prefer lower-ranking roles. In some cases, individuals with low self-esteem prefer to be treated unfairly (Wiesenfeld, Swann, Brocker, & Bartel, 2007) because it validates their own negative self-views (Swann, 2012). Novices, for example, often prefer to differ to the opinions of expert opinions rather than their own views.

Social hierarchies communicate social norms regarding what is valued by the group as a whole and create competitive social systems that orient members toward collective goals (Anderson & Brown, 2010; Sanner & Bunderson, 2016). However some argue that competitive merit-based structures are detrimental to individuals on both sides (Deutsch, 1985). This is because strong meritocratic norms compel rank striving and perfectionism. Indeed, those with rank are expected to conform to subjective prototypical standards *even more* than lower ranks are (Kippenberg, 2011). Sandel (2020 p. 183) writes that merit “induces anxiety, debilitating perfectionism, and a meritocratic hubris” among high performers, and “imposes a demoralizing, even humiliating sense of failure” among low ranks. When parents have exacting standards for their children, this is causally related to their child’s sense of perfectionism (Frost, Marten, Lahrt, & Rosenblate, 1990). This includes increasing concern for mistakes (e.g., “If I fail partly, then it

is as bad as being a complete failure”), and unreasonably high standards (e.g. “it is important to me that I be thoroughly competent in everything I do”). For this reason, some evidence suggests that high-performing athletes experience more anxiety and higher cortisol levels in anticipation of a performance episode (Papacosta, Nassis, & Gleeson, 2016; Filaire, Alix, Ferrand, & Verger, 2009; Scanlan & Passer, 1979) than lesser performing athletes. The high stakes of competitive ranking can convey that “one must win or be seen as a failure” is one reason for the connection between competitiveness and unethical behavior (Ford & Richardson, 1994).

Social differentiations (i.e., equity norms, Adams, 1965, 1963) may be a necessary component of modern organization (Weber, 1946). Nonetheless, this perspective may have unintended consequences. Equity norms tend to be preferred by very high performers – rather than those who are relatively average (Cook & Yamagishi, 1983). However, these individuals are definitively rare (Aguinis & O’Boyle, 2014). And, this social differentiation invites non-conformity and lack of care for lower-ranking others. Being of high rank is associated with entitlement and taking credit for the work of others (Lammers, Stapel, & Galinsky, 2010; Kipnis, 1972; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Those in legitimate positions of power feel a sense of hubristic pride in their rank and reduces norm conformity (Fast, Sivanathan, Mayer, & Galinsky, 2012; Hays & Goldstein, 2015). Conversely, those in lower power positions can feel a sense of social rejection (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) and humiliation (Silver, Conte, Miceli, & Poggi, 1986).

Greer et al., (2018)’s meta-analysis of social inequality in teams indicated social differentiation increased conflict in teams, which offsets the performance benefits of social differentiation (see Anderson & Brown, 2010; Bunderson et al., 2016; Sanner & Bunderson 2018, for an alternative take). Thus, these systems can catalyze conflict (Greer, 2014) and make people feel less valued on average. Vecchio (2000) found that employees or organizations with

win/lose reward systems (as is the case with zero-sum decisions in employment and promotion) tend to feel less valued by their team and organizations ($r = -.22$).

“Although the assumption that competition is advantageous for society and even ennobling for the individual might appeal to many business leaders and employees, in reality, the effects of competition on performance and social welfare are mixed (Murayama & Elliot, 2012; Stanne, Johnson, & Johnson, 1999). Furthermore, an analysis of recent corporate scandals suggests that competition places pressure on employees to behave unethically, which imposes costs on employees and the wider society....” (Vadera and Pathki, 2021, p. 1060)

A manager’s sense that they should treat members with equality will have direct positive effects on employees’ perceptions of legitimacy. Fair procedures are still important when resources are allocated equally, but people are especially concerned about procedural justice when members are treated unequally. Decision-making procedures are less important when resources are allocated equally (Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996; Brockner, Wiesenfeld, & Diekmann, 2009; van den Bos, 1999). When employees receive equal treatment to others, they tend to perceive the decision-making to be impartial to persons and are, therefore, more satisfied with the procedures (Brockner, Wiesenfeld, & Diekmann, 2009; van den Bos, 1999). Fair treatment is used as a heuristic for assessing one’s sense of value in the group (Lind & Tyler 1988; Lind & Tyler 1988). When members receive unequal treatment, it prompts social comparison processes to determine one’s standing (Adams, 1965; Blader & Tyler, 2005; Festinger, 1954). When members feel that they are treated less well compared to a colleague, they can feel a sense of relative deprivation (Stouffer, Suchman, DeVinney, Star & Williams, 1949) that can lead to stress, negative emotions, and revolt (Greenberg et al., 1993).

Nonetheless, these social comparison and attribution processes may become less relevant if a manager treats all members of their team equally (Yu, Matta, & Cornfield, 2018). Blader and Tyler, (2013, p. 343) write that “the attributional function of procedures is primarily in operation when equity is the distributive rule; when need or equality are the active distributive rules, the attributional function of procedures is not relevant.” This is because equal treatment among members fosters a sense of solidarity and unity among members (Deutsch, 1995) that occludes the need for within-group social comparisons. Rather, it fosters a positive relational environment among equals that reduces members’ uncertainty regarding their safety and security (Lind & Van Den Bos, 2002; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002) or fear of exclusion (Leary & Baumeister, 1995; Lind & Tyler 1988). Maintaining a positive relational environment is a foundation of legitimate authority (Tyler, 1997), and ensuring that members feel equally respected and included is part of this end. A manager’s sense that they should treat members equally should lead them to focus on unity and solidarity within the team.

Equality of treatment is not inherently legitimate (Adams, 1965). Thus, managers sense that they should treat members equally and may not have a one-to-one relationship with employees’ sense of legitimacy as not all members will desire equality. However, an environment where each member feels equally valued will invoke fewer concerns regarding the legitimacy of managerial decisions in general.

***Hypothesis 4:** Managers’ MBO for justice facets will be negatively related to employee perceptions of legitimacy, overall justice, and affective trust in their supervisor.*

This hypothesis should not be taken to suggest that all members will see norms of equality as legitimate. As I discuss later, individual differences in competitiveness may lead some to sense that some are entitled to receive more than others. However, as Blader and Tyler,

(2013, p. 343) note, norms of equal treatment are less likely to evoke justice concerns. Further, dissatisfaction with equality norms will be most likely to emerge among a few very high performers (e.g., star performers, Aguinis & O'Boyle, 2014) – rather than those who are relatively average (Cook & Yamagishi, 1983). Thus, this hypothesis should be taken as stating that managers' endorsement of equal treatment will be positively related to perceptions of legitimacy in general rather than in all cases.

Individual Differences Moderate the Perceived Appropriateness of Equity and Equality

Trait Competitiveness. The legitimacy of a leaders' merit-equity or equality endorsement may also be in the eye of the beholder and may vary across team members due to individual differences. This could create an interpersonal tightrope between the personal values of the managers and those of their employees. For example, people vary in their competitiveness and cooperativeness. Goal Interdependence Theory (Deutsch, 1949; Tjosvold, 1986; Tjosvold, Wong, & Feng Chen, 2014) suggests that people's orientation toward competition and cooperation are determined by the nature of their reward structures (actual or perceived). When individuals see their goals as positively connected such that if A benefits (loses), as does B such that is they "sink or swim" together. The potential for individuals to win or lose together induces cooperative attitudes. In contrast, when goals are viewed as negatively connected such that if A benefits (loses) then B loses (benefits) in a win-lose scenario. This type of environment induces competitive behavior and attitudes. Nonetheless, "it is well to realize that few situations are 'purely' positive or negative. In most situations, people have a mixture of goals so that it is common for some of their goals initially to be positive and some negatively interdependent" (Deutsch, 2011, p. 24). Thus, cooperation and competition are orthogonal constructs and individuals can be both highly competitive and cooperative.

Broadly, neither equity norms, nor competitiveness require zero-sum orientations. For example, individuals can take on a competitive personal development orientation (Andrews-Fearson & Davidai, 2023; Newby & Klein, 2014). This can involve internal comparisons that reward one's personal performance relative to past performance. Having reward structures that focus on individuals' development and progression over time reduces the need for zero-sum social comparisons regarding personal rank. Nonetheless, a personal development orientation in teams still involves a merit-based reward structure that enhances and legitimates the ranking structure. Competitiveness is highly related to ability-based social comparisons (Liu, Elliot, & Li, 2021) and would be likely to still perceive a personal development environment as competitive. Further, personal development is a tertiary factor of competitiveness – behind general competitiveness and dominance (Newby & Klein, 2014). Thus, in general, competitiveness is more closely related to dominance than to personal development orientations.

Those high in competitiveness are unlikely to fully appreciate equality norms because they do not align with their motivations. In their experimental study, Bönnte, Lombardo, and Urbig, (2017) found that those who were more competitive were more likely to seek out zero-sum competitive environments. Competitiveness involves “an individual's general tendency to select into competitive environments... where individual's goals are not simultaneously achievable given the sets of possible behaviors, i.e., in competitive environments, every attempt of individuals to get closer to their own goals makes it less likely for other individuals to achieve their goals” (Bönnte, Lombardo, & Urbig, 2017, p. 179-180). Further, they project their competitiveness outwardly. “Competitors perceive a wide range of situations as ‘competitive,’ believe that others have equally competitive motives, and are unwilling to cooperate even when doing so would maximize their outcomes. Consequently, they frequently elicit competitive

behavior from others, thereby confirming their beliefs about interaction partners (“I’m facing a hostile opponent in a risky situation”) and reinforcing their competitive tendencies (“I need to take care of myself”).” (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003, p. 368). Thus, they may assume that others share in their concerns for equity and proportionality.

Leaders may also feel obligated to enact equity ranking structures to appease competitive individuals who seek or feel entitled to rank. A leader’s legitimacy can be undermined if members feel that they are not being personally benefitted – relationally and/or instrumentally - by the current paradigm. “Instrumental models hold that individuals react to the instrumental aspects of their experiences with social entities and authorities... An instrumental perspective on legitimacy predicts that entities will be judged as legitimate when they are perceived as promoting the material interests of the individual” (Tost, 2011, p. 690). Competitive individuals will prefer the benefits that can be gained in an equity system and may be most likely to revolt if they do not get their way.

A manager’s emphasis on equity ranking structures may provide opportunities to demonstrate one’s merit and ability compared to others. Thus, competitive employees will respond well to their managers’ sense of obligation to enact merit-based inequalities.

In contrast, managers’ concern for social equality norms may be aversive to positive inequities – some having more than others – and may even punish them for seeking rank (Dreber, Rand, Fudenberg, & Nowak, 2008). Indeed, egalitarian groups will intentionally limit members’ ability to achieve rank, sometimes giving away their spoils to a random other member, or even jokingly degrading high-performance as a means of maintaining their egalitarian ethos (Boehm, 1999). Thus, competitive individuals may feel oppressed by the group (Barker, 1993; Boehm, 1999) that wants to limit inequalities and rank-seeking.

However, for some being overly concerned with equality-based norms that “keep the peace” may seem *irrational* to those who want to achieve and demonstrate their abilities. For example, in defense of Freedman’s (1970) stockholder primacy doctrine, Stieb (2009, p. 402) writes that “The price of solace and compassion is too high when it forces the redistribution of wealth from the haves to the have-nots *carelessly*. Redistribution of wealth abuses those who *merit* their earnings” (italics in original). Thus, competitive individuals feel that equality norms may “carelessly” inhibit high achievements and prefer competitive norms that are more efficient and performative (Bolton & Ockenfels, 2006).

***Hypothesis 5:** Employees’ competitiveness will moderate the relationships between managers’ MBO for justice facets and sense of organizational legitimacy, affective trust in one’s supervisor, and sense of overall justice such that these relationships are more positive when worker’s individual competitiveness is high.*

Trait Cooperativeness and Inequality Aversion. An individual’s level of cooperativeness may also influence their responses to leaders’ equity and equality endorsements. Cooperative individuals prefer to work in groups (Wagner, 1995) and believe that joint efforts are the best way to achieve team outcomes. Goal interdependence theory (Deutsch, 1975, 1985) suggests that those with a cooperative orientation tend to see their goals as aligned with others. That is, cooperative individuals see team tasks as opportunities for win-win collaborations with team members. “Cooperatively structured situations create the perception of *shared fate* and promote supportive behaviors, whereby each group member looks out for the interests of the others” (Beersma, Hollenbeck, Humphry, Moon, Conlon, & Ilgen, 2003, p. 574, italics added). Norms of outcome equality foster a shared identity among members. Sampson (1975) write that “equality-oriented behavior communicates the situated identity of cooperation among status

equals with common interests; equity-oriented behavior communicates competitiveness among persons stratified in a status hierarchy” (p. 54).

Cooperativeness involves inequity aversion. Inequity aversion involves a “need to keep deviations between their own rewards and the rewards of others as small as possible. Inequity-averse individuals are able to solve social dilemmas by resisting the temptation to pull ahead of others or—if punishment is possible—by punishing and discouraging free-riding” (Hughes, Leibo, Phillips et al., 2018, p. 2; here, they use the work equity as synonymous with equality). “Inequity aversion in humans is assumed to originate from an evolutionary mechanism regulating successful cooperative interactions” (Ulber, Hamann, & Tomasello, 2017, p. 65). Indeed, people are not only averse to receiving less than relevant others, they can also be unsatisfied when they receive more than others (Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987). Indeed, children as young as 3 years old show aversions to inequality and will sacrifice their benefits to have more equal outcomes with their peers (Ulber, Hamann, & Tomaselli, 2017; Blake & McAuliffe, 2011; Sheskin, Bloom, & Wynn, 2014). Similarly, in their study at a boy’s summer camp, Sutter (2007) reported that about 25% of their sample rejected allocations that favored them, for more equal allocations across the group members. Similarly, in their experimental study, Bolton and Ockenfels, (2006), one-third of their sample preferred more equal resource distributions even when it would be less efficient than unequal distributions.

Inequalities invoke negative emotions that can hurt team cooperation. In their laboratory study of how groups respond to inequalities, Daws, Fowler, Johnson, McElreath, and Smirnov, (2007) found that groups tended to avoid inequalities by reallocating from the most-well-off to the least-well-off. They wrote that “social inequality arouses negative emotions that motivate both the reduction and augmentation of others’ incomes. This finding supports research that

indicates humans are strongly influenced by egalitarian preferences” (p. 796). Many, but not all, people will reject unequal outcomes even when it leaves them worse off. In ultimatum games, participants will often reject unequal and disadvantageous offers even at a cost to themselves. For example, Takagishi et al (2010) found that about half of their sample of 5-6-year-olds rejected unequal disadvantageous offers. Thus, these participants were willing to give up the benefit to both themselves and their partner if they felt they received less unfairly. Thus, there are instances where both advantaged and disadvantaged members will engage in balancing behaviors that equalize individuals’ outcomes (Emerson, 1962).

Highly cooperative individuals are less likely to see the collaborative elements of group inequalities. “When concern for preserving harmony in a group is paramount, distributions of equal amounts may be deemed appropriate to minimize perceived relative deprivation and emphasize members' "common fate" (Leventhal et al 1972; Steiner 1972; Smith & Cook 1973), thus promoting solidarity.” (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983, p. 223). Equity and proportionality norms can pose a special problem for teams and groups who are trying to maintain a cooperative environment because they separate the group into ranks of deservedness. Yet, they seem necessary to appease rank-seeking or very high-performing individuals (Cook & Yamagashi, 1983; Greer, De Jong et al., 2018; Aguinis & O’Boyle, 2014). Thus, cooperative individuals may respond especially well to equality norms, but be aversive to equity norms.

***Hypothesis 6:** Employees’ cooperativeness will moderate the relationships between managers’ MBO for justice facets and sense of organizational legitimacy, affective trust in one’s supervisor, and sense of overall justice such that these relationships are more negative when worker’s individual cooperativeness is high.*

OVERVIEW OF STUDIES

The hypotheses proposed in this dissertation will be tested in two studies. First, Study 1 is an experimental study that will test a 2x2x2 hypothesis regarding the impact of Responsibility (upward/downward) and interaction with Sense of Power (high/low) and Structural Power (high/low). The goal of this experimental study is to test hypotheses 1, 2, 3a, and 3b, as well as to test my proposition regarding the perceived distance between high and low performers in these conditions. Participants will be placed in a hypothetical managerial position where each of these responsibilities are differentially emphasized. I will test the equality of their consideration (i.e., procedural justice regarding opportunities for appeal; and interactional justice regarding polite, authentic, and detailed communications in emails to employees) and reward judgments (i.e., recommendations for a promotion, and bonus allocations). If my hypotheses are supported, we would expect the greatest variance in justice enactment (i.e., the standard deviation of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice; Colquitt, 2001) in the upward-responsibility/high-sense of power condition. In contrast, we would expect the lowest variance in justice enactment in the downward-responsibility/low-sense-of-power condition.

Study 2 tests my full model in a real-world context utilizing a field study and structural equation modeling. This study will include ratings from supervisor-subordinate dyads at three-time points to reduce common methods variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003).

STUDY 1: EXPERIMENTAL STUDY OF RESPONSIBILITY ON EQUAL AND UNEQUAL TREATMENT

Overview

Study 1 utilizes an experimental design to test the effects of responsibility, psychological power, and structural power on one's tendency to enact justice unequally across persons.

Experimental designs allow me to utilize random assignment to maximize the internal validity of my study by ruling out alternative explanations for observed effects (Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

The laboratory setting also allows me to create behavioral measures of justice enactment.

Procedures for Study 1 were drawn from a combination of Overbeck and Park (2006, Study 1 and 2) and Blader and Chen (2012, Study 4). Participants role-played as managers in a simulated publishing company where employees worked from home. All participants were randomly assigned to conditions. Each participant in the experiment made a total of 32 decisions: 8 distributive decisions, 8 procedural decisions, 8 informational decisions, and 8 interpersonal decisions. Informational and interpersonal justice are coded from the participants' text communications with employees.

Participants. A total of 326 participants were recruited for this study. This included 198 supervisors recruited from the Amazon Connect survey platform. Participants from this source were paid \$7 for participating in the survey and were given a \$1 bonus for completing the entire survey. The sample also included 128 undergraduate students who completed the online experiment for class credit. After the data were collected, I made an effort to identify careless responses. I did so by first removing participants who did not complete the entire activity (21 participants). The activity was quite long (median response time was 40 minutes with a standard deviation of ~8 minutes) and “very fast responses are assumed to be careless in nature” (Meade

& Craig, 2012, p. 4). Therefore, I removed participants who spent less than 20 minutes to complete the activity (13 participants; bottom 5% of survey responses). The final sample included 292 participants. The average age for the sample was 33 years old ($SD = 12.73$). The sample was 47% female. See Appendix B for all materials for Study 1

Experimental Procedures

Structural Power Manipulation. Participants were asked to partake in an online role-playing exercise as a Lead Copy Editor for a printing company. Upon beginning the role-play exercise, they “receive an email” from the hiring manager of Clarity Copy Co., notifying them of their organizational rank and job description. In the high structural power condition, participants were assigned to the role of *Senior Director* of the Central Region of the publishing company, and they were presented with an organizational chart indicating that they were at the top of the hierarchy. In the low structural power condition, they were assigned to the role of *Lead Junior Editor* and were presented with a chart indicating that they were equal with their peers at the bottom of the hierarchy.

Upward and Downward Responsibility Manipulation. Participants’ sense of responsibility was manipulated utilizing Overbeck and Park’s (2006, p. 132 and p. 237) “people-oriented” or “product-oriented” stimuli. They then begin a short email correspondence with their hiring manager to socialize them to the responsibilities of their job. In the upward responsibility condition, their hiring manager communicates that the company’s mission is to ensure the best interests of the company in terms of overall performance and told that “their actions, communications, compensation decisions, and feedback, should be consistent with the high value that the company places on collective performance.” In the downward responsibility conditions, the hiring manager communicates that the company's mission is to ensure employee satisfaction

and well-being. They were told that their “feedback to employees and compensation decisions should be consistent with the high value that the company places on its employees and their concerns.”

Sense of Power Manipulation. In their last interaction with their hiring manager before interacting with employees, the hiring manager communicates the sense of power conditions. In the high sense of power condition, the manager communicates that the participant's job is to make decisions regarding employee compensation and promotion. The manager reiterates that they will follow the participants recommendations exactly and that they will not be challenged by their manager. In the low sense of power condition, the manager communicates that the participant's job is to make these decisions, however, the manager is “not sure if they will use their recommendations... [and] may or may not do what you say regarding these decisions.”

Dependent Variables: Justice Inequality

Dependent variables were taken from participants' behaviors regarding distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice in interactions with employees. These materials were also adapted from Blader and Chen (2012, Study 4). Participants interacted with four remote-work employees via two email communications with each employee. This was a total of eight communications for participants. Employee characteristics did not vary across experimental conditions. These communications are presented in Appendix B. All participants responded to the same eight email communications from the same four employees. In the employee (pre-scripted) emails, employees communicated their experience and performance on their assigned proofreading task. To reduce concerns regarding potential ordering effects, the correspondences were presented in a random order to all participants.

In all cases, participants' emphasis on merit was measured using the standard deviation of their' distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice behaviors in their interactions with employees. A single score for each employee was first calculated by averaging the treatment of the specific employee across the two interactions. Then the standard deviation across the four employees was calculated. A large standard deviation indicates that the participant is giving significantly more rewards, voice, explanation/ justification, or polite treatment favoring some performers relative to others.

Distributive Justice. Within the experiment, employees were either high-performing (correcting 90-95% of proofreading errors) or low-performing (correcting only 80-85% of proofreading errors). At the end of each interaction, the participant was asked to grant bonuses (ranging from \$0 to \$5). The standard deviation of bonuses was used as the behavioral measure of sense of obligation to enact distributive decisions such as pay in a more unequal way.

Procedural Justice. After making the bonus allocation decision, participants were asked if they wanted to allow the employee "to plead their case regarding the bonus amount." Allowing employees to have voice in decision-making procedures is a critical indicator of procedural justice (Thidaut & Walker, 1975). It is also noteworthy that this approach is realistic in the sense that choosing to select "no, I do not want to let them plead their case" reduces the workload on the participant (Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014).

Interactional Justice – Informational and Interpersonal Justice. Participants then provided a written prompt evaluating the employee's performance and explaining why they were granted the bonus or not. Participants' written responses acted as input to a coded measure of managers' interactional justice. Interactional justice involves both interpersonal justice and informational justice (Bies & Moag 1986). Coding for these interactional justice facets was done

utilizing a linguistic sentiment analysis software. The Linguistic Inquiry Word Count (LIWC-2022) software has been extensively validated (see Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010; Pennebaker, Boyd, Booth, Ashokkuman, & Francis, 2022) and has been used in prior research published in the *Academy of Management Journal* (Brett, Olekalns, Friedman, Goates, Anderson & Lisco, 2007; Nadkarni & Chen, 2014), the *Journal of Applied Psychology* (Sergent & Stajkovic, 2020; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009; Madera, Hebl, & Martin, 2009), and the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Sundar & Cao, 2020; Barclay & Saldanha, 2016)

To capture interpersonal justice, I utilized equal weighting of LIWC assessments for politeness (e.g. thank you, please, thanks, good afternoon), prosociality (e.g. thank, please, help, care; see Nai, Narayanan, Hernandez, & Savani, 2018), and positive tone (e.g. good, happy, hope). Informational justice refers to the truthfulness, authenticity, and detail of information shared with participants (Bies & Moag 1986; Bies, 2005). Informational justice was captured utilizing equal weighting of the assessments of perceived authenticity (see, Newman, Pennebaker, Berry, & Richards, 2003 study of identifying deception/truthfulness in texts; see Moore, Lee, Kim & Cable 2017 for use of the authenticity measure in the *Journal of Applied Psychology*) and total word count to capture the breadth of information communicated.

Manipulation Checks

Sense of Upward and Downward Responsibility. Responsibility orientations were measured using three items each. Each item was measured on a five-point scale ranging from 1 “to a very small extent” to 5 “to a very large extent.” Example items include “I feel a duty to protect the goals of my organization” for upward responsibility ($\alpha = .79$) and “I feel a duty to protect the interests of my employees” for downward responsibility ($\alpha = .91$).

Sense of Power. Sense of power was rated using the six-item measure from Anderson, John, and Keltner, (2012). An example item includes “If I want to, I get to make the decisions” ($\alpha = .93$).

STUDY 1 RESULTS

Before I conducted a series of regressions for the test of my hypotheses, I assessed the effectiveness of the manipulations in this 2 (upward responsibility/downward responsibility) x 2 (high/low sense of power) x 2 (high/low structural power) experimental design. I found significant effects for my upward responsibility manipulation ($F(2, 290) = 8.82, p < .01, n^2 = .03$). Participants in the upward responsibility condition ($M = 4.55, SD = .61$) reported higher mean levels of responsibility to their organization compared to the downward responsibility condition ($M = 4.34, SD = .62$). I also found a significant effect of the responsibility conditions on participants' sense of responsibility to their employees ($F(2, 290) = 7.79, p < .01, n^2 = .02$). Participants in the downward responsibility condition ($M = 4.20, SD = .83$) reported significantly more sense of responsibility to their employees than in the upward responsibility condition ($M = 3.92, SD = .89$). Notably, though these results provide some indication of the efficacy of my manipulation. However, the responsibility conditions explained only 2% of the variability in participants' sense of responsibility and indicate that these manipulations were not very strong.

Next, I found a statistically significant effect of my sense of power (SOP) manipulation ($F(1, 290) = 220.13, p < .01, n^2 = .43$). Participants reported higher levels of SOP in the high SOP condition ($M = 4.20, SD = .68$) than in the low SOP condition ($M = 2.69, SD = 1.03$). Further, my structural power condition had a non-significant effect on participants' sense of power ($F(1, 290) = 0.70, ns$). There were no statistically significant effects of my sense of power or structural power conditions on participants' sense of responsibility. There were also no statistically significant effects of my responsibility conditions on participants' sense of power.

The descriptive statistics and correlations for Study 1 are presented in Table 1. Note that the experimental conditions were coded as follows: responsibility (upward=1, downward=0),

structural power (high=1, low=0), and psychological power (high=1, low=0). Distributive justice represents the total amount of bonus provided to participants. Procedural justice represents participants' willingness to grant employees voice and the ability to appeal decisions. Note that procedural justice was based on dichotomous (1,0) decisions. Thus, values for procedural justice should be interpreted as the probability that they granted voice to employees. Informational justice represents the total amount, and authenticity of communications with employees. Interpersonal justice represents the politeness and positive tone used in communications with employees. Means and standard deviations for interpersonal and informational justice are based on standardized values. Thus, these should be interpreted as a % of 1 standard deviation from the mean. For example, for informational justice, the SD of standardized values was .31 which indicates that the average standard deviation of informational justice was .31 standard deviations. For informational justice for high versus low performers, for example, .06 and -.06 indicate that high performers received an average of -.06 standard deviations below the mean and low performers received an average of .06 standard deviations above the mean.

Table 1 – Correlation Matrix and Descriptive Statistics for Study 1

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<i>Conditions</i>												
1. Upward Responsibility	0.47	0.50										
2. High Structural Power	0.52	0.50	-.04									
3. High Psychological Power	0.51	0.50	-.10†	-.02								
<i>Manipulation Checks</i>												
4. Sense of Upward Responsibility	4.44	0.62	.17*	.06	-.04							
5. Sense of Downward Responsibility	4.07	0.87	-.16*	.09	-.01	.05						
6. Sense of Power (SOP)	3.46	1.15	-.04	.05	.66*	.04	.07					
<i>Standard Deviation Between Performers</i>												
7. Distributive Justice	0.89	0.48	.12*	.03	-.04	.07	-.03	-.03				
8. Procedural Justice	0.13	0.16	-.03	-.07	-.01	-.08	.07	.04	.03			
9. Interpersonal Justice	0.31	0.22	-.06	.07	-.08	-.06	-.02	-.08	.00	.03		
10. Informational Justice	0.31	0.15	.02	.04	-.03	-.02	-.07	-.04	-.03	.11†	.21*	
<i>Overall Means</i>												
11. Distributive Justice	2.49	0.95	-.09	.13*	.08	.01	.16*	.15*	.04	.14*	.03	.07
12. Procedural Justice	0.60	0.39	-.08	-.01	.05	.11*	.08	.01	-.10†	-.22*	.06	-.03
13. Interpersonal Justice	0.00	0.56	-.06	-.02	.02	-.08	.01	.06	-.05	-.06	.57*	.09
14. Informational Justice	0.00	0.56	.07	-.02	.02	.03	.05	.02	-.02	-.05	-.25*	.05
<i>Mean Values for High and Low Performers</i>												
15. Distributive Justice (High Performers)	3.19	1.06	-.03	.14*	.05	.05	.13*	.11†	.42*	.12*	.00	.04
16. Distributive Justice (Low Performers)	1.78	1.03	-.12*	.10†	.09	-.05	.16*	.17*	-.37*	.12*	.05	.09
17. Procedural Justice (High Performers)	0.62	0.41	-.07	-.01	.05	.12*	.05	.04	-.11†	-.15*	.10	-.03
18. Procedural Justice (Low Performers)	0.59	0.40	-.08	-.02	.04	.10†	.10†	-.03	-.09	-.26*	.03	-.03
19. Interpersonal Justice (High Performers)	0.06	0.59	-.05	.01	.01	-.03	.02	.03	-.01	-.08	.56*	.09
20. Interpersonal Justice (Low Performers)	-0.06	0.60	-.06	-.04	.03	-.12*	-.01	.08	-.08	-.04	.51*	.08
21. Informational Justice (High Performers)	-0.06	0.58	.05	-.02	.00	-.03	.04	.00	-.04	-.08	-.19*	-.04
22. Informational justice (Low Performers)	0.07	0.59	.07	-.01	.02	.07	.05	.03	-.02	-.03	-.26*	.11†

Note: N= 292, *p <.05, † p<.10

Table 1 (cont'd)

	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
<i>Overall Means</i>											
11. Distributive Justice											
12. Procedural Justice	.03										
13. Interpersonal Justice	.02	.05									
14. Informational Justice	.08	.00	-.28*								
<i>Mean Values for High and Low Performers</i>											
15. Distributive Justice (High Performers)	.91*	-.02	-.01	.06							
16. Distributive Justice (Low Performers)	.91*	.06	.05	.09	.65*						
17. Procedural Justice (High Performers)	.01	.96*	.08	-.03	-.03	.06					
18. Procedural Justice (Low Performers)	.04	.96*	.02	.03	.00	.07	.83*				
19. Interpersonal Justice (High Performers)	.03	.05	.94*	-.24*	.02	.03	.08	.03			
20. Interpersonal Justice (Low Performers)	.01	.04	.94*	-.28*	-.03	.06	.08	.01	.76*		
21. Informational Justice (High Performers)	.05	.00	-.25*	.95*	.03	.07	-.03	.03	-.24*	-.23*	
22. Informational justice (Low Performers)	.07	.01	-.27*	.95*	.05	.09	-.01	.03	-.22*	-.28*	.82*

Tests of Hypotheses

For the tests of my hypotheses, I recode my conditions utilizing contrast coding (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003; p. 204-217). “Contrast coding differs from other coding primarily in its generality: any single contrast within a set of *independent* contrasts can be represented and tested by means of contrast coding” (Cohen et al., 2003, p. 205) in a regression framework. Contrast coding improves the interpretability of partial regression coefficients by reducing unnecessary multicollinearity between conditions created by group sizes or mean differences. Results for Study 1 are presented in Table 2.

Hypothesis 1 stated that managers’ sense of upward responsibility will be positively related to their tendency to treat members unequally when it came to each justice dimension. By direct contrast, Hypothesis 2 stated that managers’ downward responsibility will be negatively related to managers’ tendency to treat members unequally when it came to each justice dimension. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 2 are tested with a single test using the contrast between these two conditions.

Critically, the F-statistic was non-significant for each of my models, indicating that each model does not explain a statistically significant amount of variance in the dependent variables. Thus, it is common practice to not interpret the statistical significance of estimates within the model. Nonetheless, the non-significant model F-statistics could also be due to the number of parameters in the model. According to Cohen et al., (2003, p. 53), the F significance test of R^2 is adjusted for the number of parameters in the model where as a *t* significance test tests the statistical significance of each individual parameter estimate. In models that have a single predictor, the F-test and a t-test are equivalent. Cohen et al., (2003, p. 105) write that “the test of significance for *r* could be carried out by either a *t-test* or by an F test, because for one degree of

freedom in the numerator $F = t^2$.” Thus, a significant p-value generated from a t-test indicates that the F-test would be significant if only the significant predictors were included in the model. Thus, a statistically significant p-value indicates that the predictor explains significant variance in the dependent variable, even if the model F-statistic is non-significant due to the additional error created by adding non-significant estimates to the model.

An interpretation of the coefficients indicates that Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported with respect to distributive justice¹, but not supported with respect to procedural, informational, or interpersonal justice. Participants did not give higher bonuses to high performers across the upward and downward responsibility conditions ($F(1, 290) = .34, ns$). However, the upward and downward responsibility conditions did differ in the bonuses they gave to low performers ($F(1, 290) = 4.55, p < .05, \eta^2 = .01$). Among their interactions with low performers, participants in the upward responsibility condition gave significantly less to low performers ($M=1.6, SD=1.0$) compared to the downward responsibility condition ($M=1.9, SD=1.0$). For only distributive justice, this indicates that participants in the upward responsibility condition enacted greater inequality compared to the downward responsibility condition.

Further, hypotheses 3a and 3b stated that these effects would be larger in the high sense of power condition compared to the low sense of power condition. Hypotheses 3a and 3b were not supported.

¹ Note that, as part of a test of distributive justice, participants also provided ratings of the probability that they would grant promotions to each of the employees. The standard deviation of promotion recommendations did not differ across any experimental conditions. This may be due to (a) the unreliability of the measure given that it was only measured one time (compared to bones which were granted twice) or (b) due to the criticality and promotion decisions.

Table 2 – Results of Experimental Conditions Predicting the Standard Deviation of Justice Enactment Across the Four Employees in Study 1

	Distributive Justice SD ¹		Procedural Justice SD	
Upward Responsibility	.23*	.24*	-.07	-.07
Structural Power	.06	.12	-.15	-.10
Psychological Power	-.05	-.07	-.03	-.01
<i>Two-way Interactions</i>				
Upward Responsibility X Structural Power		-.12		-.11
Upward Responsibility X Psychological Power		.05		-.05
Structural Power X Psychological Power		-.15		.14
<i>Three-way Interaction</i>				
Upward Responsibility X Structural Power X Psychological Power		.26		-.23
R ²	.02	.02	.01	.01
F	1.50	.72	.37	.39
Model p-values	.22	.65	.92	.88

Note: N= 292, * p<.05. Dependent variables are standardized to aid interpretability. SD = Standard Deviation. Distributive justice represents the total amount of bonus provided to participants. Procedural justice represents participants' willingness to grant employees voice and the ability to appeal decisions. ¹ Note that, as part of a test of distributive justice, participants also provided ratings of the probability that they would grant promotions to each of the employees. The standard deviation of promotion recommendations did not differ across any experimental conditions.

Table 2 (cont'd)

	Informational Justice SD		Interpersonal Justice SD	
Upward Responsibility	.06	.05	-.13	-.12
Structural Power	.05	-.13	.13	.34*
Psychological Power	-.05	-.11	-.17	-.24
<i>Two-way Interactions</i>				
Upward Responsibility X Structural Power		.35		-.45
Upward Responsibility X Psychological Power		.10		.16
Structural Power X Psychological Power		.19		.17
<i>Three-way Interaction</i>				
Upward Responsibility X Structural Power X Psychological Power		-.46		.02
R ²	.00	.01	.02	.03
F	.22	.50	1.53	1.37
Model p-values	.88	.79	.21	.22

Supplemental Analyses

In order to probe the nature of these effects, I also conducted a set of exploratory supplemental analyses that (a) utilized mean levels of justice enactment as the dependent variable and (b) utilized the SD of justice enactment as the dependent variable controlling for mean levels of the SD of justice enactment (i.e., mean level of bonus, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice). With the exception of mean levels of bonuses allocated, results of these analyses indicated that there were no significant direct effects or interactive effects on mean levels of justice enactment. As demonstrated in Table 3 (and Table 1) the structural power condition had a significant positive effect on participant's average bonus allocation. Nonetheless, this result should be interpreted with extreme caution because, as

discussed below, it is not clear that the structural power condition accurately represented structural power and the structural power condition may have manipulated members' sense of status instead (see Blader and Chen, 2014, Study 4).

Table 3 – Supplemental Results of Experimental Conditions Predicting the Mean Level of Distributive Justice (Bonuses) Granted to Employees in Study 1

	Mean Distributive Justice
Intercept	2.51
Upward Responsibility	-.15
Structural Power	.25*
Psychological Power	.13
R ²	.03
Adjusted R ²	.02
F	2.96
Model p-values	.03

Note: N= 292, * p<.05. Dependent variables are standardized to aid interpretability. SD = Standard Deviation. Distributive justice represents the total amount of bonus provided to participants.

Further, I also conducted my core analyses utilizing the SD of justice enactment as the dependent variable, controlling for the participant's mean level of justice enactment. Controlling the mean level of justice enactment had no effect on the inferences stemming from the core analyses presented above. The only exception to this was that the Upward Responsibility X Structural Power interaction became a significant predictor of variance in interpersonal justice ($B = -.15, p < .01$) when controlling for the mean. These results are presented in Table 4. To determine if including this interaction term led to a significant improvement in model fit, I compared the variance explained of the simpler model (Model 1, $R^2 = 0.3417$) and 4 predictors to a more complex model (Model 2, $R^2 = 0.35$) and 5 predictors. An F-test indicated that adding the interaction term led to a significant improvement in model fit ($\Delta R^2 = 0.01, F(1, 286) = 5.18, p < 0.05$). However, adding additional two- and three-way interaction terms in Model 3 ($R^2 =$

0.36) had a non-significant improvement beyond those included in Model 2 ($\Delta R^2 = 0.0013$, $F(3, 283) = 0.19$, $p > .10$).

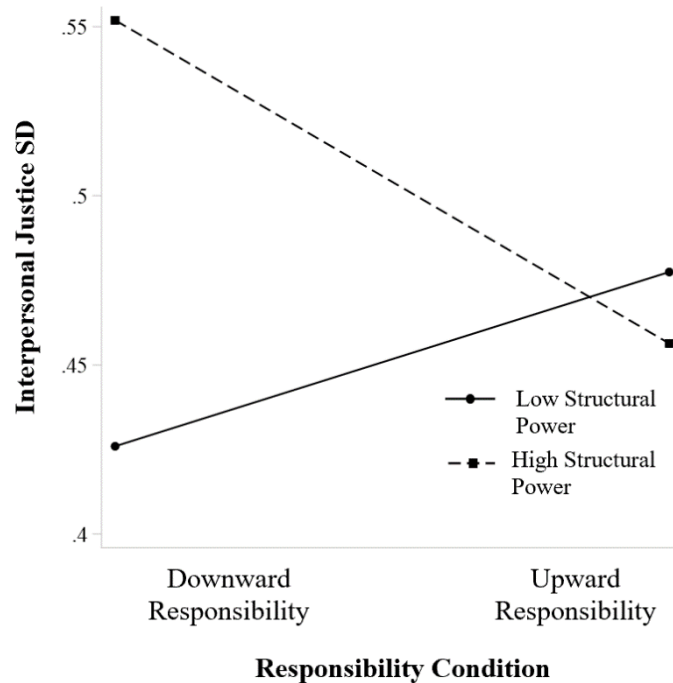
Table 4 – Supplemental Results of Experimental Conditions Predicting the Standard Deviation of Interpersonal Justice Enactment Across the Four Employees in Study 1 Controlling for the Average Level of Interpersonal Justice

Model	Interpersonal Justice SD		
	1	2	3
Upward Responsibility	-.02	-.02	-.02
Structural Power	.05	.05	.05
Psychological Power	-.06	-.06	-.06
<i>Two-way Interactions</i>			
Upward Responsibility X Structural Power		-.15*	-.15*
Upward Responsibility X Psychological Power			.05
Structural Power X Psychological Power			-.01
<i>Three-way Interaction</i>			
Upward Responsibility X Structural Power X Psychological Power			-.03
<i>Controls</i>			
Mean Interpersonal Justice	.34*	.45*	.34*
R^2	.34	.35	.36
ΔR^2		.01*	.00
Adjusted R^2	.33	.34	.34
F	37.24	31.27	19.45
Model p-values	.00	.00	.00

Note: $N = 292$, * $p < .05$. Dependent variables are standardized to aid interpretability. SD = Standard Deviation. Interpersonal justice represents the politeness and positive tone used in communications with employees.

The interaction of the Upward Responsibility and Structural Power conditions predicting variance in interpersonal justice enactment is depicted in Figure 3. As it depicts, the predicted value for the SD of interpersonal justice was highest in high structural power and downward responsibility conditions. Very importantly, however, because interpersonal justice was not measured on an easily interpretable scale, the exact points on this plot should not be over-interpreted.

Figure 3 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction the Upward-Facing Responsibility and Structural Power Conditions Predicting the SD of Interactional Justice in Study



To restate, again, these results should be interpreted with great caution because it is not perfectly clear what the structural power condition was manipulated in this study. For example, one would have assumed that the structural power condition would have had some positive effect on participants' sense of power. However, this relationship was null. Instead, based on the empirical results, it seems that the structural power condition may have manipulated sense of status rather than structural power (Blader and Chen, 2014). However, because sense of status was not measured in this study, there is no clearly comprehensible interpretation of these results.

STUDY 1 DISCUSSION

Study 1 aimed to test the effects of managers' sense of responsibility and their sense of power on their tendency to enact greater inequality in terms of justice-relevant behaviors.

Unfortunately, the F-statistic for each of my models was non-significant and indicated that the proposed model explained approximately zero variance in my dependent variables. With this in mind, standard practice would be to not interpret these results.

If we do choose to interpret the parameter estimates in light of non-significant model F-statistics, then Study 1 found some support for this hypothesis when it came to distributive justice, but not for the other justice dimensions. Based on the regression coefficients, participants in the upward responsibility condition were more likely to have a larger distance between the bonuses that they granted to high versus low performers. This finding is interesting due to its implications for justice and inequality. On the one hand, Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) clearly suggests that members' bonuses should be proportional to their relative performance such that high performers receive *relatively* larger bonuses compared to low performers. Blader and Chen, (2012) suggested that "greater differentiation in the amount of bonus money allocated to the low- versus high-performance groups... [indicates] greater consideration and use of information about others and, thus, greater distributive justice." From this perspective, participants in my upward-facing responsibility condition were fairer than participants in the employee care-focused downward responsibility condition.

On the other hand, how large the difference needs to be to be proportional to inputs can be ambiguous and up to interpretation. In their review of the performance appraisal literature, DeNisi and Sonesh (2011, p. 263) write that "the goal of maintaining harmony and fairness among the workgroup, for example, may influence the rater to reduce accuracy by elevating

ratings and reducing variance among the ratings given to the employees in the group. This tactic might be seen as a way to avoid social comparison and jealousy among the work group and maintain harmony.” Thus, according to research on performance appraisals, managers often reduce the variance among employee ratings as a means of promoting a sense of fairness.

Based on the theory presented, participants in the upward responsibility condition should have been more concerned with rewarding and punishing employees’ conformity with the organizational expectations (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015, p. 63). Interestingly, the upward and downward-facing conditions did not differ in their interpersonal treatment of high performers, as indicated in Table 1. However, participants in these two conditions did differ in the bonuses they allocated to lower performers. Whereas participants in the downward-facing condition were more likely to be “lenient” with low performers, participants in the upward-facing condition were more likely to “punish” low performers with relatively lower bonuses. Nonetheless, the use of “leniency” or “punishment” are used tentatively because there is no objective assessment of how much each performer deserves beyond individual judgment. Therefore, all that can be said is that participants in the upward responsibility condition enacted greater inequality with respect to distributive decisions than did participants in the downward condition.

Nonetheless, contrary to my hypotheses, I expected participants in the upward-facing responsibility condition to also enact greater inequality with respect to interpersonal justice in terms of politeness and positive tone. I hypothesized that participants may use more of a negative tone with lower performers to assert their non-performance and use more negative tone to motivate low performers to improve. However, I found no effect of my responsibility conditions on participants' differentiation between high and low performers with respect to interpersonal justice, informational justice, or procedural justice (giving the opportunity to voice concerns).

Critically, it is also interesting that participants in the high structural power condition were indeed more generous overall. Structural power was positively related to the bonus totals granted to both high ($B = .14, p < .05$) and low performers ($B = .10, p < .10$). Therefore, this experiment provides additional support for the conclusions generated by Tost, Wade-Benzoni, and Johnson (2015) that structural power leads high ranking members to be more generous compared to their lower-ranking counterparts.

Limitations

Study 1's experimental design has some strengths. For example, Study 1 was able to capture behavioral measures of justice enactment. However, it has several limitations as well. Most critically, the conclusions of this experiment, including the model R-squares, are limited due to the fact that the responsibility manipulation was very weak (explaining only 2% of the variance in participants' sense of responsibility). With this, any non-significant results stemming from my responsibility conditions could be due to the weakness of the manipulation rather than a problem with the underlying theory and hypotheses.

Further, the contrived setting of a virtual experiment may not accurately represent the behaviors of managers' real-life decisions and the external validity of these findings cannot be established in this experimental setting. Second is that Study 1 did not involve interactions between managers and employees' that have a longer history of working together. It may be the case, for example, that managers would be more likely to be interpersonally unfair to employees who have consistently not met performance goals and inhibiting the manager's overall performance. Further, Study 1 also did not allow me to test my hypotheses regarding managers' internal sense of obligation, nor employees' reactions with respect to outcomes such as organizational legitimacy, overall justice, or affective trust.

STUDY 2: FIELD STUDY OF MANAGER-EMPLOYEE DYADS

Sample and Procedures

To follow up on Study 1, I conducted a field study including 180 manager-employee dyads. Participants were told that they were partaking in a study on how managers responded to their responsibilities at work. Participants were recruited from two different sources. 129 dyads were recruited utilizing a snowball sampling method whereby students from U.S. universities provided the contact information for full-time managers and their employees in exchange for class credit. Second, I recruited 51 dyads from the community research participant pool at a large mid-western university. Participants from the community research pool were compensated \$10 for completing both of their individual surveys. Participants reviewed the study consent form and provided informed consent prior to completing their first survey. 49% of the sample were women. 62% were White, 16% Black, 9% LatinX, and 13% other. The average age for managers in the sample was 43 years old with a standard deviation of 11 years. The average age for employees in the sample was 34 years old with a standard deviation of 11. The sample included a wide variety of industries including technology (11%), healthcare (12%), education (11%), customer service (8%), hospitality (9%), construction (7%), government (5%), sales (7%), retail (5%), consumer goods (5%), and 20% others.

I employed a multi-rater four-time-point design to reduce common methods bias in my study (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003). At time 1, managers provided their organizational rank and rated their sense of upward and downward responsibility as well as their sense of power. 180 managers completed their first survey. Then, one week after the manager's first survey, the manager rated their sense of obligation to allocate justice-relevant resources based on merit. Then two days later, the employee completed self-reported measures of their

own trait cooperativeness and competitiveness, as well as all of the dependent variables measured for this study. 158 managers and 155 employees completed their second survey.

Measures

Independent Variables

Upward and Downward Responsibility. I measured upward and downward responsibility using items adapted from Tost, Wade-Benzoni, and Johnson, (2015). Five-point scales were used for the questions (from 1 = “to a very small extent” to 5 = “to a very large extent”). Example items for downward responsibility include, “When you think about your responsibilities at work, to what extent do you... feel a duty to protect the interests of my employees” and “feel a responsibility to help my employees” ($\alpha = .86$). Similarly, for upward-facing responsibility, participants were asked the extent that they “feel a duty to protect the goals of my organization” and “feel a primary responsibility to help my organization as a whole” ($\alpha = .83$).

Managers’ sense of obligation toward unequal merit-based treatment and equality of treatment. This measure was developed for the purposes of this study based on the items generated by Colquitt (2001) (See Appendix C). A list of justice-relevant resources was generated to capture the four justice dimensions measured in Colquitt (2001). The items that were used to represent each dimension are presented in Table 5. Managers were asked to rate the degree that they felt that they *must* allocate each resource based on merit such that high performers would receive more than low performers (Adams, 1965). The stem prior to each item was “When it comes to fulfilling my responsibilities at work, I often feel that I must treat (1) all members as equals regardless of performance or (10) I must give more to high performers than to low performers when it comes to...”. The manager was then presented with a list of items related to distributive justice (i.e., pay, promotions, bonuses), procedural justice (e.g., the ability to

appeal the manager's decisions, having input into decisions, having influence over decision outcomes, having decisions be based on accurate information, having the ability to express their views regarding procedures), interpersonal justice (e.g., politeness, respect, esteem, appreciation for their concerns, dignity), and informational justice (e.g., decision making transparency, honesty, timely information, receiving detailed explanations regarding decisions, receiving detailed explanations of the rules). A series of confirmatory factor analyses were conducted to assess the factor structure of these responses (see analytical strategy). Each form of justice was modeled as a latent variable in my final analyses, which removed any unreliability from my measures (Klein, 2005).

Table 5 – Items for Justice focused Merit Based Obligation (MBO)

When it comes to fulfilling my responsibilities at work, I often feel that _____ when it comes to...	
All members are equal regardless of performance (1)	I must give more to high performers than to low performers. (10)
Distributive Justice (DJ-MBO)	
allocating pay.	
promotions.	
bonuses.	
Procedural Justice (PJ-MBO)	
having input into decisions.	
being able to appeal the manager’s decisions.	
being able to express their views about the decisions you make.	
having influence over how decisions are made.	
having influence over decisions.	
having influence over the outcomes of decisions you make.	
granting influence in team meetings.	
Informational Justice (IJ-MBO)	
receiving detailed explanations regarding decisions.	
providing full honesty and truthfulness.	
being transparent about decisions.	
having access to frequent communication with you.	
providing timely information.	
receiving detailed explanations of the rules.	
Interpersonal Justice (IJ-MBO)	
allocating respect.	
granting dignity.	
allocating esteem.	
being treated politely in every conversation.	
appreciation for their concerns.	

Note. Both interpersonal and informational justice were aggregated under one factor of interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986). See the section entitled “Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Merit-based Justice Items” below.

Sense of Power. Sense of power was measured using four items from Anderson, John, and Keltner (2012). Example items include “If I want to, I get to make the decisions” and “I can get others to do what I want” ($\alpha = .88$).

Moderators²

Employee Cooperativeness and Competitiveness. These were measured using items collected from Simmons et al., (1988) and Wagner (1995). Example items for cooperativeness include “joint effort is the best way to achieve success” and “I enjoy working with others to achieve joint success” ($\alpha = .86$). Items for competitiveness include, “it annoys me when others perform better than I do,” and “I feel that winning is important in both work and games” ($\alpha = .73$).

Dependent Variables³

The core aim of this analysis is to understand the connection between supervisors’ sense of responsibility and members’ sense of organizational legitimacy. Nonetheless, an organization’s legitimacy is related to employees’ sense that leaders “have a right to be obeyed.” Obedience and support for the organization are also seen as natural outcomes of an employee’s sense of legitimacy. Thus, the core dependent variable of interest in this dissertation is the employee’s sense of organizational legitimacy. However, I include a variety of other potential dependent variables in this study. I provide detailed explanations of each of these in turn.

Employee Sense of Organizational Legitimacy. Legitimacy has been defined as “Subjective perceptions of the fairness or justice of the distribution of socially distributed outcomes” (Major & Schmader, 2001, p. 180). Thus, a sense of legitimacy relates to the perceived fairness of the distribution of a variety of socially desired resources. Thus, participants were given a list of resources that are allocated by the organization (pay, respect and esteem,

² Note that employees’ perceptions regarding their managers’ rating bias during performance appraisal was also collected as a potential moderator in this study. Results for the moderating effects of rating bias on the study outcomes can be made available upon request.

³ Note that I also collected data regarding employees’ affective commitment to the organization, their internalized motivation, and their extrinsic motivation as well. These results can be made available upon request.

power, status, promotions, training and development opportunities, and others) and were asked to refer to these when responding to questions.

I utilized items aggregated from two scales to capture employees' sense of legitimacy at work. First, I utilized five items from Ho, Sidanius, Pratto, Levin, Thomsen, Keilty, and Sheehy-Skeffington's (2012) system legitimacy scale. Example items include "Differences in members' outcomes are fair" and "This team is one where we can all achieve better outcomes." Similarly, I adapted two items from Colquitt's (2001) distributive justice scale. Example items include "members' outcomes are justified given their performance" and "differences in members' outcomes reflect what they have contributed to the organization." All items are included in Appendix A. The alpha reliability for this scale was .80.

Overall Justice. I noted earlier that the literature on legitimacy and organizational justice have been intricately intertwined. Legitimacy relates to the perceived fairness of resource allocations. Though there are several discrete types of justice (Colquitt., 2001), many argue that these act as individual inputs into overall justice judgments regarding whether the firms' behaviors are "appropriate and fair" in general (Ambrose & Arnaud, 2005; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). Though some suggest that fairness and legitimacy are theoretically distinct (2011) overall judgments of legitimacy – whether the organization is "appropriate, proper, and just." (Tyler, 2006, p. 375) – is highly related to overall justice judgments.

I measured overall justice utilizing the six-item scale used in Ambrose and Schminke, (2009). Example items include, "In general, I can count on this organization to be fair," "In general, the treatment I receive around here is fair," and "Most of the people who work here would say that they are often treated fairly" ($\alpha = .84$).

Affective Trust in Supervisor. If employees see their leader as legitimate and worthy of obedience, then they should develop more affective trust in their supervisor. Affective trust involves an emotional bond that the employee feels that the supervisor has similar values and ideals as the employee. According to Colquitt, Baer, Long, Halvorsen, and Ganepola's (2014) empirical study, affective trust is the strongest indicator of relationship quality in leader-member relationships and should be the best predictor of support for one's leader.

I measured affective trust utilizing five items from McAllister (1995). Example items include, "If I share my problems with this person, I know (s)he would respond constructively and caringly," and "I would have to say that we both have made considerable emotional investments in our working relationships" ($\alpha = .87$)

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors. Organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) refer to a variety of voluntary – nonobligatory – behaviors aimed at supporting the organization (see Organ, 2018 for a review). Members voluntarily engage in OCBs because they identify with their organizations and feel that their voluntary efforts will be appreciated. OCBs are another potential dependent variable and is like legitimacy because "OCB represents the informal modes of cooperation and contributions that participants render as a function of job satisfaction and perceived fairness" (Organ, 2018, p 297). Thus, engaging in OCBs indicates that members are intrinsically motivated to support their organization.

I measured organizational citizenship behaviors using the eight-item OCB scale from Dalal, Lam, Weiss, Welch, and Hulin, (2009). Example items include, "I go out of my way to be a good employee," "I try to uphold the values of my organization," and "I displayed loyalty to the organization" ($\alpha = .89$).

Counter Productive Work Behaviors. Like OCBs, counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs) are an essential component of performance at work (Rotundo & Sackett., 2002). CWBs are defined as “volitional employee behavior that harms, or at least is intended to harm, the legitimate interests of an organization” (Dalal et al., 2009, p. 1052; Sackett & DeVore, 2001; Spector, Fox, Penney, Bruursema, Goh, & Kessler, 2006). I measured CWBs using the eight-item scale from Dalal, Lam, Weiss, Welch, & Hulin, (2009). Example items include, “I spoke poorly about my organization to others,” “I did not fully comply with my supervisor’s instructions,” & “I said or did something that was unpleasant” ($\alpha = .93$).

Analysis

Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Merit-based Justice Items

All analyses were conducted using structural equation modeling in Mplus 8.2 utilizing Full Information Maximum Likelihood estimation (FIML). My final sample for managers’ time-two responses was $N=158$. Further, I had a total of 21 justice MBO items. Thus, this gave me a subject to indicators ratio of 7.5:1. This is within the suggested subject-to-indicator ratios suggested by Cattell (1978, 6:1) and Gorsuch (1983; 5:1) but less than the suggested 10:1 ratio proposed by Everitt (1975). Nonetheless, these act as general guidelines as “The minimum level of N, or the minimum N:p ratio, needed to assure good recovery of population factors is not constant across studies but rather is dependent on some aspects of the variables and design in a given study” (MacCallum, Widaman, Zhang, & Hong, 1999, p. 96). Thus, I proceeded with a confirmatory test of my measurement model.

To begin, I conducted a series of factor analyses to assess the fit and structure of my measurement model for my measure of managers’ sense of obligation to merit-based justice enactment. The factor structures I tested align with the history of the justice literature where all

justice factors were originally subsumed under distributive justice (Adams, 1965). Then, justice was broken into two factors – distributive and procedural justice (Thibaut & Walker, 1975, 1978). Then it was broken into three factors – distributive, procedural, and interactional justice (Bies & Moag, 1986). Then, lastly, it was broken into a four-factor solution where interactional justice was broken into two sub-facets that included both interpersonal (i.e., respect and politeness) and informational (i.e., honesty and transparency) justice (Greenberg, 1993).

The results of these factor analyses are presented in Table 6. I first tested the fit of a one-factor model where all items were included under one factor ($\chi^2(189) = 714.46$, CFI = .79, RMSEA = .13, and SRMR = .10). Then, I tested the fit of a two-factor solution with distributive justice (i.e., pay, promotion, bonuses) were on one factor, and all other resources were used as indicators of procedural justice (e.g., ability to appeal the manager's decisions, having influence over decision outcomes, receiving detailed explanations of the rule, respect, esteem, and dignity). This the two-factor solution ($\chi^2(188) = 519.96$, CFI = .87, RMSEA = .11, and SRMR = .08) fit the data significantly better than the one factor solution ($\Delta \chi^2(1) = 194.5$, $p < .01$). Next, I tested the fit of a three-factor solution with distributive justice (i.e., pay, promotion, and bonuses), procedural justice (e.g., ability to appeal the manager's decisions, having influence over decision outcomes), and interactional justice (both interpersonal and informational justice; e.g., respect, politeness, honesty, and decision-making transparency) under one factor ($\chi^2(186) = 431.95$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .06). The three-factor solution fit the data significantly better than the two-factor solution ($\Delta \chi^2(2) = 88.01$, $p < .01$). Lastly, I compared the fit of the three-factor solution with that of a four-factor solution where distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice were included as separate factors ($\chi^2(183) = 427.43$, CFI = .91, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .06). The four-factor solution did not fit significantly better than the

three-factor solution ($\Delta \chi^2(3) = 4.52, p = .28$). Therefore, I retained the three-factor solution – including distributive justice (i.e., pay, promotion, and bonuses), procedural justice (e.g., ability to appeal the manager’s decisions, having influence over decision outcomes), and interactional justice (both interpersonal and informational justice; e.g., respect, politeness, honesty, and decision-making transparency).

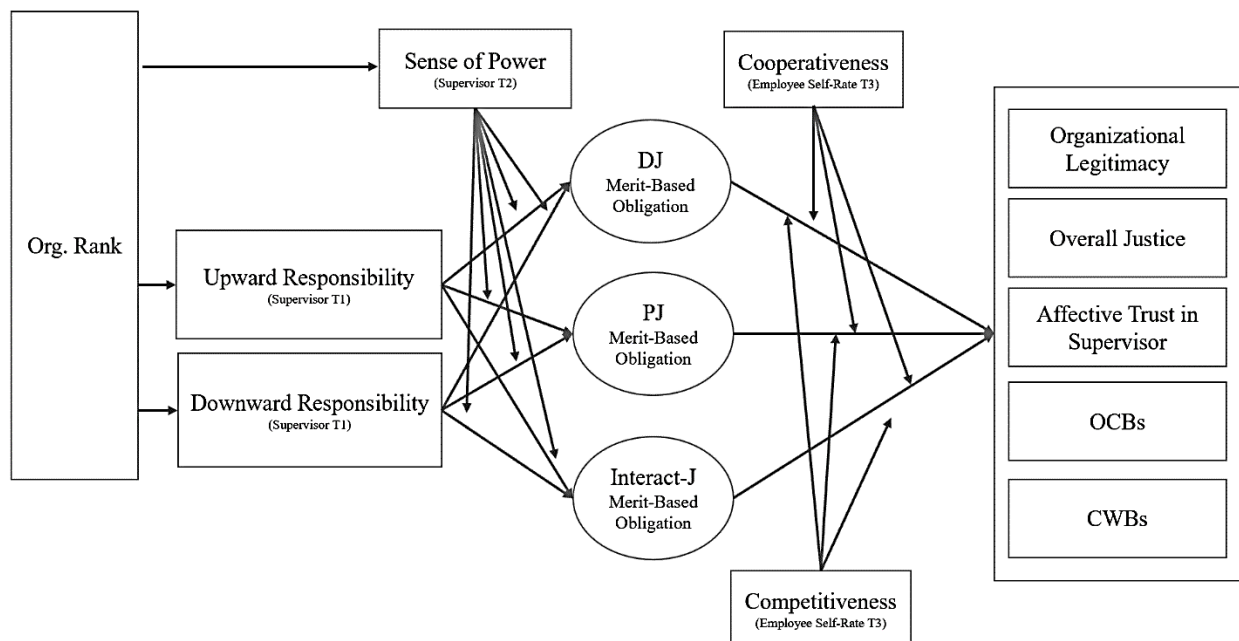
Table 6 – Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for Measures of Justice-Focused Merit-Based Obligations (MBO)

Number of Factors	Factors Represented	N	$\Delta\chi^2$	ΔDF	P-value for $\Delta\chi^2$	χ^2	DF	CFI	SRMR	RMSEA
4 Factor	PJ, DJ, InterJ, InfoJ	158	4.52	3	p =.28	427.43	183	0.91	0.06	0.09
3 Factor	PJ, DJ, InteractJ	158	88.01	2	p<.01	431.95	186	0.91	0.06	0.09
2 Factor	PJ (with Interact J), DJ	158	194.5	1	p<.01	519.96	188	0.87	0.08	0.11
1 Factor	Overall	158				714.46	189	0.79	0.10	0.13

Note: N= 158. All variables were collected in the manager's second survey. PJ = Sense of obligation to equity-based procedural justice (e.g., giving high performers more input into decisions, influence over decision outcomes, and the ability to appeal the manager's decisions compared to lower performers). DJ = Sense of obligation to equity-based distributive justice (e.g., giving high performers more pay, promotions, and bonuses compared to lower performers). Interact J = Sense of obligation to equity-based interactional justice (e.g., giving high performers greater politeness, respect, dignity, honesty, decision-making transparency, and timely information compared to lower performers). InfoJ = Informational justice, which includes only the informational aspects of interactional justice (e.g., giving high performers greater decision-making transparency, honesty, and timely information compared to low performers).

Due to the large number of items used to measure each facet and the large number of parameters used in my final model, I utilized item parceling to reduce the complexity and improve the fit of the final measurement model (Bandalos, 2002; Matsunaga, 2008). I did this by creating two-item parcels by aggregating the indicators for each of the justice sub-dimensions. For interactional justice, respect and esteem were aggregated into one indicator, as were honesty and dignity. Further, for procedural justice, for example, being able to appeal the manager's decisions and having influence over decision outcomes were combined into one indicator. After utilizing item parceling, the measurement model contained a total of thirteen indicators for the three factors. This included four parceled indicators for procedural justice, three for distributive justice, and six for interactional justice. This led to a final subject-to-indicator ratio of 12:1. Which is in the guidelines proposed by Everett (1975). The final measurement model fit the data well ($\chi^2(59) = 99.68$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .07, and SRMR = .03).

Figure 4 – Final Empirical Model



STUDY 2 RESULTS FOR POWER, RESPONSIBILITY, AND JUSTICE MBO

I proceeded with the test of my hypotheses using structural equation modeling in Mplus 8.2 utilizing Full Information Maximum Likelihood Estimation (FIML). FIML provides unbiased estimates for parameters in the presence of missing data compared to other methods such as listwise or pairwise deletion (Enders, 2010; Enders & Bandaolos, 2001; Newman, 2003). To reduce unnecessary multi-collinearity between independent variables and interaction terms, all predictors were grand-mean centered prior to the test of my hypotheses (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). To account for the non-normality of indirect effects (Williams & MacKinnon, 2008), I used bootstrap confidence intervals (1,000 replications) for the tests of indirect effects.

Descriptive statistics for Study 2 are presented in Tables 7. The Results of the path analysis for the tests of my hypotheses are presented in Tables 8-17.

Table 7 – Correlation Matrix for Study 2

Variable Name	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Rank ^a	7.28	2.05	--							
2. Sense of Power (SOP) ^a	4.05	0.85	0.34**	(.88)						
3. Upward -SOR ^a	4.29	0.66	0.27**	0.26**	(.83)					
4. Downward – SOR ^a	4.42	0.57	0.05	0.23**	0.36**	(.86)				
5. DJ – MBO ^b	6.36	2.13	-0.01	-0.19*	0.00	-0.16*	(.85)			
6. PJ - MBO ^b	4.84	2.24	0.05	-0.16*	-0.07	-0.23**	0.54**	(.89)		
7. IJ - MBO ^b	3.70	2.72	0.11	-0.15†	-0.07	-0.26**	0.35**	0.84**	(.96)	
8. Cooperativeness ^c	4.25	0.65	-0.06	0.11	0.20*	0.25**	-0.17†	-0.14	-0.10	(.86)
9. Competitiveness ^c	3.15	0.99	0.18*	-0.03	0.10	-0.04	0.08	0.26**	0.40**	-0.09
10. Org. Legitimacy ^c	3.86	0.69	0.10	0.08	0.13	0.20*	0.01	0.12	0.14†	0.22**
11. Overall Justice ^c	4.02	0.76	0.14†	0.24*	0.19*	0.10	-0.01	0.04	0.10	0.24**
12. Affective Trust in Manager ^c	4.11	0.79	0.15†	0.02	0.08	0.15†	-0.10	-0.10	-0.07	0.39**
13. OCBs ^c	4.10	0.69	0.16†	0.20*	0.17*	0.24**	-0.12	-0.09	0.02	0.48**
14. CWBs ^c	1.66	0.74	0.06	-0.28**	-0.18*	-0.15	0.13	0.17†	0.24*	-0.44**

Note. † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$; ^a indicates Manager Survey 1, N=180, ^b indicates items collected at manager response 2, N=158, ^c indicates items collected from employees, N=155. SOR = Sense of responsibility. DJ-MBO = managers' sense of merit-based obligation with respect to distributive justice (e.g. pay, promotions), PJ-MBO = managers' sense of merit-based obligation with respect to procedural justice (e.g., granting the ability to appeal, have voice and influence over decisions). IJ-MBO = managers sense of merit-based obligation with respect to interactional justice (e.g., respect, politeness, honesty). OCB = organizational citizenship behaviors. CWB = counterproductive work behaviors.

Table 7 (cont'd)

Variable Name	Mean	SD	9	10	11	12	13	14
9. Competitiveness ^c	3.15	0.99	(.73)					
10. Org. Legitimacy ^c	3.86	0.69	0.17*	(.80)				
11. Overall Justice ^c	4.02	0.76	0.03	0.57**	(.84)			
12. Affective Trust in Manager ^c	4.11	0.79	0.07	0.33**	0.36**	(.87)		
13. OCBs ^c	4.10	0.69	0.05	0.27**	0.35**	0.41**	(.89)	
14. CWBs ^c	1.66	0.74	0.20*	-0.18*	-0.30**	-0.29**	-0.24*	(.93)

Rank Predicting Upward and Downward Facing Responsibility

I first tested the first half of my theoretical model beginning with rank predicting sense of responsibility, and then to managers' sense of obligation to merit-based justice. The present research proposes that structural power is a proximal antecedent to both a psychological sense of responsibility to various stakeholders and a psychological sense of power and control (see Tost & Johnson, 2019; Tost, 2015). According to evidence presented by Tost and colleagues (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Tost, Wade-Benzoni, & Johnson, 2015) being in a position of power induces a sense of responsibility to care for employees. The present investigation suggests that being in a position of power is also related to managers' sense of responsibility to their organization. As presented in Table 8, managers' rank had a null relationship with their sense of downward-facing responsibility to employees ($b = .01, ns$) and a significant and positive relationship with their sense of upward-facing responsibility to their organization ($b = .09, p < .01$). Thus, the evidence from this study seems to suggest that as managers move higher and higher in the organization, they feel a greater responsibility to look out for the best interests of their organization, but not necessarily an increased responsibility to lower-ranking employees. It may be the case that people placed in management have a baseline level of care-based SOR such that it may be equally high at all levels of management.

Table 8 – Results of the Relationships Between Rank, Responsibility, and Merit-based Justice Obligations for Study 2

	Dependent Variables					
	Upward SOR	Downward SOR	SOP	DJ-MBO	PJ-MBO	IJ-MBO
<i>Independent Variables</i>						
Rank	.09**	.01	.14**	-.04	.12	.24†
Upward SOR				.44	.07	.11
Downward SOR				-.24	-.95**	-1.26**
<i>Moderators</i>						
Sense of Power (SOP)				-.49*	-.29	-.48
<i>Interactions</i>						
SOP*Upward SOR				.44	1.07**	1.01*
SOP*Downward SOR				-.66	-.30	.25

Note. N=180, † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01; Upward SOR = Sense of Responsibility to the Organization, Downward SOR = Sense of Responsibility to Employees; DJ-MBO, PJ-MBO, and IJ-MBO all refer to the manager's sense of obligation to merit-based distributions of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice resources respectively. Model fit for model 2 is $\chi^2 = 179.43$, $df = 117$, CFI = .94, SRMR = .06, RMSEA = .06

Further, managers' rank also demonstrated a significant positive relationship with their sense of power (B = .14, p < .01). Thus, managers who were higher ranked in their organization also felt a great sense of control compared to lower-ranking managers.

Upward and Downward Facing Responsibility → Managers Justice-Focused MBO

Hypothesis 1 stated that managers' upward SOR will be positively related to managers' MBO with respect to DJ, IJ, and PJ. Hypothesis 1 was not supported. Managers' sense of upward responsibility had a null relationship with their DJ-MBO (B = .36, ns), PJ-MBO (B = -.06, ns), and IJ-MBO (B = -.08, ns).

Hypothesis 2 stated that managers' sense of downward SOR will be positively related to managers' sense that they should treat members equally with respect to distributive, interpersonal, informational, and procedural justice. Hypothesis 2 was not supported with respect to DJ-MBO (B = -.38, ns), but was supported with respect to PJ-MBO (b = -1.0, p < .01) and IJ-MBO (B = -1.34, p < .01). This indicates that managers who felt a downward SOR felt that they

must treat employees equally when it came to giving them voice and influence over decisions (i.e., procedural justice), respect, honesty, and transparency (i.e., interactional justice) regardless of their individual performance.

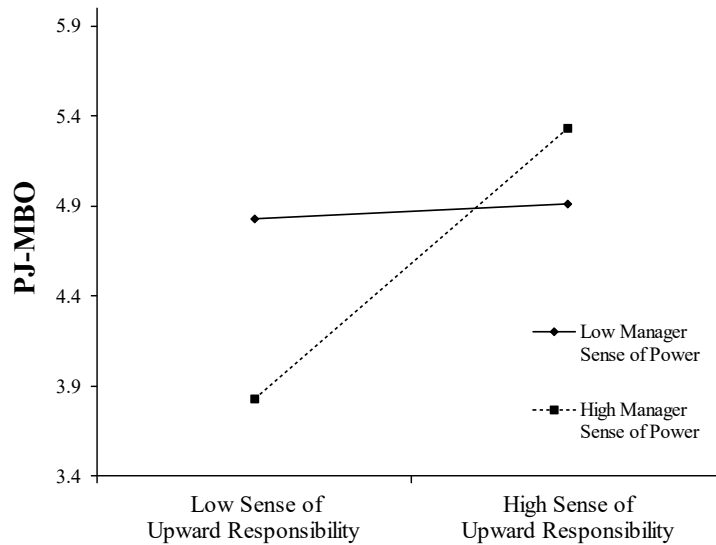
The Moderating Effect of Managers' Sense of Power on the Relationship Between Sense of Responsibility and Managers Justice-based MBO

Hypothesis 3a states that sense of power will moderate the positive relationship between sense of upward responsibility and sense of obligation to merit-based inequality of treatment such that the relationship will be stronger when sense of power is high. Hypothesis 3a was supported for PJ-MBO ($B = 1.07, p < .01$) and for IJ-MBO ($B = 1.01, p < .05$), but not for DJ-MBO ($B = .44, ns$). For PJ-MBO, simple slopes analysis indicated that upward responsibility had a null relationship with PJ-MBO when sense of power was low ($B = .07, ns$), but was positive when sense of power was high ($B = 1.13, p < .05$). For interactional justice, upward responsibility had a null relationship with IJ-MBO when sense of power low ($B = .11, ns$) but had a marginally significant positive relationship when sense of power was high ($B = 1.11, p = .08$). These results indicate that the relationship between managers upward SOR and PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO was more positive for managers who were high in SOP. Interaction plots for these results are presented in Figures 5 and 6.

An interpretation of the moderation plots indicates that managers' MBO was consistently highest when their sense of power was low. Thus, managers who did not feel a sense of power consistently felt more MBO than those with high sense of power. However, managers who were high in sense of power were more affected by their sense of responsibility such that they may have felt free to disregard MBOs when their sense of power was high and upward SOR was low.

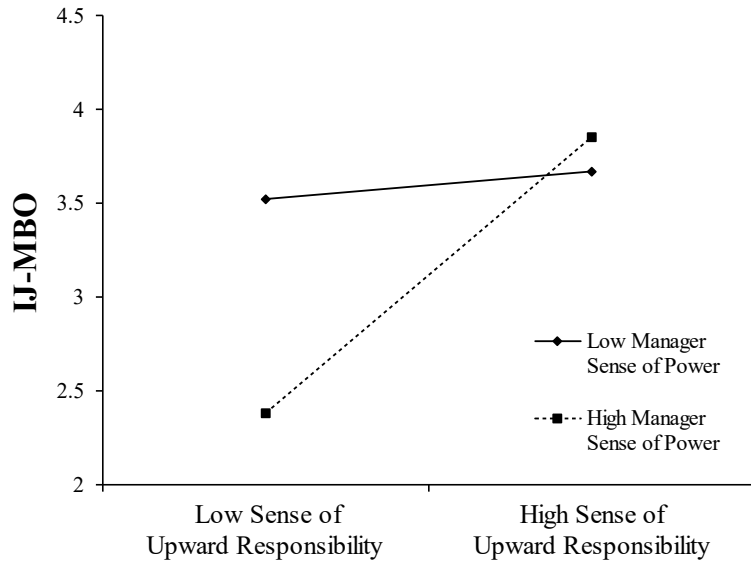
However, managers were more responsive to upward SOR when sense of power was high and chose to endorse greater MBO when sense of power was high.

Figure 5 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Managers’ Upward-Facing Responsibility With Sense of Power Predicting Managers’ PJ-MBO



Hypothesis 3b stated that sense of power will moderate the negative relationship between downward SOR and justice-based MBO such that the relationship will be stronger when sense of power is high. Hypothesis 1b was not supported. There were no significant interactions between sense of power and downward SOR.

Figure 6 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Managers’ Upward-Facing Responsibility With Sense of Power Predicting Managers’ IJ-MBO



Mediation and Moderated Mediation From Rank to Merit-Based Justice Obligations

Next, I tested potential moderated mediation effects that link managers’ rank to their justice-based MBO via their sense of responsibility using 95% bias-corrected bootstrapped confidence interval around Hayes’s (2015) index of moderated mediation with 1,000 replications. Results are presented in Table 9. Since rank had a null effect on managers’ downward SOR, there were no significant mediation or moderated mediation effects of rank on MBO via downward SOR. However, there was a significant direct effect of rank on managers’ upward SOR, and there were significant moderation effects with the interaction of upward SOR and sense of power predicting managers’ PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO. The index of moderated mediation for the relationship between rank and PJ-MBO moderated by sense of power was significant (index = .08, 95% CI = [.03, .17]). The index of moderated mediation was significant for IJ-MBO at the 95% confidence level (index = .10, 95% CI = [.02,.24]). Therefore, there

seems to be some support that rank can lead to greater PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO via Upward-SOR when sense of power is high.

Table 9 – Moderated Mediation Effects for the Relationship Between Rank and Justice Merit-based Obligation

	Index of Moderated Mediation	95%CI.
<i>Moderated Mediation</i>		
Rank -> Upward*SOP -> PJ-MBO	0.08	[.03,.17]
Rank -> Upward*SOP -> IJ-MBO	0.10	[.02,.24]

Note: confidence intervals are based off 1000 bootstrap samples.

STUDY 2 RESULTS FOR JUSTICE MBO AND EMPLOYEE OUTCOMES⁴

Analytical Strategy

I then proceeded to test the second half of my proposed model by testing the relationships between managers' MBO and employee-rated outcomes. Hypothesis 4 suggested that managers' sense of MBO would be negatively related to members' sense of organizational legitimacy, affective trust in their supervisor, and sense of overall justice at work. Further, I am also reporting on the relationships between these focal predictors and employees' self-rated organizational citizenship behaviors (OCBs) and counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs). The results for the tests of Hypothesis 4 and related fit statistics are presented in Tables 10, 11, 13, 14, and 16 Models 1.

The second half of my model includes interactions between managers' MBO and employees' cooperativeness and competitiveness predicting my focal DVs. To test these interactions, I first grand mean centered the moderators to reduce non-essential multi-collinearity between the moderators and the interaction terms (Cohen et al., 2003). To conduct latent variable interactions in Mplus specifying ANALYSIS TYPE=Random and used the XWITH command to generate interaction terms with my latent MBO factors. Further, I utilize monte-carlo integration to generate the standard errors for my interaction terms. Though Mplus generates fit statistics for models that do not require latent variable interactions, it cannot generate fit statistics for models with latent variable interactions. Lastly, I conducted my interaction tests by including one

⁴ Note that I also collected data regarding employees' affective commitment to the organization, their identified motivation, and their extrinsic motivation as well. These outcomes were relevant to, but not central to, my core hypotheses regarding legitimacy. Nonetheless, these results can be made available upon request.

interaction term into the model at a time due to the high collinearity between my interactions when all interactions were included simultaneously.⁵

Organizational Legitimacy

Direct Effects. The results for my effects on organizational legitimacy are presented in Table 10. First, I tested the direct effects of managers' justice-focused MBO on legitimacy. All these direct effects were non-significant as managers' DJ-MBO, PJ-MBO, and IJ-MBO all had null effects on employees' ratings of organizational legitimacy. The model for legitimacy fit the data well ($\chi^2(72) = 120$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04).

⁵ All analyses for outcome variables were tested with and without controls for members' leader-member exchange quality. Leader member exchange reflects the strength of the affective bonds between leaders and followers (Liden, Sparrowe, and Wayne, 1997). It is reasonable to assume that members that have favorable relationships with their managers are more likely to see their behaviors as legitimate and unbiased. Thus, I utilized the LMX7 (Liden, Wayne, and Stilwell 1993) to capture members LMX. Example items include "my supervisor would be personally inclined to use his/her power to help me solve problems in my work" ($\alpha = .88$). Nonetheless, controlling for LMX had little to no effect on the results of my models. Therefore, this control variable was excluded from further analysis. Changes in results due to this control are reported in footnotes.

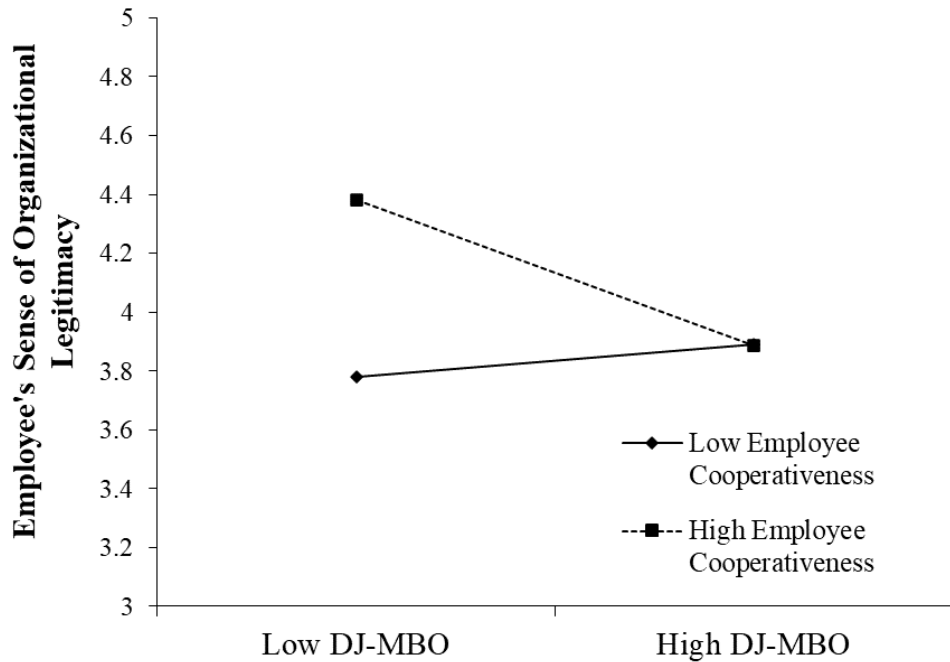
Table 10 – Results of Structural Equation Models and Moderator Analysis Predicting Employees’ Sense of Organizational Legitimacy for Study 2

Model	Legitimacy						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Constant	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.86	3.85	3.84
<i>Independent Variables</i>							
DJ - MBO	.00	.03	.01	.01	.01	-.01	-.01
PJ - MBO	-.05	-.03	-.02	-.03	-.03	-.02	-.03
IJ - MBO	.07	.06	.06	.06	.06	.04	.04
<i>Moderators</i>							
Cooperation		.30*	.26**	.24*			
Competition					.10†	.10†	.11†
<i>Interactions</i>							
Cooperation*DJ-MBO		-.14**					
Cooperation*PJ-MBO			-.05				
Cooperation*IJ-MBO				-.00			
Competition*DJ-MBO					-.07*		
Competition*PJ-MBO						.01	
Competition*IJ-MBO							.02

Note: N = 155. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, $\chi^2(72) = 120$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04. DJ-MBO= Sense of obligation to equity-based allocations of distributive justice resources (e.g., pay, promotions), PJ-MBO= Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of procedural justice resources (e.g., voice, influence over outcomes), IJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of interactional justice resources (e.g., respect, honesty). Cooperativeness and Competitiveness are both employee self-ratings of themselves.

Moderation Effects of Cooperation. Next, I tested the moderating effect of employees’ cooperativeness on the relationship between managers’ DJ-MBO and employees’ sense of organizational legitimacy. In support of Hypothesis 6, employees who were more cooperative were less likely to see their managers’ sense of DJ-MBO as legitimate (B = -.14, p < .01). The interaction is plotted in Figure 7. Simple slopes analysis indicated that managers’ DJ-MBO was negatively related to organizational legitimacy among highly cooperative employees (B = -.12, p < .05), but was null when employee cooperativeness was low (B = .03, ns). There were no significant interactions between managers’ sense of obligation of PJ-MBO or IJ-MBO with employee cooperativeness predicting employees’ sense of legitimacy.

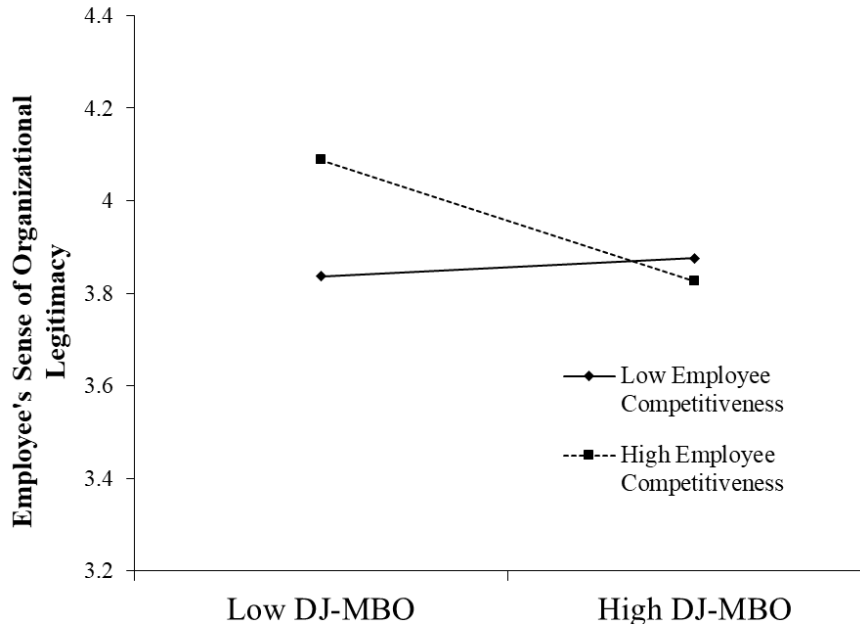
Figure 7 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees’ Cooperativeness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees’ Sense of Organizational Legitimacy at Work



Moderation Effects of Competition. Counter to Hypothesis 5, there was a significant interaction between managers’ DJ-MBO and employees’ cooperativeness. However, the interaction was in the opposite direction than hypothesized ($B = -.07, p < .05$)⁶. This interaction is plotted in Figure 8. Simple slopes analysis indicated that the relationship was more negative when cooperativeness was high ($B = -.06, p = .16$) and less negative when cooperativeness was low ($B = .01, p = .78$). There were no significant interactions between managers’ PJ-MBO or IJ-MBO with employee cooperativeness predicting employees’ sense of organizational legitimacy.

⁶ Note that this value becomes marginally significant when members LMX is controlled for ($B = -.06, p < .10$).

Figure 8 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees’ Cooperativeness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees’ Sense of Overall Justice at Work



Mediation and Moderated Mediation Effects There were no significant mediation or moderated mediation effects linking managers’ SOR (upward or downward) to employees’ sense of organizational legitimacy.

Overall Justice

Direct Effects. The results for overall justice are presented in Table 11. First, I tested the direct effects of managers’ justice MBO on employees’ sense of overall justice. All the direct effects were non-significant as managers DJ-MBO, PJ-MBO, and IJ-MBO all had null effects on employees’ ratings of overall justice. The model for justice MBO predicting employees’ sense of overall justice fit the data well ($\chi^2 (72) = 116.67$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04).

Table 11 – Results of Structural Equation Models and Moderator Analysis Predicting Employees’ Sense of Overall Justice for Study 2

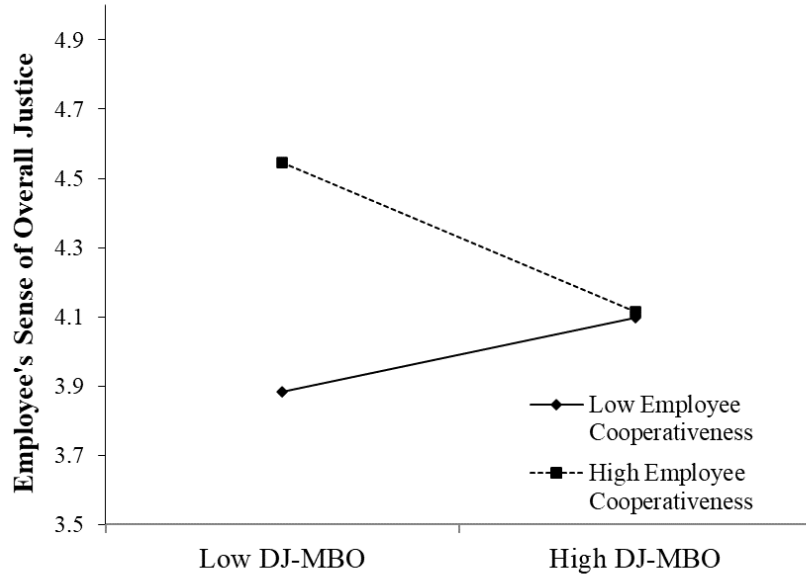
Model	Overall Justice						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Constant	4.01	4.02	4.01	4.01	4.00	4.02	4.01
<i>Independent Variables</i>							
DJ - MBO	.02	.05	.03	.03	.04	.03	.02
PJ - MBO	-.05	-.03	-.01	-.02	-.05	-.05	-.05
IJ - MBO	.06	.06	.05	.05	.08	.07	.06
<i>Moderators</i>							
Cooperation		.34**	.32**	.31**			
Competition					-.01	-.00	.00
<i>Interactions</i>							
Cooperation*DJ-MBO		-.15**					
Cooperation*PJ-MBO			-.10*				
Cooperation*IJ-MBO				-.05			
Competition*DJ-MBO					-.09*		
Competition*PJ-MBO						-.01	
Competition*IJ-MBO							.00

Note: N = 155. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01. $\chi^2(72) = 116.67$, CFI = .98, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04. DJ-MBO= Sense of obligation to equity-based allocations of distributive justice resources (e.g., pay, promotions), PJ-MBO= Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of procedural justice resources (e.g., voice, influence over outcomes), IJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of interactional justice resources (e.g., respect, honesty). Cooperativeness and Competitiveness are both employee self-ratings of themselves.

Moderation Effects of Cooperativeness. In support of Hypothesis 6, employee cooperativeness interacted with managers’ DJ-MBO such that highly cooperative employees saw DJ-MBO as less legitimate than non-cooperative employees (B = -.15, p < .01). Managers’ DJ-MBO was negatively related to employees’ sense of overall justice when employee cooperativeness was high (B= -.10, p<.01) but was null when cooperativeness was low (B = .01, ns). Similarly, there was also a significant negative interaction with managers’ PJ-MBO (B = -.10, p<.05). Simple slopes analysis indicated that the relationship was more negative when employee cooperativeness was high (B = -.07, ns) and less negative when employee cooperativeness was low (B=.03, ns). Nonetheless, both slopes were non-significant. There was

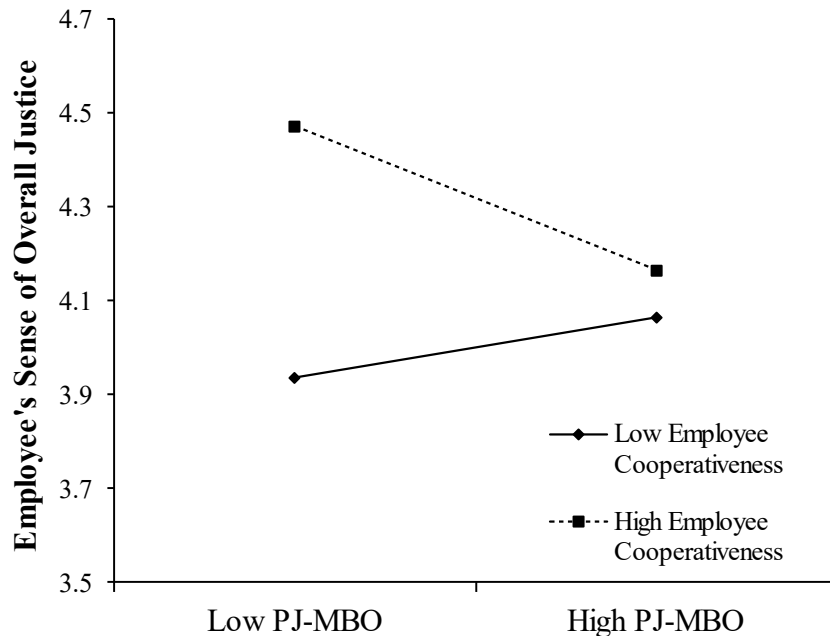
no significant interaction between employees' cooperativeness and managers' IJ-MBO⁷. These interactions are plotted in Figures 9 and 10.

Figure 9 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees' Cooperativeness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees' Sense of Overall Justice at Work



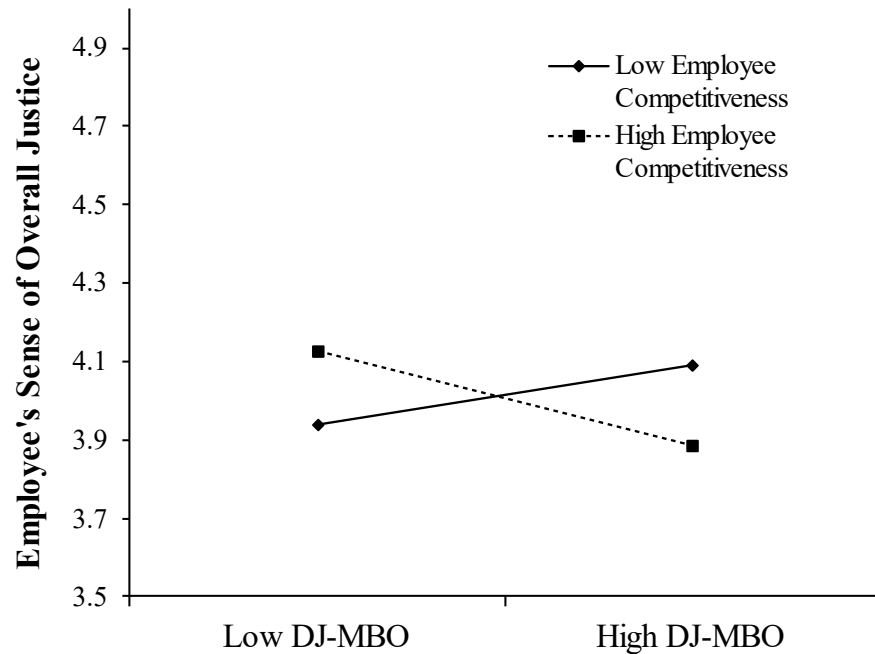
⁷ Note that this value becomes marginally significant when members LMX is controlled for ($B = -.07, p < .10$).

Figure 10 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees’ Competitiveness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees’ Sense of Overall Justice at Work



Moderation Effects of Competitiveness. Like the findings regarding legitimacy, there was a significant interaction between managers’ DJ-MBO and employee competitiveness. This interaction is plotted in Figure 10. However, the interaction was in the opposite direction than hypothesized ($B = -.09, p < .05$). Simple slopes analysis indicated that the slope was less negative at low levels of competitiveness ($B = .04, p = .24$) and more negative at high levels of competitiveness ($B = -.06, p < .10$). There were no significant interactions between employee competitiveness and managers’ PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO predicting overall justice.

Figure 11 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees’ Competitiveness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees’ Sense of Overall Justice at Work



Mediation Effects. Because there were no significant direct effects of managers' MBO on employees' sense of overall justice, there were no significant non-contingent mediation effects linking managers' SOR (upward or downward) to employees' sense of overall justice.

Moderated Mediation Effects. The results of the moderated mediation analyses are presented in Table 12. However, since Downward-SOR had a direct negative effect on PJ-MBO, and there was a significant moderation effect of employees' cooperativeness on the relationship between PJ-MBO, I did test to see if the mediation effect from Downward-SOR to employees' sense of Overall Justice via managers PJ-MOB was moderated by employees' cooperativeness. The confidence interval of the index of moderated mediation did not include zero (index = .13, 95% CI = [.01, .37]). Because managers' upward SOR had a null effect on justice MBOs, no

moderated mediation effects were tested for the relationship between managers' Upward-SOR and employees' sense of overall justice.

Table 12 – Moderated Mediation Effects on Overall Justice

	Index of Moderated Mediation	95% CI.
<i>Moderated Mediation</i>		
Downward -> PJ-MBO*Cooperation-> Overall Justice	0.13	[.01, .37]

Note: confidence intervals are based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

Affective Trust in Supervisor

Direct Effects. The results for the effects on affective trust are presented in Table 13.

First, I tested the direct effects of managers' justice MBO on employees' sense of affective trust in their supervisor. All the direct effects were non-significant as managers' DJ-MBO, PJ-MBO, and IJ-MBO all had null effects on employees' ratings of affective trust. The model for justice MBO predicting affective trust in the supervisor fit the data well ($\chi^2 (72) = 123.48$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04).

Table 13 – Results of Structural Equation Models and Moderation Analysis Predicting Employees’ Sense of Affective Trust in Their Leader for Study 2

Model	Affective Trust in Supervisor						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Constant	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.11	4.11	4.10	4.11
<i>Independent Variables</i>							
DJ - MBO	-.01	.02	.01	.01	-.00	-.01	-.00
PJ - MBO	-.04	-.01	-.00	-.01	-.02	-.01	-.02
IJ - MBO	.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.01	-.03	-.02
<i>Moderators</i>							
Cooperation		.49**	.48**	.45**			
Competition					.09	.09	.09
<i>Interactions</i>							
Cooperation*DJ-MBO		-.07					
Cooperation*PJ-MBO			.00				
Cooperation*IJ-MBO				.05			
Competition*DJ-MBO					-.01		
Competition*PJ-MBO						.03	
Competition*IJ-MBO							.00

Note: N = 155. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01. χ^2 (72) = 123.48, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04. DJ-MBO= Sense of obligation to equity-based allocations of distributive justice resources (e.g., pay, promotions), PJ-MBO= Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of procedural justice resources (e.g., voice, influence over outcomes), IJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of interactional justice resources (e.g., respect, honesty). Cooperativeness and Competitiveness are both employee self-ratings of themselves.

Moderation Effects. The moderating effects of cooperativeness and competitiveness on the relationships between managers MBO (DJ, PJ, or IJ) on employees’ sense of affective trust in their supervisor we all non-significant.

Mediation and Moderated Mediation Effects. There were no significant mediation or moderated mediation effects linking managers’ SOR (upward or downward) to employees’ affective trust in their supervisor via manager’s justice MBO.

Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

Direct Effects. The results for the effects on OCBs are presented in Table 14. The model for justice MBO predicting OCBs fit the data well (χ^2 (72) = 126.16, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .07, and SRMR = .04). There was a significant direct effect of managers’ PJ-MBO on employees’

OCBs ($B = -.16, p < .05$). Interestingly, and in contrast to my theoretical arguments, there were also positive and significant relationships between IJ-MBO and OCBs ($B = .11, p < .05$). This may indicate that a manager's focus on caring for high performers inspires some to become more helpful at work because they know that their helpfulness will earn them greater merit – and therefore respect – within their team.

Table 14 – Results of Structural Equation Models and Moderator Analysis Predicting Employees' Organizational Citizenship Behaviors for Study 2

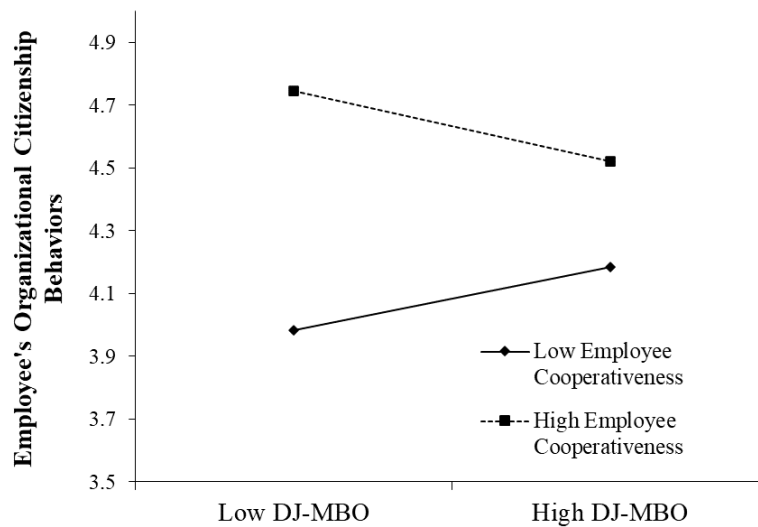
Model	Organizational Citizenship Behaviors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Constant	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.10	4.09	4.09
<i>Independent Variables</i>							
DJ - MBO	.02	.05	.03	.03	.02	.01	.01
PJ - MBO	-.16*	-.14*	-.13†	-.13*	-.15*	-.14*	-.15
IJ - MBO	.11*	.10*	.10*	.10*	.11*	.09†	.10*
<i>Moderators</i>							
Cooperation		.55*	.50**	.52*			
Competition					.02	.02	.02
<i>Interactions</i>							
Cooperation*DJ-MBO		-.10*					
Cooperation*PJ-MBO			-.02				
Cooperation*IJ-MBO				-.03			
Competition*DJ-MBO					-.02		
Competition*PJ-MBO						.03	
Competition*IJ-MBO							.02

Note: $N = 155$. † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. $\chi^2(72) = 126.16$, $CFI = .97$, $RMSEA = .07$, and $SRMR = .04$. DJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocations of distributive justice resources (e.g., pay, promotions), PJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of procedural justice resources (e.g., voice, influence over outcomes), IJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of interactional justice resources (e.g., respect, honesty). Cooperativeness and Competitiveness are both employee self-ratings of themselves.

Moderation Effects of Cooperativeness. There was also a significant interaction between managers DJ-MBO and employee cooperativeness such that cooperative employees were less likely to engage in OCBs when managers' DJ-MBO was high ($B = -.10, p < .05$). This interaction is plotted in Figure 12. Simple slopes analysis indicated that the relationship was more negative at high levels of cooperativeness ($B = -.04, p = .19$) and more positive at low levels of

cooperativeness ($B=.05$, $p= .11$). There was not a significant interaction between employees' cooperativeness and managers sense of PJ-MBO or IJ-MBO predicting OCBs. There were no significant interactions between managers MBO (DJ, PJ, or IJ) predicting employees' engagement in OCBs.

Figure 12 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees' Cooperativeness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees' Organizational Citizenship Behavior



Mediation Effects. Next, I tested the mediating roles of managers' MBO on employees' OCBs. The results of my tests of mediation and moderated mediation are presented in Table 15. The effect of downward responsibility on OCBs via managers' PJ-MBO was not significant at the .05 level ($IE = .12$, $95\% CI = [-.02, .39]$). The effect of downward responsibility on OCBs via managers IJ-MBO was negative and significant ($IE = -.14$, $95\% CI = [-.41, .01]$). These effects indicate that managers' lower levels of IJ-MBO partially mediate the relationship between managers' downward SOR and employees' OCBs such that managers who have lower IJ-MBO yielded greater OCBs from their employees.

Moderated Mediation Effects. Because managers' PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO had significant direct effects on employees' OCBs, I can test if managers' sense of power moderates the mediation effect between managers' SOR and their employees' OCBs via managers' MBO. Sense of power did not moderate any of the mediation effects from SOR on OCBs via the manager's MBO at the .05 level. The index of moderated mediation (Hays, 2015) was significant for the path between upward responsibility and OCBs via manager's PJ-MBO (index = -.16, 95% CI = [-.44, -.02]) and via managers IJ-MBO (index =.14, 95% CI = [.02, .43]).

Table 15 – Mediation and Moderated Mediation Effects on Organizational Citizenship Behaviors

	Direct Mediation	Index of Moderated Mediation	95% CI.
<i>Direct Mediation</i>			
Downward -> PJ-MBO -> OCB	.12†		[-.02, .39]
Downward -> IJ-MBO -> OCB	-.14*		[-.41,-.01]
<i>Moderated Mediation</i>			
Upward*SOP -> PJ-MBO -> OCBs		-.16*	[-.44,-.02]
Upward*SOP -> IJ-MBO -> OCBs		.14*	[.02, .43]
<i>Serial Moderated Mediation</i>			
Rank -> Upward*SOP -> PJ-MBO -> OCBs		-.01*	[-.04,-.001]
Rank -> Upward*SOP -> IJ-MBO -> OCBs		.01*	[.001, .05]

Note: confidence intervals are based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

Serial Moderated Mediation. Further, because rank had a significant direct effect on managers' upward SOR, I was able to test serial moderated mediation for the relationships between rank and employee OCBs through upward SOR, PJ-MBO, and IJ-MBO, moderated by managers' sense of power. As shown in Table 15, the index of moderated mediation for these serial mediation effects were significant through both PJ-MBO (index=-.01, 95% CI= [-.04, -.001]) and IJ-MBO (index=.01, 95% CI= [.001, .05]).

Counterproductive Work Behaviors

Direct Effects. The results for my effects on CWBs are presented in Table 16. The model for justice MBO predicting CWBs fit the data well ($\chi^2(72) = 124.36$, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04). Managers' IJ-MBO had a positive and significant direct effect on employees' engagement in CWBs ($B = .10$, $p < .05$). Managers DJ-MBO and PJ-MBO did not have significant direct effects on CWBs.

Table 16 – Results of Structural Equation Models and Moderator Analysis Predicting Employees' Counterproductive Work Behaviors for Study 2

Model	Counterproductive Work Behaviors						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Constant	1.69	1.64	1.65	1.65	1.66	1.65	1.63
<i>Independent Variables</i>							
DJ - MBO	.04	-.02	.02	.02	.04	.02	.02
PJ - MBO	-.10	.10†	-.07	.10†	-.08	-.05	-.07
IJ - MBO	.10*	.09*	.09*	.11*	.07	.06	.08†
<i>Moderators</i>							
Cooperation		-.52**	-.45**	-.44**			
Competition					.11†	.11†	.10†
<i>Interactions</i>							
Cooperation*DJ-MBO		.12*					
Cooperation*PJ-MBO			-.10†				
Cooperation*IJ-MBO				-.09*			
Competition*DJ-MBO					.11†		
Competition*PJ-MBO						.03	
Competition*IJ-MBO							.04

Note: N = 155. † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$. $\chi^2(72) = 124.36$, CFI = .97, RMSEA = .06, and SRMR = .04. DJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocations of distributive justice resources (e.g., pay, promotions), PJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of procedural justice resources (e.g., voice, influence over outcomes), IJ-MBO = Sense of obligation to equity-based allocation of interactional justice resources (e.g., respect, honesty). Cooperativeness and Competitiveness are both employee self-ratings of themselves.

Moderation Effects for Cooperativeness. There was a statistically significant interaction between managers DJ-MBO and employees cooperativeness predicting CWBs ($B = .12$, $p < .05$). Simple slopes indicated that managers' DJ-MBO was positively related to CWBs when cooperation was high ($B = .07$, $p < .05$), but had a null relationship with CWBs when

cooperativeness was low ($B = -.05, ns$). Interestingly, and counter to my theorizing, there was also a significant interaction with IJ-MBO ($B = -.09, p < .05$) and a marginally significant interaction with PJ-MBO ($B = -.10, p < .10$). Simple slopes analysis indicated that the relationship between managers' IJ-MBO and employees' CWB was positive when employee cooperativeness was low ($B = .11, p < .01$) and was null when cooperativeness was high ($B = .02, ns$). These interactions are plotted in Figures 13 and 14.

Figure 13 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees' Cooperativeness with Managers Distributive Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees' Counter Productive Work Behavior

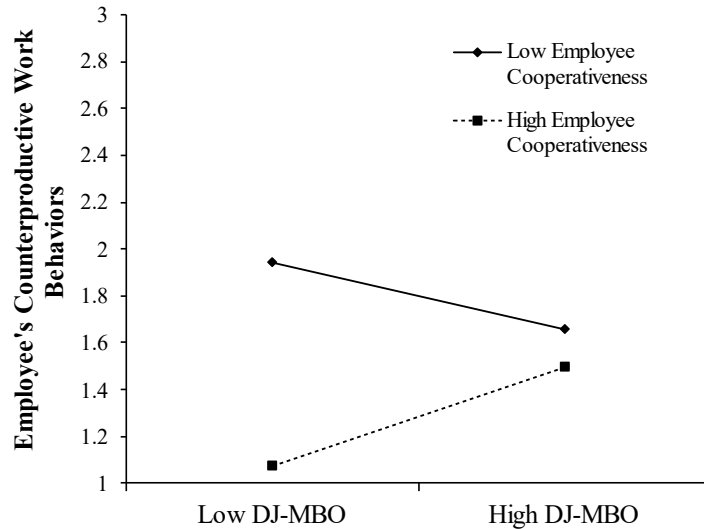
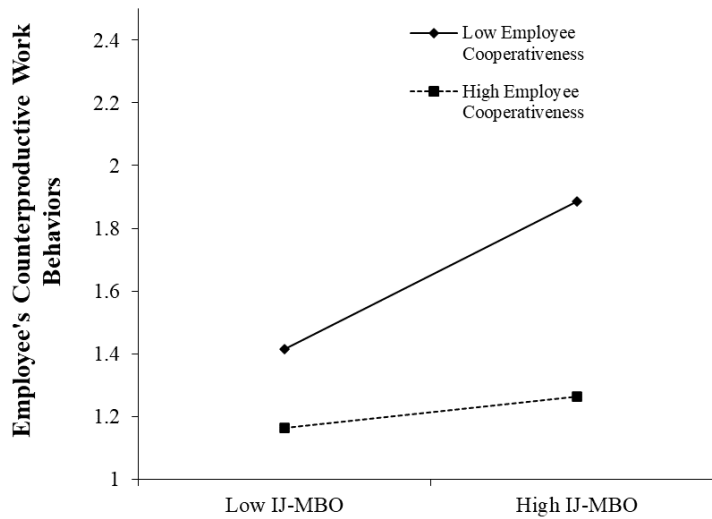


Figure 14 – Moderation Plot Depicting the Interaction of Employees’ Cooperativeness with Managers Interactional Justice Merit-based Obligation Predicting Employees’ Counter-Productive Work Behavior



Moderation Effects for Competitiveness. Employees’ competitiveness did not moderate any of the relationships between managers' justice MBO and employees' CWBs.

Mediation Effects. All mediation and moderated mediation effects are presented in Table 17. Because there were significant direct effects of managers’ downward-SOR on PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO, and direct effects of PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO on employees’ CWBs, I conducted tests of mediation for these paths. Results indicated that managers' IJ-MBO was a statistically significant mediator of the relationship between managers' downward SOR and employees CWBs (IE = -.15, 95% CI = [-.37, -.02]). This means that managers with a strong Downward-SOR were able to stave off employees' CWBs by endorsing lower degrees of interactional justice inequality. For PJ-MBO, results indicated that managers’ PJ-MBO had a marginally significant mediation effect on the relationship between managers’ downward SOR and employees’ CWBs (IE = .12, 90% CI = [.01, .36]). This indicates that managers' sense of responsibility to care for employees may lead to greater CWBs from employees when the manager gives equal voice and influence over

decisions to all members regardless of their ability to perform. This is interesting because it demonstrates the potential dark side of managers' downward SOR, and the bright side of managers' PJ-MBO.

Moderated Mediation Effects. Next, managers' PJ-MBO had a significant and negative direct effect on CWBs (index = $-.13$, 95% CI = $[-.71, -.01]$). This suggests that managers who felt a sense of power also had greater PJ-MBO which led to a reduction in CWBs. This may be that having a strong focus on merit-based procedural justice may act as a motivating force that encourages members to adhere with the organizational goals, and making it risky to engage in CWBs at the risk of having less control over one's outcomes. By contrast, there was a marginally significant moderated mediation effect of interactional justice on CWB (index = $.11$, 90% CI = $[.01, .43]$, 95% CI = $[-.01, .54]$). Thus, this provides some evidence that managers' sense of power led to greater CWBs when Upward-SOR was high.

Table 17 – Mediation and Moderated Mediation Effects on Counterproductive Work Behaviors

	Direct Mediation	Index of Moderated Mediation	95%CI.
<i>Direct Mediation</i>			
Downward -> IJ -> CWB	-0.15		$[-.37, -.02]$
<i>Moderated Mediation</i>			
Downward -> IJ*Cooperation -> CWB		-0.13	$[-.41, -.01]$
Upward*SOP -> IJ -> CWBs		0.11	$ [.003, .47]$
<i>Serial Mediation</i>			
Rank -> Upward*SOP -> IJ -> CWBs		0.01	$ [.0001, .06]$

Note: confidence intervals are based on 1000 bootstrap samples.

Serial Moderated Mediation. Further, because rank had a significant direct effect on managers' upward SOR, I tested serial moderated mediation effects for the relationships between rank and employee CWBs through upward SOR and IJ-MBO, moderated by managers' sense of

power. The index of moderated mediation for this serial mediation effects were significant through IJ-MBO (index=.01, 95%CI= [.001, .06]).

Supplemental Analyses for Study 2

The literature suggests that some justice facets should be distributed based on merit (i.e., distributive justice), while others should be distributed equally regardless of performance. Therefore managers' justice-focused MBO could have interactive effects on employee outcomes. For example, it could be that DJ-MBO is positive to employee's sense of overall justice, legitimacy, affective trust, OCBs when PJ-MBO or IJ-MBO are low but negatively related to these outcomes when PJ- and IJ-MBO are high. Alternatively, if a manager has a goal of distributive bonuses and other resource equally regardless of performance, employees may find this to be fair only if high performers also receive high levels of PJ-MBO or IJ-MBO. Thus, there are reasons to believe that there could be complex interactive relationships between managers' MBO and employee outcomes. Therefore, I tested interaction among each of the justice MBO facets predicting the focal outcomes for this study. Unfortunately, however, there were no statistically significant interaction effects among MBO facets. These interactions will not be discussed further.

DISCUSSION FOR STUDY 2

Study 2 aimed to build upon Study 1 by measuring managers' internal sense of MBO as correlated constructs, and by testing my hypotheses regarding the effects of managers' MBO on employee outcomes. The results of this dissertation provide evidence both for and against the present consensus in the literature.

Discussion of Power and Responsibility

I suggested that manager rank would be positively related to managers' sense of power and to their sense of responsibility. In support of my hypotheses regarding the link between power and SOR, Tost & Johnson, (2019) suggested that powerholders feel more responsible for employees, which in turn is related to managers' tendency to promote solidarity and oneness. However, contrary to the theory and results presented in Tost and Johnson (2019) and of Tost (2015), Study 2 provided evidence that structural power (operationalized as managerial rank) was positively related to their sense of responsibility to the organization and its goals, but unrelated to managers' sense of responsibility to care for members who were below them in the hierarchy (i.e., downward responsibility). Therefore, this study indicates that increases in rank may come with a greater responsibility to their institutional goals (i.e., upward responsibility and an obligation to enforce conformity with organizational prototypes) rather than a downward-facing responsibility to employees.

It is important to note, nonetheless, that this result should not be interpreted as an indication that those who are in positions of power do not feel a sense of responsibility to their employee. On the contrary, there was a statistically significant correlation between upward and downward-facing responsibility in Study 2 ($r = .36, p < .01$) indicating that managers who felt one sense SOR to one target (e.g., upward-facing) also felt a SOR to the other target (e.g.,

downward). This finding makes sense because people seek to appoint leaders who are responsible in general, thus, it makes sense that being in a role of structural power is related to a general responsibility factor. This could be a source of range restriction on the responsibility variables. The raw mean values for both SORs were quite high. The mean for upward-SOR was 4.05 (SD = .85), had a range of 1.75 to 5 and was negatively skewed (skewness = -.87). The mean for downward-SOR was 4.29 (SD = .66) and had a range from 3 to 5 and was also negatively skewed (skewness = -.62). Thus, there may have been range restriction on these variables in my sample.

Discussion of Responsibility and MBO

From this, I hypothesized that upward responsibility would be positively related to justice MBO when it came to each of the justice dimensions. This was such that upward responsibility would be positively related to merit-based discrimination between high and low performers. I did not find support for the direct effects of managers' upward responsibility on their MBO. Rather, responsibility was only positively related to MBO when it interacted with the manager's sense of power. In contrast to upward responsibility, I did find that managers' downward SOR to care for employees was negatively related to PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO, but not for DJ-MBO. Thus, whereas managers who feel a responsibility to employees did indeed seem to foster greater social equality, managers who feel a sense of responsibility to their institution seemed to generate greater inequality between members. Importantly, I also found statistically significant moderated mediation effects linking rank to both IJ-MBO and PJ-MBO, indicating that rank did have a positive indirect effect of inequality obligations when their sense of power was also high.

However, I did find that managers would be more likely to feel obligated to enact merit systems when their sense of power was high. Results for the interactions between SOR and sense

of power this indicates that managers' sense of power may have allowed them to feel less obligated to enact MBOs. This makes sense because sense of power should be related to a manager's ability to act volitionally rather than being controlled by organizational norms. However, managers who were both high in upward SOR and sense of power seemed to choose to implement greater MBOs. This supports the connection between upward SOR and MBO because managers who felt a stronger sense of power were more likely to endorse MBOs when they were focused on their institutional responsibilities.

Discussion of MBO and Employee Outcomes

Further, I did find some support that a manager's sense of MBO can impact employee outcomes in both positive and negative ways. I found no support for Hypothesis 4, regarding the direct effects of justice MBO on organizational legitimacy, overall justice, and affective trust in their supervisor. However, I did find managers' DJ-MBO was negatively related to employees' sense of legitimacy and overall justice when employees' trait cooperativeness was high. This was because cooperative norms tend to be characterized by social equality in relationships (Lawler & Yoon, 1999). This same effect was also significant for OCBs and CWBs such that cooperative employees engaged in fewer OCBs and more CWBs when managers' DJ-MBO was high. This lends support for my hypothesis that cooperative team members would prefer norms of equality and, therefore, see merit-based norms of inequality as being less legitimate or fair (Ulber, Hamann, & Tomaselli, 2017; Blake & McAuliffe, 2011; Sheskin, Bloom, & Wynn, 2014; Leventhal et al 1972; Steiner 1972; Smith & Cook 1973). The relationships with OCBs and CWBs also demonstrate that these factors coalesce to predict behavior and not just cognitions regarding legitimacy or justice.

Though only the interaction with DJ-MBO was significant in most of my models, PJ-MBO also interacted with employees' cooperativeness to predict employees' sense of overall justice. Thus, this result seems to suggest that cooperative individuals may see managers' tendency to grant more influence to high performers as less just, but not necessarily as less legitimate.

For employees' affective trust in their supervisor, I found no significant direct or interactive effects of managers' MBO on employees' affective trust in their supervisor, affective trust represents an employee's relationship strength with their supervisor (Colquitt et al., 2014). It would be reasonable to assume that employees who assume that their managers' obligations as less legitimate or fair would also not feel a strong sense of affective trust in their supervisor. However, the results do not support this. This finding may be due to the content of responsibility and *obligation*. If cooperative employees see DJ-MBO as less legitimate, but DJ-MBO is due more to the organizational environment rather than the manager's personal preferences, then they may be more likely to attribute them to the organization and not their supervisor.

Likely the most surprising finding from Study 2 involves the direct effect of managers' IJ-MBO being positively related to both employees' OCBs and CWBs. These findings are surprising because they indicate managers' who are feel obligated to treat high performers better in terms of respect, esteem, transparency, and the like, were actually the most likely to motivate behaviors – both good and bad – at work. I hypothesized that managers' use merit-based norms as a means of reinforcing social norms with rewards and punishments for good and bad behavior respectively. Interactional justice is the element of justice that managers have the most discretion over on a daily basis (Scott et al., 2014). Therefore, a manager's use of merit rewards and punishments in terms of interpersonal treatment may be an especially potent motivator at work.

Managers' IJ-MBO may motivate OCBs by creating a tight expectancy between engaging in OCBs and better interpersonal treatment. However, if managers feel that they must treat some people better than others – based on performance – then this may also lead employees to feel justified in doing the same. Bandura's (1969) social learning theory may indicate that employees may be more likely to feel entitled to positive treatment and feel more entitled to give lower-performers negative interpersonal treatment, in a context where their manager has high IJ-MBO.

Further, managers PJ-MBO was negatively related to OCBs and CWBs (though non-significant for CWBs). This finding is in line with the justice literature on the whole, which suggests that procedural justice is something that should be applied to all members equally (Leventhal, 1980; Colquitt, 2001). By contrast, in this study, I did not find that employees saw managers' PJ-MBO as being directly unjust or illegitimate. Nonetheless, work environments where voice and input are only given to high-performing members may reduce the value of extra-role behaviors such as OCBs (Organ, 2018), but also increase the risks of losing one's voice after engaging in CWBs.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

The aim of this dissertation was to shift the consensus in the literature on power and responsibility to be considerate of the range of responsibilities that powerholders have (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Scholl et al., 2022). Together, these studies shift the consensus in the power and responsibility literature (Tost, 2015; Tost & Johnson, 2019; Scholl et al., 2014) by recognizing that managers have responsibilities to multiple stakeholders and that power is related to a responsibility to collective goals, which can contrast with the relational goals of individuals within the organization. The present researcher's introduction of multiple stakeholders makes several theoretical and conceptional contributions to current conceptions of power and responsibility

Responsibility, Leadership, and Ethics

The responsibility constructs discussed in this dissertation have similarities and differences with other leadership constructs. Further, it is worthwhile to theorize about the incremental contributions that sense of responsibility adds to research on leadership behaviors and ethical leadership. In general, leadership is defined as “(a) influencing individuals to contribute to group goals and (b) coordinating the pursuit of those goals. We think pragmatically of leadership as building a team and guiding it to victory” (Van Vugt, Hogan, and Kaiser, 2008, p. 182). Thus, leadership involves influencing, directing, motivating, and regulating individuals' behavior toward ‘group’ goals (Kotterman, 2006). In many ways, this definition of leadership aligns well with that of upward responsibility. Similarly, demonstrating care and consideration for followers is also considered an important leadership behavior (Stogdill, 1963) that is like downward responsibility. However, while related, there are important differences between the

responsibility constructs discussed in this dissertation and leadership or leadership behaviors, such as task and socially-oriented leadership.

Upward Responsibility is More Closely Related to Management Than to Leadership.

The “leadership” construct has often been contrasted with the construct of “management” (Kotterman, 2006; Algahtani, 2014). The term “leadership” is often applied to consensual processes where leaders work with followers to generate a shared group vision. Leadership then involves communicating that vision in an inspirational fashion so that others are intrinsically motivated to follow. By contrast, the term “management” is often applied to more controlling behaviors that limit employee choices and ensure that work processes are consistently executed to accomplish the goals of upper management (Kotterman, 2006). From this, Katz (1955) distinguished leadership as a multi-directional influence relation, whereas management is a unidirectional authority relationship. Management and leadership are separate and necessary organizational processes (Kotterman, 2006). However, the term “management” has often been treated as a ‘dirty word’ associated with more controlling behaviors from those with structural power while leadership is treated as a more optimistic and pro-social approach to influencing others to accomplish group goals.

While upward responsibility is distinct from both leadership and management themselves, upward responsibility may be reasonably characterized by the degree that the individual feels an obligation to *prioritize* the managerial role over the leadership role. Upward responsibility is characterized by an individual's internal sense of *obligation to and accountability for* producing or preventing designated ends for the organization (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013). Upward responsibility is likely negatively associated with leadership in terms of bi-directional and consensual influence and more positively associated with unidirectional

management and controlling influence. Indeed, when a manager feels a strong sense of upward responsibility to protect institutional norms and goals (and fears being held responsible for not protecting those goals) they are unlikely to adjust their behavior to meet the needs of individual employees unless the employee's needs align well with the goals of the organization. Thus, if meeting employees' needs interferes with organizational goals (e.g., extended medical leaves, time off requests, a higher and potentially more fair wage), it is a manager's upward responsibility to prioritize the needs of the organization and to deny employee's needs that may inconvenience the organization. Further, one of the core contributions of the responsibility construct is that it removes volitional behaviors on behalf of the leader, meaning that the leader may not have the freedom to prioritize the needs of lower-ranking members.

Upward and Downward Responsibility are Similar to but different from Task and Socially Oriented Leadership. Upward and downward-facing responsibilities are also similar to, but different from, task and socially-oriented leadership behaviors. In general, a sense of responsibility involves an internal obligation to produce or prevent certain ends (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013) and a sense of upward and downward responsibility involves a sense of responsibility to produce or prevent certain ends *for specific stakeholder referents*. Upward responsibility is directed at the collective organization and one's organizational superiors, while downward responsibility is directed at lower-ranking employees. Because sense of upward and downward responsibility tends to be associated with instrumental and relational goals respectively, it may seem that these would be highly akin to task and social orientations. For example, upward responsibility is associated with collective organizational goals which is largely task focused. The Webster Meridian dictionary, for example, defines an organization as “an administrative and *functional structure*” (italics added), and others suggest that the term “applies

correctly to stable associations of persons engaged in concerted activities directed to the attainment of a specific objective” (Bittner 1965, p. 175). Further, “thus, leadership and followership are social strategies that have been selected for by virtue of their success in fostering collective action” (Van Vugt, 2006, p .359, italics added). Thus, upward responsibility to care for the organization is clearly more strongly associated with task-related behaviors than with socially-focused leadership behaviors. Similarly, since downward responsibility involves prioritizing care for lower-power members – potentially placing relational care before task behaviors – it is more strongly associated with socially-focused leadership behavior than it is with instrumental leadership behaviors.

In the leadership literature, the concepts that are most closely related to task versus social behaviors are those of initiating structure and individual consideration (Stogdill, 1950). “Initiating Structure is the degree to which a leader defines and organizes his role and the roles of followers, is oriented toward goal attainment, and establishes well-defined patterns and channels of communication” (Judge, Piccolo, & Illies, 2004, p. 36). Further, individual consideration “is the degree to which a leader shows concern and respect for followers, looks out for their welfare, and expresses appreciation and support” (Judge, Piccolo, & Illies, 2004, p. 36). Although upward responsibility is more strongly associated with task orientation (e.g., initiating structure) and downward responsibility with relational behaviors (e.g., individual consideration), they are not the same as task and socially-focused leadership behaviors. *Ultimately, the content of one’s responsibility to any single stakeholder can vary depending on how task or socially-oriented they are.* For downward responsibility, for example, employees vary in their need for task guidance and initiating structure from their leader. Organizing tasks could be part of caring for an employee's needs. Similarly, organizational cultures vary in how much they command

managers to care about their employees. In some organizations, a manager could be assigned the upward responsibility of prioritizing care for employees – leading them to be high in both upward and downward responsibility. Thus, both initiating structure and individual consideration can *both* be employed as part of one's upward *and* downward responsibilities. Thus, these are distinct but related concepts.

Additionally, sense of responsibility captures the strength of one's sense of obligation in a way that self-reported leadership behaviors do not. For example, initiating structure could stem from one's own volition (i.e., because they want to) rather than from a strong external obligation (i.e., because they have to) to organize individuals' tasks. Thus, a manager who is low in sense of upward responsibility could be high in initiating structure but do so in a lackadaisical and worryless way. By contrast, a manager who is high in sense of upward responsibility may feel a very strong sense of obligation/accountability to manifest a certain organizational outcome. If so, then they may do so in an intense, rigid, and unyielding way because they could receive harsh accountability for failure. Similarly, a manager who is low in sense of downward responsibility could be high in individual consideration but do so only when it is convenient and easy. If so, then they could feel validated when turning a blind eye to the suffering of others. By contrast, a manager who is high in downward responsibility would feel that they must engage in individual consideration even when it is difficult or bothersome, potentially even at a cost to themselves. Therefore, the obligatory aspects of sense of responsibility make it readily distinguishable from task- and socially-oriented leadership behaviors.

Leadership and Sense of Responsibility are Ethically Neutral. Further, given that a sense of responsibility invokes a duty and obligation to care for a given entity, it might seem that sense of responsibility (upward versus downward) would have important ethical implications.

However, leadership and a sense of responsibility as conceived in the present work has little to no connection with ethical behaviors. Current responsible leadership research emphasizes that “responsible leadership is an inherently normative approach to leadership” (Maak & Pless, 2011) and ethical leadership is often subsumed as a facet of responsible leadership (Miska & Mendenhall, 2018). Nonetheless, leadership is “influencing individuals to contribute to group goals” (Van Vugt, Hogan, & Kaiser, 2008, p. 182) and leaders can influence groups to engage in both ethical and unethical acts and there are many examples in history of ‘responsible leaders’ who enact great harm. Similarly, a leader’s responsibility is also ethically neutral because one’s sense of responsibility only contains ethical content to the degree to the degree that the obligations pressed upon them are normatively ethical. Thus, both leadership and *sense of* responsibility are not necessarily connected with normative ethics.

For example, the upward-facing obligations placed upon most leaders are ethical or ethically neutral. Nonetheless, there are many examples of upward-facing responsibility gone wrong. There is literature that discusses the ethical limitations of being responsible within organizations such as the Nazi military during World War II (Berghs, de Casterlé, & Gastmans, 2007; Katz, 1982). Business ethics textbooks also raise this concern for accountants working for scandalous organizations like Enron and WorldCom (Stanwick & Stanwick, 2013). In each of these high-profile examples, employees had unethical obligations assigned to them by layers of superior organizational leaders. To explain why people behave unethically, famous experiments on obedience (Milgram, 1963, 1974) demonstrated that people are most likely to inflict harm when they are told to do so by a superordinate authority – such as those whose authority is legitimated by formal bureaucratic structures. Certainly, the same is also true that individuals are more likely to behave ethically when told to do so by a superior leader. Similarly, downward

responsibility can also be viewed as ethically neutral. Depending on one's preference for ethical theories⁸, an unconstrained downward responsibility to care for individuals could also lead to unethical behaviors in the contexts of nepotism and decisions that benefit the few in need even at cost to the organization (Weber, 1946; Blau, 1956). Thus, leadership and sense of responsibility are theoretically unrelated to ethical behavior.

⁸ Moral perspectives such as Deontic ethics (Kant, 1785/1997) and Care ethics (Larrabee, 2016) often emphasize a duty to care for others as a primary or sole moral imperative. By contrast, other moral theories could place limits on care-based behavior. Utilitarian ethics sometimes does so by justifying harm based on the collective good (Bentham, 1789). Nonetheless, a detailed discussion of these topics is outside the scope of this dissertation.

THEORETICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

Given that the responsibility constructs provide incremental information beyond prior conceptions of leadership, power, and ethics, the power-and-responsibility perspective makes several theoretical contributions to the literature on power.

Theoretical Contributions to The Literature on Power

The present research has several implications for existing theories regarding the outcomes of power and responsibility in organizations. Existing theories largely indicate that power leads to more self-serving behaviors and emphasis on personal goals rather than others' goals (Lammers, Galinsky, Dubois, & Rucker, 2015; Magee & Galinsky, 2008). For example, the Approach-Inhibition Theory of Power (Keltner et al., 2003) suggests that power leads to more action because it reduces the person's concerns regarding material and social constraints (Galinsky, Magee, Gruenfeld, Whitson, & Liljenquist, 2008). Thus, those with power are said to be more likely to defy social obligation and politeness norms because they feel less obligated to meet the expectations of others (Keltner et al., 2003). The Psychological Distance Theory of Power (Magee & Smith, 2013), also suggests people in positions of power see themselves as independent from others – rather than *interdependent* with or dependent upon others. From a position of rich resources, others need you more than you need them. This position disincentivizes powerholders from taking on the burdens of those they could functionally do without.

Together, these theories suggest that the ostensible 'corrupting' effects of power stem from the powerholder's selfish freedom to act without needing to be fully considerate of the needs, goals, and perspectives of others (Magee and Galinsky, 2008; Lammers et al., 2015). Further, since power provides the resources to accomplish one's goals without being hindered by

the need for support from others (Magee and Galinsky, 2008), power is said to lead to greater action toward selfish and personal, rather than pro-social, goals. However, the power-and-responsibility perspective suggests that power should have more pro-social outcomes that have been discussed in the literature.

Structural Power and Sense of Power. The literature on power and responsibility was born to push back against the narrative that power is associated with selfishness and personal freedom. Indeed, the motivation for Tost's (2015) article was exactly to challenge the presumption that having structural power and feeling powerful are highly related. The results of the current studies further support Tost's (2015) insights that structural power (operationalized as organizational rank) may not be highly related to a manager's sense of power. Indeed, in Study 2, the results indicated that managers' rank explained only about 12% of the variance in managers' sense of power. Thus, while the present research does support the idea that power is a proximal antecedent to a sense of power and to a sense of responsibility, it also reinforces that structural power is accompanied by many factors that limit powerholders' use of power. Thus, the current research further reinforces Tost's (2015) suggestion that the literature on power may not be a fully accurate representation of how those in positions of power actually behave. As Hill (2021) stated above, "Becoming a manager is not about becoming a boss. It's about becoming a hostage" (Hill, 2021). Together, these studies (Tost, 2015; Tost and Johnson, 2019) and the present results indicate that a focus on structural power (rather than psychological power) could provide important insights into how people with power experience the freedoms and constraints of their roles.

Power and Responsibility. First, Tost and colleagues suggest that structural power induces managers to generate solidarity and oneness due to their sense of responsibility for

employees. By contrast, Study 2 and Study 1 provide conjoint evidence that structural power may be more strongly related to managers' sense of responsibility to their organization and, therefore, to unequal allocations of respect, voice, and other forms of interpersonal treatment. Thus, whereas managers who feel a responsibility to employees did indeed seem to foster greater social equality, managers who feel a sense of responsibility to their institution seemed to generate greater inequality between members. The present evidence suggests, therefore, that structural power and responsibility were related to large inequality rather than greater solidarity.

Perhaps the most compelling proposition placed forth by the proposed theory is that managers may indeed, feel a sense of obligation that they *must* enact degrees of inequality with respect to distributive, procedural, and interactional justice as a core responsibility of their job. Responsibility involves "a sense of internal obligation and commitment to produce or prevent designated outcomes" (Lauermann & Karabenick, 2013, p. 13, italics added). Specifically, I suggested that the shift to managerial roles involves a shift, therefore, from a non-evaluative relational paradigm among lower-power members to an evaluative paradigm used to assess individual's congruence with organizational goals (Rucker, Galinsky, & Magee, 2018). Indeed, managers in my sample indicated that they felt that they had an obligation to treat high performers better when it came to procedural justice (granting more voice and outcome control to high performers) and interactional justice (politeness and detailed explanations). This means that people who enter positions of structural power may feel that they must enact greater inequality (favoring high performers) even if doing so is incongruent with relational norms or their own personal values. Indeed, this is proposed to be one of the core challenges that face people who are moved into managerial roles for the first time (Lipman, 2018).

However, it is crucial to emphasize again that this result does not imply that individuals in positions of power lack a sense of responsibility towards their employees given the statistically significant correlation between upward and downward-facing responsibility in Study 2 ($r = .36, p < .01$). The correlation between SORs also makes sense because people generally choose leaders who are agreeable (Blake, Luu, Petrenko, Gardner, Moergen, & Ezerins, 2022), generous (Wellman, 2017; Van Vugt, 2006; Von Rueden, Gurven, Kaplan, & Stieglitz, 2014) embody group norms (Van Knippenberg, 2011). Thus, it could be that people who feel a downward SOR are more likely to make it into leadership at the lowest ranks and then later be promoted into higher ranks. If this is the case, then it could be that *additional* rank may not induce a SOR to employees above and beyond the initial requirement that managers, in general, feel a sense of responsibility to employees.

Structural Power to Inhibition. The Approach-Inhibition theory suggests that sense of power leads to *lower inhibition* via freedom from constraints. However, the present analysis suggests that structural power could lead to *greater inhibition* because they are constrained by the incredible weight of responsibility and *conform* to social expectations. Drawing from the Approach-Inhibition framework, scholars have argued that power leads to a disregard for social expectations and leads them to break social norms, steal, or be dishonest (Yap, Wazlawek, Lucas, Cuddy, & Carney, 2013). Thus, the current literature suggests that power leads to decreased conformity with social norms. However, from the perspective of power and structural responsibility, a manager may not feel free to be self-interested because they are accountable for fulfilling their obligations to others (Anichich & Hirsh, 2017). Responsible leaders may feel *less free* to express their individuality and self-interest outside of those that benefit the organization. Indeed, this could lead lower power managers to feel even more compelled to align themselves

with the behaviors of superior managers to avoid social risks of non-conformity (Zhang, Higgins, & Chen, 2011). Indeed, the need to be representative of the organization's ideals may lead those in positions of structural power to feel that they lack the freedom to prioritize their self-interest (Tost, 2015).

It is also important to note, again, that being in a position of rank and structural power also comes with an *increased risk* of legal and publicized social accountability (as I discussed in the subsection entitled "By What Standard - Procedural and Legal Accountability" in the above section on "Responsibility to whom?"). Thus, whereas the Approach-Inhibition Theory would suggest that power leads to less concern regarding risks, the present theory would suggest that structural power leads to greater concerns for accountability from broader organizational stakeholders. Indeed, much like how the Construal Level Theory of Power suggests that power leads one to think in more abstract terms (Magee and Smith, 2013), rank in an organization may lead powerholders to feel fearful of accountability from more distal accountability systems (e.g., laws, society) rather than proximal accountability systems (e.g., being held accountable by one's team). Thus, this dissertation presents several reasons why power should lead to increased inhibition. However, the nature of that inhibition may be more nuanced than prior concepts of inhibition.

Structural Power to Approach. This connection between structural power and inhibition via responsibility also raises some interesting questions about the effect of real (i.e., structural) power on the approach via decreased inhibition. Instead, in the context of systems of accountability, being in positions of *structural power* may lead to greater action orientation *and* inhibition of self-interests. For example, evidence suggests that fear of social accountability could lead to greater action orientation (Scholer, Zou, Fujita, Stroessner, and Higgins, 2010) and

the conjunction of power and responsibility has been shown to lead those with power to be more motivated to complete undesirable tasks (Williams, Lopiano, & Heller, 2022). Indeed, given that a manager's job is to coordinate action toward fulfilling obligations to stakeholders such as suppliers, wholesalers, and customers, they are *obligated to be action-oriented* when forwarding the organization's interests⁹. For example, few managers enjoy administering punishments to lower-performing employees. However, they must take action to punish/prevent deviant members and free riders who threaten the team or organization's goals. These punishments may be in the form of performance improvement plans and threats to low performers (e.g., with job loss) as a responsibility of their role (Huselid, 1995). Together, this indicates that those with power, via responsibility, are more extrinsically *motivated* to act. In this way, there may be a connection from power to approach-oriented behaviors that are the opposite mechanisms than are invoked in existing theory.

Power and Psychological Distance. The responsibility perspective on power may also shift the consensus in the literature on power and psychological distance. The psychological distance theory of power (Magee and Smith, 2013) has largely been utilized as evidence of the anti-social elements of power. The psychological distance theory of power suggests that powerholder's independence from others reduces their sense of psychological closeness with others and therefore leads to a decreased attention to the needs and perspectives of others (Galinsky, Magee, Inesi, & Gruenfeld, 2006). However, the theoretical perspectives raised in this dissertation may point to a more pro-social view of power and psychological distance.

⁹ Nuance is by the fact that concerns of being held responsible reduces risk-taking and should lead to a preference for safer actions for protecting the group (Weigold & Schlenker, 1991). Thus, while there are clear connections between responsibility, accountability, and action orientation, this action orientation would occur in via vigilance and prevention orientation (Sholer et al., 2010). As evidence of manager's obligations to be disinhibited, the inclusion of "golden parachutes" in CEO employment contracts aim to lift manager's fears of accountability align the CEOs risk preferences with those of owners and shareholders (Fich, Tran, & Walkling, 2013).

For example, one critical rule of procedural justice – arguably the most important facet of justice (Greenberg and Folger, 1983; Van den Bos, Wilke, Lind, & Vermunt, 1998; Tyler, 1989) – is that procedures must be enacted in a way that is impartial and free from personal bias (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Colquitt, 2001). Thus, a manager’s responsible administration of decision-making procedures often means that they *cannot make special exceptions* in order to care for the needs of individual members. This is, of course, especially the case with respect to personal friends of the manager. Indeed, one core virtue of rational bureaucratic organizing is exactly that it reduces the potential for nepotism and favoritism by requiring the impersonal and impartial application of generalized rules. Further, as the prior quote by Lipman (2018) stated, “If you happen to be promoted to manager of a team you’d been a member of, friends may not be friends in quite the same way they were. (Or at least they won’t be once the first serious corrective action needs to be taken.)” In this statement, Lipman is referring the fact that managers must be impartial with their employees and to avoid concerns about favoritism toward old friends. The responsibility to be impartial (i.e., lack of favoritism or personal preference) would be widely considered as necessary for constructing a fair organizational system. Joseph Henrich (2020), for example, refers to this as “impartial prosociality” because it fosters justice *in the broader social systems* of cooperation that lay beyond interpersonal relationships of care and friendship. Ultimately, the responsibility perspective on power suggests that the anti-relational aspects of power could have important functions at the collective level (Henrich, 2020)

Power and Prosocial Behavior. Overall, the connections between structural power and responsibility discussed in this research indicate several pro-social interpretations that contrast with the conclusions of these theories. From this perspective, structural power did not lead to greater self-interests as existing theory on power often suggests. Rather it led to a pro-social

orientation directed at the collective organization (but not necessarily to an increased concern for lower-power others). Specifically, the present results seem to indicate that structural power leads to an increased sense of responsibility for the collective interests of the group – potentially over the self-interests of the powerholder or the individuals they care for.

However, there are important caveats, of course, regarding the “pro-sociality” of a leader’s concern for the “collective good.” Given the nature of bureaucratic organizing that directs responsibility upward in the hierarchy (Weber, 1947), it is uncertain whether organizational (upward) responsibility can be functionally considered “pro-social” or “pro-collective” in a way that it is *equally* concerned with the well-being of all members of the collective – such as the concerns of low-ranking employees. The goals of modern organizations are determined by the most high-ranking members, almost without exception. Then, these goals are allocated downward in conjunction with systems of reward and punishment that strongly motivate lower managers and employees to adopt the goals of upper management and ownership (Merchant & Otley, 2007, p. 792). As the present evidence suggests, being high-ranked had no effect on their sense of responsibility to lower-ranking members. Instead, it led to more concern *for the organization*, which exists primarily for the benefit of owners or shareholders in the private economy (Friedman & Miles, 2002, 2006) and for service to the community in the governmental and non-profit sectors.

Nonetheless, one critical insight from the present theoretical framework is that it preserves the prosocial intentions that come from power, even if many of the supposed “anti-social” (restated here as “anti-relational”) outcomes remain the same (e.g., reduced individual concern and greater psychological distance). This is critical because it aligns the conversations regarding power and “corruption” with the pro-social intentions of management and is more

consistent with manager's self-perceptions, daily experiences, and intentions to be responsible. This sort of paints a picture of, "the road to power and 'interpersonal corruption' is paved with good intentions" explanation that is novel to the existing literature. Removing the assumptions regarding selfish intentions means that researchers can speak to managers in a way that validates the manager's daily experiences and challenges, rather than meeting them with cynical and accusatory perspectives on their use of power.

Contributions to the Organizational Justice Literature

This dissertation also makes several contributions to the organizational justice literature. The justice literature has widely contended distributive rewards such as pay should be allocated based on merit, but that procedural (PJ) and interactional treatment (IJ) should be allocated equally across all members. However, this dissertation identified that managers seemed to feel that they *must* treat members unequally when it came to PJ and IJ as part of their responsibility to their organization. Results also indicated some functional effects of those inequality endorsements. This identification that PJ and IJ can, and maybe should, be allocated unequally in some cases constitutes a shift in the consensus of the justice literature which has largely assumed that these must be allocated equally.

Critically, this approach is substantially different from prior approaches to managers' justice behaviors and attitudes. Prior research has largely focused on mean levels of very specific behaviors (e.g. "do you treat them politely" for interpersonal justice and "are they able to express their views" for procedural justice) without digging into the nuance regarding exactly how these behaviors are distributed across members. Instead, again, the justice literature has largely assumed that PJ and IJ should be distributed equally, and the current approach in the justice literature largely focuses on mean levels of each justice facet (Colquitt, 2001; Ambrose and

Schminke, 2009). By contrast, the current study focused on variance in the application of these justice facets.

Discussion Regarding the Factor Structure of Justice-based MBO. One interesting finding that came from this investigation relates to the underlying factor structure of the justice-MBO items. The justice literature has had a very long debate regarding the factor structure of justice facets and has largely concluded that there are four underlying facets – distributive justice, procedural justice, interpersonal justice, and informational justice (Colquitt, 2001). However, others still argue that the distinctions between justice facets may be blurred in many cases. Indeed, Ambrose and Schminke (2009) suggested that each justice facet may be readily discernable in a specific case, but that facets ultimately coalesce over time into a single overarching judgment of overall justice.

Interestingly, I did not find support for the four-factor structure of justice behaviors in my confirmatory factor analyses. Rather, the results seemed to indicate that a three-factor structure of distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice fit the data best. Nonetheless, it is notable that the results also call this three-factor structure into question because the raw correlation between PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO was .84. When treated as latent factors in my structural equation models, which removes random error and provided correlation estimates that are corrected for unreliability (Klein, 2005), the correlation between these latent factors was .88. With such a high correlation, it would seem that endorsing PJ-MBO was nearly the same as endorsing IJ-MBO and the distinction between these two facets may be blurred. Nonetheless, there was no case where a CFA of these items indicated that a two-factor model that combines these two facets fit the data better than the three-factor model.

Taken together, this provides statistical support for a three-factor solution, but may also indicate that managers perceive these justice items as having two-underlying factors – DJ-MBO and PJ-MBO. This is interesting and important for several reasons. First is that it may indicate that managers' general level of justice behaviors (e.g., do you grant employees voice in general?) has a different factor structure than endorsements or enactments of variance in justice behaviors (i.e., who do you give the most and least voice to?). Thus, this may indicate that, when it comes to the actual distribution of justice behaviors across employees, managers did not meaningfully distinguish between PJ and IJ. Rather, the results suggest that distributions of voice (procedural justice), politeness (interpersonal justice), and information (informational just) may all be subsumed under one general factor relating to variance in interpersonal treatment. Thus, taken together with the findings in Table 6, it seems that managers' upward-facing responsibility was related to their endorsement of a general inequality-of-treatment factor – that was independent of distributive justice.

Discussion of Justice-based MBO and Employee Outcomes. Nonetheless, in spite of the high correlations between PJ-MBO and IJ-MBO, these factors did seem to have some different effects on employee-rated outcomes. For example, in Table 14, and in line with what would be predicted by the justice literature, PJ-MBO was negatively related to employees' OCBs ($B = -.16, p < .05$). By contrast, perhaps the most surprising finding here was that managers' IJ-MBO was positively related to employees' OCBs ($B = .11, p < .05$). IJ-MBO was also negatively related to employee's CWBs ($B = -.10, p < .05$). I hypothesized that managers would use not just DJ but also IJ as a way of enforcing social norms and rewarding performance, and it may be the case that a manager who believes in giving special interpersonal treatment of reward high performers are the most likely to motivate employee behaviors – both good and bad. These

investigations suggested that IJ-MBO was actually the most likely to motivate employee behaviors including both OCBs and CWBs. Therefore, justice-related MBO seems to have novel, interesting, and complex effects on employee outcomes that should be explored in future research.

Indeed, it was actually a bit surprising that managers' DJ-MBO was not directly related to employees' sense of overall justice given a long history of literature suggesting that merit-based DJ is critical to fairness (Adams, 1965). This finding may be due to DJ-MBO having a highly moderated effect based on context or based on employee characteristics. Interestingly, more than PJ-MBO or IJ-MBO, managers' DJ-MBO seemed to have the most significant effect on employees' sense of legitimacy and overall justice at work – depending on the employee's cooperativeness.

LIMITATIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The present research has a number of strengths and weaknesses that should be explored or redressed in future studies. These limitations largely relate to how multi-stakeholder issues were handled in this study, and this study's inattention to need-based allocations (Leventhal, 1980), the lack of differentiation between power and status (Hays & Bendersky, 2015), and the lack of differentiation between instrumental and relational legitimacy.

Future Research Should Consider a Wider Variety of Stakeholders

This study mostly aimed to shift the consensus in the power and responsibility literature to stakeholders that went beyond employees. However, this study was still limited in scope when it came to multiple-stakeholder issues. Most clearly, is that this study only includes two stakeholders – those above them versus below them in the organizational hierarchy – and does not include managers' sense of responsibility to customers, their community, the environment, or society at large.

This limitation is most clearly evident in Study 1 where participants were only given one referent to be responsible to (either the organization's performance or for their employees' well-being and commitment). However, real-life managers often have many goals that influence their decisions. Indeed, Murphy and Cleveland, (1991) identified four core motivations that managers may have, including motivating performance, improving a positive climate, improving their own status, and accuracy. Nonetheless, the present experiment only investigated two of these goals within orthogonal conditions. Future research should include a wider variety of responsibilities and motivations that were not considered in this research as well as how managers may behave in the context of multiple salient responsibilities.

This limitation was somewhat addressed in Study 2 because managers' upward and downward responsibilities were measured along two orthogonal and continuous dimensions. Nonetheless, there are many potential stakeholders that could also be considered. For example, it may be that managers' sense of responsibility to morally relevant out-group members, such as the organization's customers, may be more likely to induce MBOs because merit-based treatment may be more important, consequential, and justifiable in the context of prosocial behaviors favoring customers. That is, enacting merit-based norms may be less justifiable when it is based on organizational performance, but more justifiable when derived from care-based concerns for customers or society.

Future Research Should Address Need-based Allocations

Further, perhaps the largest limitation of the present work is that it gives no attention to need-based allocations, which is one of the three modes of resource allocations (Leventhal, 1980). This dissertation was mainly concerned with managers' enactment of inequality based on merit-based norms and emphasized managers' responsibility to reward and punish members (with DJ, PJ, and IJ) based on merit. Indeed, my items for MBO were rated on a scale from "all members should be equal" to "high performers should receive more than low performers." However, there are likely many cases where managers feel an obligation toward neither equality nor merit-based treatment.

However, "everyone should be equal" may actually be an inappropriate response when something should be allocated based on need. Indeed, need-based norms also involve inequality because some members need more support and care than others. For example, managers who feel a downward-facing responsibility to care for employees may be more likely to give flexible work arrangements to a new parent than they are to someone without children. Indeed, asking a new

parent to work off hours when a non-parent could take those times instead may be irresponsible when it comes to caring for those employees. Nonetheless, much like how upward responsibility may lead to preferential treatment based on merit, downward responsibility may lead to preferential treatment when it comes to need-based allocations. Therefore, I feel relatively strongly that the conclusions of this dissertation regarding inequality may be over-expressed, in some way, by simply focusing on merit-based treatment and not also including unequal treatment based on need. Future research on need-based allocations is needed to redress this limitation.

Future Research is Needed to Parse Out the Effects of Power and Status

The present work was principally focused on how members respond to the responsibilities that come with roles of structural power. However, social hierarchy scholars acknowledge that hierarchies have two foundations, both power and status (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Indeed, prior research has also found that power and status have contrasting effects on justice behaviors (Blader & Chen, 2014), such that people who feel a sense of status tend to be more generous and fair than those who are in positions of low status.

Interestingly, Study 1's structural power condition actually led to similar results to the high-status conditions presented by Blader and Chen (2014). They argued that high status would make powerholders more attentive to social cues and, therefore higher distributive justice in the form of more unequal distribution between lower and higher power members. Given that structural power had a similar effect to their high-status condition, but sense of power had no effect, it may be the case that my high structural power condition was more strongly related to participants' sense of status. This could be an explanation for both the incongruence between my theorizing and that of Blader and Chen (2014) and it could also be an explanation for the greater generosity demonstrated by members in the high structural power condition. Status, in contrast to

power, has been consistently tied to more prosociality and generosity compared to power (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). However, both Study 1 and Study 2 did not have measures of managers' status. Therefore these studies could not differentiate between these effects. Thus, future research is needed to parse out the effects of power and status when it comes to MBOs and inequality enactment.

Future Research Should Distinguish Between Relational and Instrumental Legitimacy

Lastly, the present investigation defined legitimacy in terms of employees' "subjective perception regarding the fairness of the distribution of socially distributed outcomes" (Major & Schmader, 2001, p. 180). I suggested that legitimacy involved perceptions regarding the fairness of allocations of *social value* – both material and social (Tost, 2011; Tyler, 1989). Thus, this study treated instrumental and relational aspects of legitimacy as one factor constituted by an overall assessment of organizational legitimacy.

Nonetheless, relational legitimacy in terms of interpersonal value, and instrumental legitimacy in terms of material benefice, are largely treated as independent judgments in the legitimacy literature (Tost, 2011). It could be the case that MBO is positively related to assessments of instrumental legitimacy for some members and that MBO is negatively related to relational legitimacy. Indeed, much of the theory presented in this paper focused on managers' responsibility to violate relational norms of equality and, therefore, should be most relevant to assessments of relational legitimacy rather than assessments of instrumental legitimacy. Future research is needed to assess how, when, and why MBO is related to relational versus instrumental legitimacy.

Future Research Should Address Socially Desirable Responses and Range Restriction

Across these studies, the empirical results provide interesting insights into the connections between power and responsibility. However, the data also indicate several shortcomings regarding socially desirable responses and range restriction that could lead to higher error rates (both Type I and Type II errors) and should be addressed in future studies (Paunonen & LeBel, 2012). For example, even though upward and downward responsibility were manipulated orthogonally in Study 1, the data indicate that most participants were still high on sense of responsibility (both upward and downward) regardless of their experimental condition. Indeed 80% of the participants in the downward responsibility condition rated their upward responsibility as greater than or equal to 4 ($M=4.34$, $SD=.63$, $Skewness = -.84$) on a scale from 1(not at all) to 5 (to a very large extent). Thus, though participants in one condition did report more upward responsibility than the downward-facing condition, nearly all participants felt a strong sense of upward responsibility regardless of their condition. Similarly, in the upward-facing responsibility condition, the mean level of downward-facing responsibility was 3.91 ($SD = .89$, $Skewness -.55$), and 60% of the participants in the upward responsibility condition had a sense of downward responsibility that was greater than or equal to 4 out of 5. Responses were also similarly high in Study 2 where responsibility orientations were measured separately. In study 2, 80% of respondents rated themselves as having a sense of upward responsibility that was greater than or equal to 4, and 84% of respondents rated their sense of downward responsibility as greater than or equal to 4. Thus, there were very few to zero instances where participants in these studies considered themselves feeling “absolutely low” in terms of responsibility.

Participants' social motivation to be seen as “responsible” and “dutiful” by others (or to themselves), could lead to unreliable inferences (potentially Type I errors) if participants are not reporting accurately on their true feelings regarding their sense of responsibility or obligations toward inequality. Socially desirable responding is defined as “the tendency to give overly positive self-descriptions” that describe how participants they think they are expected to respond, rather than a rating that are accurate evaluation of their true feelings (Braun, Jackson, & Wiley, 2001). Those high in socially desirable responses may have endorsed lower MBO (demonstrating a socially desirable preference for equality) and higher levels of downward responsibility (demonstrating a socially desirable responsibility to care for others). If so, impression management, which is one factor of socially desirable responding (Paulhus, 1984), could act as a confounding factor creating a spurious negative association between MBO and overall justice¹⁰. Further, the range restriction caused by socially desirable responding could also lead to greater Type II error rates (Paunonen & LeBel, 2012). Increasing the variance in participant responses could improve the insights gained in future research and future research should consider implementing one of the following recommendations for reducing range restriction.

¹⁰ Ultimately, however, “being responsible” means *being seen as* responsible in the eyes of others. Thus, being responsible and managing one’s impression with a given party (e.g., one’s organization or one’s employees) are related. Indeed, impression management motives are one core reason why managers enact fairness with their employees and has been shown to lead to more lenient treatment (Scott, Colquitt, and Paddock, 2009). Thus, impression management could also be one mediating mechanism, rather than a confound, that explains the relationships between self-reported downward responsibility and lower endorsements of MBO.

Sample Individuals Who Lack Structural Responsibility. The present study was specifically interested in the behavior of those in positions of structural power and how *managers'* sense of responsibility influences their treatment of lower-power employees. However, this fact in conjunction with the observed range restriction on sense of responsibility, means that there were no instances where participants either had (a) no structural power at all or (b) where managers felt no sense of responsibility at all. For Study 2, this meant that sense of responsibility and MBO were never measured from employees who had no structural power at all. Rather, all the participants who reported their structural power were in a management role of some kind. Similarly, in Study 1, participants were either “team lead” or “manager of the central region” and all had some structural power (i.e., the power to allocate bonuses and to evaluate others) as part of the experiment.

To help address this, future research could deliberately sample from individuals that have no structural responsibilities at all. This could involve comparing the sense of responsibility of managers who do have structural power, to employees without structural power, or even outside citizens who have no relationship with the organization’s goals or members. This would allow the researcher to deliberately contrast the behaviors of powerholders with those who have zero structural power and, ostensibly have no real obligation to care for either the organization or its subordinate employees, with those who do. Similarly, it would be compelling to measure how a person’s sense of responsibility changes as a result of being placed in a position of structural power. This would inform the most critical transition for both employees who move into management positions, and for researchers who want to understand how power affects people at the onset of their promotion to manager. These approaches should increase the range of

participants' sense of responsibility by adding individuals to the low end of the sense of responsibility scale, thus increasing statistical power.

Deliberately Manipulate Participants' Irresponsibility. The previous recommendation was to include individuals and conditions where participants have zero responsibility at all. However, an alternative could be to deliberately manipulate irresponsibility – that is, the tendency to shirk one's obligations and responsibilities to a given stakeholder. Future research could consider manipulating irresponsibility by making it very clear to not look out for particular goals or even to undermine their organization. In the existing studies, participants were told to be responsible to either their employees or their organization. However, when told to look after their organizational responsibilities, they were not told to disregard any sense of responsibility for the well-being of employees. Instead, they were told nothing at all about how they should construe their downward responsibility. Similarly, when told to look out for employees, they were not told to disregard the organization's goals when caring for those employees. However, because the current study did not have an irresponsibility condition, it is not clear how “irresponsible” individuals compare to “responsible” individuals in this context. Thus, future research should include conditions that explicitly ask participants to eschew their responsibilities during the experiment.

One important caveat to this recommendation is that “irresponsibility” and “responsibility” may be related but *different* constructs. For example, the justice literature suggests that “justice” and “injustice” are not opposites of one another. Rather, Colquitt, Long, Rodell, and Halvorsen-Ganepola (2014) reported an average correlation of approximately $r = -.64$ for between reports of justice with reports of injustice. They also demonstrated injustice added additional incremental variance in explaining employees' work-related outcomes above

and beyond employees' sense of justice. This could also be true for sense of responsibility and irresponsibility because sense of responsibility involves pro-social intentions to benefit someone, while irresponsibility likely involves an intention to allow harm to someone. Because the absence of an intention to benefit others is not the same as the intention to harm, responsibility and irresponsibility may not be opposites – just as justice and injustice are not (Colquitt et al., 2014). Thus, asking participants to be irresponsible, and placing them in positions where they feel zero sense of responsibility are unlikely to be the same.

Consider Alternative Survey Items and Measures. In study two, I aimed to align this work with prior research on power and responsibility by utilizing the scale from Tost, Wade-Benzoni, and Johnson, (2015). However, these items utilized morally charged terms such as “responsibility” and “duty” (e.g., “I feel a responsibility to look out for the interests of my employees”, or “I feel a duty to protect the goals of my organization”) and this led to very high ratings and, therefore, range restriction in this study. The range restrictions observed in this study are not substantially different from those observed in other published research. For example, Scott et al., (2015) measured manager’s self-rated justice enactment and reported means of 4.17 (SD = .91) for distributive justice, 3.88 (SD = 1.08) for procedural justice, 4.34 (SD = .68) for informational justice, and 4.62 (SD = .58) for interpersonal justice (on a scale from one to five). Ultimately ratings on some constructs may be naturally relatively high (e.g., ratings of prosocial motivation, Libel and Patil, 2018) whereas other constructs are naturally relatively low (e.g., abusive supervision, Nandkeolyar, Shaffer, Li, Ekkirala, & Bagger, 2014). Because correlations indicate whether someone who is relatively high (or low) on one construct is also relatively high (or low) on another construct compared to others in the sample, these absolute mean levels are not especially important for correlational research (Cohen, Cohen, West, and Aiken, 2003).

Nonetheless, range restriction could lead to greater Type II error rates and alternative items should be considered in future research.

There are at least two effective ways of doing this. Perhaps the most promising approach could be to measure how “responsible” a person feels for given for other’s *outcomes*. This approach could be promising because stating “I am not responsible for their outcomes” is likely less socially undesirable than stating “I don’t feel a responsibility to care for others’ needs.” For example, rather than asking, “Do you feel a responsibility to care for employees,” one could ask “If an employee was struggling at work, would you feel personally responsible for their failure?” Similarly, rather than asking, “Do you feel a duty to protect the goals of your organization,” one could ask, “If my company performed poorly, I would feel personally responsible for its failure.”

Another alternative, though potentially less accurate, would be to get other-reported measures of the manager’s sense of responsibility (upward or downward). Those in positions of power may be motivated to see themselves as responsible and, therefore, inflate their responses to sustain a positive sense of self. Having other reports would reduce this self-serving bias by asking others who would not be personally threatened by reporting on the irresponsibility of others. Nonetheless, because sense of responsibility is defined as one’s *internal* sense of obligation to meet the needs of others, other reports may be less valid if they cannot accurately report on the internal sense of responsibility that others feel. Thus, this could be one effective method for reducing range restriction but future measurement work could compare self and other reports of a manager’s sense of responsibility for designated parties or outcomes.

OVERALL CONCLUSIONS

This dissertation sought to advance understanding within the literature on power and responsibility, challenging prevailing notions and uncovering nuanced relationships between power dynamics and managerial responsibilities. The findings collectively contribute to a more comprehensive view of how power influences managerial behavior and organizational justice perceptions. This research built off of the work of Tost and colleagues (Tost, 2015; Tost, Wade-Benzoni & Johnson, 2019) by discussing the connections between structural power and prosocial responsibility. However, it also diverges from these works by highlighting that structural power correlates more strongly with an upward responsibility towards organizational goals than with a downward responsibility to care for subordinates. This suggests that while power can foster solidarity, it may also exacerbate merit-based inequalities.

Further, this dissertation extends the organizational justice literature by examining how managers may feel obligated to be fairer (in terms of procedural and interactional justice) to some team members than they are to others. Unlike traditional views advocating equal distribution, the findings suggest that managers perceive a responsibility to treat employees unequally based on merit-based norms of performance. This nuanced perspective challenges the current literature and suggests that unequal justice enactment may be an inherent part of roles of structural power.

This dissertation also contributes a new perspective to the justice literature by invoking merit-based norms of unequal justice enactment. Prior works drawing on Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) have conclusively stated that merit-based distributive justice is a central element of just distributions. However, prior works have assumed that equity/merit-based norms only occurred in the context of distributive justice, and not among the other justice factors. This dissertation

identified that merit-based distributions go beyond distributive justice and actually spill over into other elements of justice as well. Thus, this lays a very preliminary foundation for future research on organizational justice that could investigate managers' unequal justice enactment across employees.

In conclusion, this dissertation contributes a nuanced understanding of power, responsibility, and justice within organizational contexts. By challenging prevailing assumptions and uncovering complexities in managerial behaviors, it offers a foundation for future research and practical implications aimed at enhancing organizational effectiveness and employee well-being.

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APPENDIX A: SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIALS

Upward and Downward-Facing Responsibility

Adapted from Tost, 2015

Tost, L. P., Wade-Benzoni, K. A., and Johnson, H. H. (2015). Noblesse oblige emerges (with time): Power enhances intergenerational beneficence. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 128, 61–73.

Downward Responsibility

When you think about your responsibilities at work, to what extent do you think about...

1. I feel responsibility to look out for the interests of my employees.
2. I feel a duty to protect the interests of my employees.
3. I feel a responsibility to help my employees.
4. I feel it is my duty to look out for my employees.

Upward Responsibility

When you think about your responsibilities at work, to what extent do you think about...

1. I feel a responsibility to look out for the interests of my organization.
2. I feel a duty to protect the goals of my organization.
3. I feel a primary responsibility to help my organization as a whole.
4. I feel it is my duty to look out for my organizational superiors.

Sense of Power

Anderson, C., John, O. P., and Keltner, D. (2012).

1. I can get others to listen to what I say.
2. I can get others to do what I want.
3. I think I have a great deal of power.
4. If I want to, I get to make the decisions.

Sense of Obligation to Merit-Equity Rule with Respect to Justice Facets

Resource Allocations At Work

Please take a moment to reflect on what is required to fulfill your responsibilities on a day-to-day basis in your job.

Managers oversee a variety of employees on their teams. Some employees are more capable, motivated, and high performing than others. Unfortunately, not all employees are equally committed to their jobs.

As part of your job as a manager, you must allocate resources in a way that allows you to fulfill your work obligations.

To do so, you may feel obligated to **(10)** give more resources to high performers to recognize the work of top performers, to motivate team member to perform well, or to ensure that resources are used by your most capable team members.

Alternatively, you may **(0)** feel obligated to treat everyone equally regardless of individuals' contributions, ability, or performance. This can promote a sense of equal value among all members who have diverse personal needs, circumstances, and ability to perform.

****Note that this question is not asking about how you think you ought to behave in ideal circumstances. Rather, it is about how you feel you must behave to do your job.**

When it comes to fulfilling my responsibilities at work, I often feel that _____ when it comes to...

All members are equal regardless of performance performers.

I must give more to high performers than to low

1 -----
10

Items for Distributive Justice

- 1. Allocating material rewards (e.g., pay).
- 2. Promotions
- 3. Bonuses

Items for Procedural Justice

- 4. Having input into decisions.
- 5. Being able to appeal the manager's decision.
- 6. Being able to express their views about the decisions you make.
- 7. Having influence over how decisions are made
- 8. Having influence over decisions

9. Having influence over the outcomes of decisions you make
10. Granting influence in team meetings.

Items for Informational Justice

11. Receiving detailed explanations regarding decisions.
12. Providing full honesty and truthfulness
13. Being transparent about decisions
14. Having access to frequent communication with you
15. Providing timely information.
16. Receiving detailed explanations of the rules

Items for Interpersonal Justice

17. Allocating Respect
18. Granting Dignity
19. Allocating Esteem
20. Being treated politely in every conversation
21. Appreciation for their concerns.

Competition and Cooperation

Cooperation Simmons et al, 1988; Competition Wagner 1995

Cooperation:

1. Individual success can be achieved while working in groups.
2. Joint effort is the best way to achieve success.
3. Success is best achieved through cooperation rather than competition.
4. Shared efforts can lead to both individual and group success.
5. I enjoy working with others to achieve joint success.

Competition:

1. Winning is everything.
2. I feel that winning is important in both work and games.
3. Success is the most important thing in life.
4. It annoys me when other people perform better than I do.

Sense of Organizational Legitimacy

Sense of organizational legitimacy was measured using items come from a combination of items from Ho, Sidanius, Pratto, Levin, Thomsen, Kteily, and Sheehy-Skeffington, (2012) and Colquitt (2001). Legitimacy is defined as a “subjective perception regarding the fairness of the distribution of socially distributed outcomes” (Major and Schmader, 2001, p. 180). These outcomes could be a variety of outcomes including material resources (e.g., pay), opportunities (e.g., promotions), or status and respect. Thus, participants were presented with the following prompt.

Perceived Organizational Legitimacy

Organizations are often deemed legitimate when they distribute socially valued outcomes in a fair manner and when there is opportunity to improve their social standing within the organization. If organizations are not legitimate then employees can perceive that the organization does not deserve loyalty from employees.

Organizations distribute a wide variety of socially desired outcomes including **pay, respect and esteem, power, status, promotions, training and development opportunities, and others.**

Please use the following scale to rate the extent to which each of the following statements is true regarding how your organization distributes the outcomes mentioned above. There are no right or wrong answers for any question. The best answer is what you think is true for yourself. ($\alpha = \sim .70$)

In our team:

1. This team is one where we can all achieve better outcomes.
2. Advancement is possible for all individuals.
3. Differences in members' outcomes are fair.
4. Differences in outcomes between our members is the result of injustice. (Reverse coded)
5. Differences in outcomes between members reflect actual performance differences.
6. Members' outcomes are justified given their performance.
7. Differences in members' outcomes reflect what they have contributed to the organization.

Overall Justice

Perceived Overall Justice (POJ) Ambrose and Schminke (2009) $\alpha = .92$

1. Overall, people are treated fairly by my organization.
2. In general, people can count on this organization to be fair.
3. In general, the treatment we receive around here is fair.
4. Usually, the way things work in this organization are not fair (r).
5. For the most part, this organization treats its employees fairly.

6. Most of the people who work here would say they are often treated fairly.

Formal Rank

Think of the ladder below as the **formal hierarchy** (i.e., the hierarchy depicted on the org chart) of your organization. The **1st and bottom rung represent the people at the bottom** of the organization (e.g., assistants, maintenance staff), whereas the **10th and top rung represents people at the very top** of the organization (e.g., CEO, Managing Director). Indicate below **approximately where on your organization's hierarchy you fall**.



APPENDIX B: STUDY 1 EXPERIMENTAL MATERIALS

See the methods section for study 1 for a detailed explanation of these manipulations. Note that all participants were presented with all eight employee emails from all four employees. Thus, employees and messages did not vary across conditions. Employee emails were presented in a random order to reduce concerns regarding potential ordering effects.

INSTRUCTIONS

You will be participating in a role-playing exercise. You will be a Copy Editing Team Manager for a popular copy-editing company. Please read all texts carefully.

The quality of our research is improved if you embody your character as Editing Team Manager. We will outline your Role and Responsibilities. Throughout this role-play, you will interact with employees in a way that is inline with your role and responsibilities.

Click Next to Begin the Role-Playing As Manager At Clarity Copy Co.

----- next web page -----
Structural Power Manipulation

Figure 15 – Organizational Chart for High Structural Power Condition

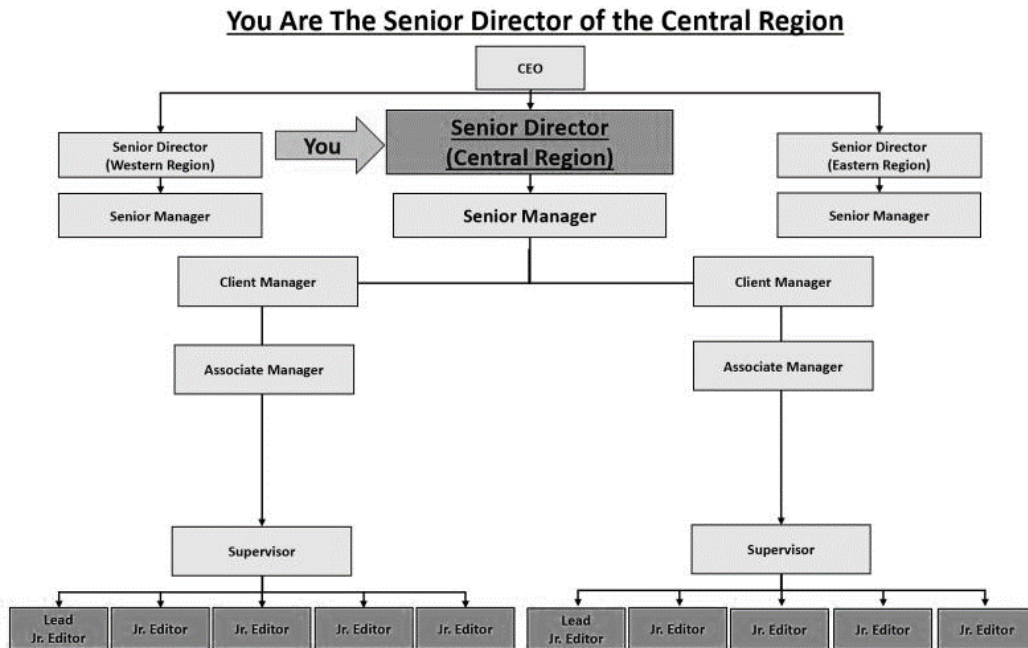
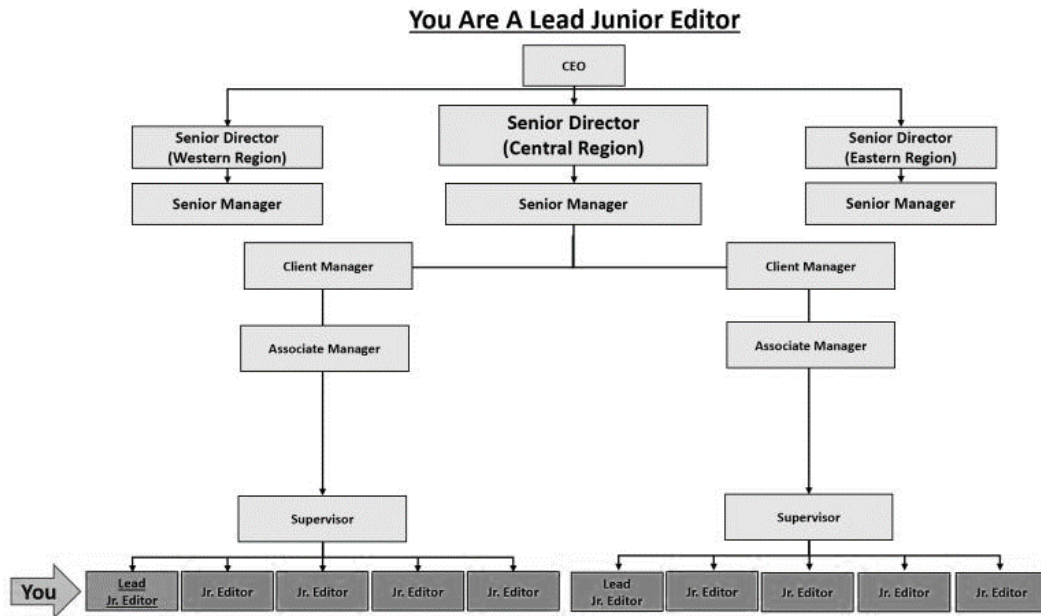


Figure 16 – Organizational Chart for Low Structural Power Condition



To: {Participant Name}
From: Clarity Copy Co. Hiring Manager
Subject: Your Managerial Role

Hello {Participant Name}:

You are hired to be a Manager for Clarity Copy Writing Company.

We are trying a new remote-work arrangement. As a manager, you are asked to oversee the performance of four newly-remote employees working on our copy editing team. They were asked to edit two documents for punctuation and spelling errors.

We need you to communicate with them to manage their performance on these tasks. Accuracy in these tasks is very important as Clarity Copy Co.’s customers rely on us to ensure that their documents are clear of errors. Below is a statement of the company’s mission and goals, please ensure that these goals are reflected in your communications and performance evaluations.

Your Job Description:

Job Title: Remote Editing Team Manager

[High Structural Power] Your job as Editing Team Manager is to...

1. Oversee and manage a team of remote workers.
2. Review and evaluate employees following the values of the Clarity Copy Co.
3. Make decisions regarding employee compensation and promotions.
4. Communicate with employees regarding their performance, including employee compensation disputes.
5. Exercise discretion in implementing decision-making procedures and communications with employees.
6. Grant employee bonuses (\$1-\$5) when you feel they are appropriate.

[Low Structural Power] Your job as Editing Team Manager is to...

1. Oversee and manage a team of remote workers.
2. Provide input to employee evaluations following the values of the Clarity Copy Co.
3. Provide input to employee compensation and promotions as needed.
4. Communicate with employees regarding their performance, including employee compensation disputes.
5. Follow expectations in implementing decision-making procedures and communications with employees.
6. Grant employee bonuses (\$1-\$5) when you feel they are appropriate.

Please send me an email (click next below) when you are ready to start working. I will let you know a little bit more about your role and Clarity Copy Co. at that time.

Sincerely,
Hiring Manager
Clarity Copy Co.

Respond To Your Manager:

Please send a brief Introduction to your manager to let them know that you have read the job description and are ready to start work as a Manager at Clarity Copy. Co.

To: Hiring Manager at Clarity Copy Co.

From: {Participant Name}

Subject: Managing at Clarity

Hello,
I look forward to acting as Manager of this remote work team.
Let me know more about the job and what my responsibilities are.

- {Participant Name}

----- next web page -----

After participants send the message to their “hiring manager,” the hiring manager then communicates both the Sense of Power and the Sense of Responsibility. To make this section easy, participants will be given a pre-written text that they can edit if they like.

Upward and Downward Responsibility Manipulation

To: {Participant Name}

From: Clarity Copy Co. Hiring Manager

Subject: RE: Managing at Clarity

Hello {Participant Name}:

Thanks for joining us at Clarity Copy Co. Before, you start, please review our Mission and Vision Statement below. Ultimately, it is your responsibility as manager to enact the goals and mission of Clarity in your decisions.

[(Upward Responsibility) Your company has a history of pursuing optimal productivity and running a lean operation. The company's mission statement emphasizes that it wants to be the leader in its industry, to maximize profits and shareholder returns, and to ensure the highest possible productivity. As you do your work to promote the interests of the company, please keep in mind that the company wants efficiency and productivity to be reflected throughout all activities. To accomplish this, your actions should be consistent with the high value that the company places on collective performance.]

Your task is to get the workers performing at the goal level by the end of the work session. For telecommuting to be a viable option, it is critical that people perform as productively and efficiently as possible. Therefore, we need to discover whether we can ensure the necessary levels of production. We do not want workers sabotaging the company's goals by sitting at home watching TV when they should be working.

Use whatever means you can derive to accomplish this goal, including the kinds of recommendations and feedback you provide, and decisions about workers' pay.]

[(Downward Responsibility) Your company has a history of particularly good working relationships with employees. The company's mission statement emphasizes that it cares very much for employees and is concerned with making its people feel valued and included. As you act as manager to promote the interests of the company, please keep in mind that the company wants all its employees to experience high satisfaction and a sense of personal involvement in their work. To accomplish this, your decisions should be consistent with the high value that the company places on its people and their concerns.]

Your task is to establish an atmosphere in which workers feel positive, engaged, and with a sense of belonging to the organization. It has been demonstrated that this atmosphere causes workers to be more enthusiastic and motivated to focus on doing what is best for the company. If the right environment is established, the rest of the company's goals can be met with much less effort and difficulty. Workers are more likely to channel their effort to the company's benefit, by doing their work rather than (for example) watching TV while they are at home, which is basically taking pay without working.

Use whatever means you can derive to accomplish this goal, including the kinds of recommendations and feedback you provide, and decisions about workers' pay.]

Please send me an email (click next below) to clarify that you understand your responsibilities considering Clarity's vision.

Glad to have you on board.

Sincerely,

Hiring Manager
Clarity Copy Co.

Respond To Your Manager:

Let your hiring manager know that you understand what your responsibilities in light of Clarity's mission and vision statement.

To: Hiring Manager at Clarity Copy Co.

From: {Participant Name}

Subject: RE: Managing at Clarity

Hello,

I have read and reviewed the mission statement that you sent over.

Based on what you sent, it sounds like my core responsibilities are to

1. {write responsibility 1 here}
2. {write responsibility 2 here}

- {Participant Name}

----- next web page -----

Psychological Power Manipulation

To: {Participant Name}

From: Clarity Copy Co. Hiring Manager

Subject: RE: Managing at Clarity

{Participant Name}:

That's good to hear. Just be sure to follow the responsibilities we discussed. You are almost all set to get started.

One last thing! Your job description states that you will be [high structural power: making] [low structural power: providing input into] decisions about employee compensation [(**Low Sense of Power**)]. I want to clarify that I am not sure if I will use your recommendations. I need your input so I can make an informed decision, but I'll need to review your work to decide if I want to follow your advice or not. I may or may not do what you say regarding these decisions.]

[(**High Sense of Power**)]. I want to clarify that I will follow your recommendations. I need your input so that I can make an informed decision, but I won't have time to review your work. I will do exactly what you say regarding these decisions.]

It sounds like you're all ready to get started! Some employees will be sending you their work to review shortly.

Sincerely,
Hiring Manager
Clarity Copy Co.

Last Response To Your Manager Before Working With Employees:

To: Hiring Manager at Clarity Copy Co.

From: {Participant Name}

Subject: RE: Managing at Clarity

Hello,

Thanks for clarifying that before I start. I understand what Clarity's goals are with employees. I am ready to respond to employees on my own. I will also, [*high structural power*: make] [*low structural power*: provide input into] decisions about employee compensation.

[*(Low Sense of Power)*]. I also understand that you are not sure if you will follow my recommendations. My job is to [high structural power: make] [low structural power: provide input into] decisions about employee compensation, and you may or may not do what you suggest regarding these decisions.]

[*(High Sense of Power)*]. I also understand that you will definitely follow my recommendations. My job is to [high structural power: make] [low structural power: provide input into] decisions about employee compensation, and you will do exactly what you say regarding these decisions.]

I am ready to working with my employees now.

- {Participant Name}

----- next web page -----

Example of Participant Interaction with Employees

EMPLOYEE 1: Adrian:c5w5

Correspondence 1

Performance Metrics:

100% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 100%

Spelling Errors Caught: 100%

To: Clarity Copy Co. Editing Manager

From: Adrian

Subject: Completed Editing Assignment 1 of 2

Hello {Participant Name}:

I appreciated the opportunity to help with this. This task was easy, I think. I was caring for my family this weekend, so I hope I didn't miss anything. Did I catch all the mistakes? Please let me know if I did.

I am happy to help with more if I can. I think I am pretty good at this.

Hope you had a great week.

Sincerely,

Adrian

For Adrian:

How much of a bonus do you want to give?

\$0.00 ----- \$2.5 ----- \$5.00

Do you want to allow Adrian to plead his case regarding the bonus amount? Y/N

----- next web page -----

[If participant selects "Yes" to indicate that they do want to allow Adrian to plead his case:]

To: Clarity Copy Co. Editing Manager - {Participant Name}

From: Adrian

Subject: Bonus for Editing Assignment 1 of 2

Hello {Participant Name}:

I appreciated your proposed bonus of [proposed bonus amount]. I found this task easy, and I did catch all of the mistakes. It looks like I am pretty good at this.

A little extra to spend on the family is always good. Anything you can do to help with these rewards would be nice.

Hope you had a great week.

Sincerely,

Adrian

Do you want to revise the bonus you want to give?

\$0.00 ----- \$2.5 ----- \$5.00

Send a Message to Adrian About Your Decision

To: Adrian

From: {Participant Name}

Subject: Re: Bonus for Editing Assignment 1 of 2

{Participant Response}

-- Coded for Informational and Interpersonal Justice using the text analysis software -
Linguistic Inquiry Word Count (LIWC). See methods section --

All Employee Correspondences

EMPLOYEE 1: Adrian: c5 w5

Correspondence 1

Performance Metrics:

100% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 100%

Spelling Errors Caught: 100%

To: Clarity Copy Co. Editing Manager - {Participant Name}

From: Adrian

Subject: Completed Editing Assignment 1 of 2

Hello {Participant Name}:

I appreciated the opportunity to help with this. This task was easy, I think. I was caring for my family this weekend, so I hope I didn't miss anything. Did I catch all the mistakes? Please let me know if I did.

I am happy to help with more if I can. I think I am pretty good at this.

Hope you had a great week.

Sincerely,

Adrian

Correspondence 2

Performance Metrics:

95% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 90%

Spelling Errors Caught: 100%

To: Clarity Copy Co. Editing Manager - {Participant Name}

From: Adrian

Subject: Completed Editing Assignment 1 of 2

Subject: Completed Editing Assignment 2 of 2

Hello [Participant Name]:

I appreciated the opportunity to help with this again. This task was easier than the last one. I may be busy, but I double checked my work and I think I got 100% on this one as well. Please let me know if I did.

I am happy to help with more. Please let me know if I can take on more work in this job.

Hope life is going well for you all at the office.

Sincerely,

Adrian

EMPLOYEE 2: Brad: c5 w1

Correspondence 1

Performance Metrics:

100% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 100%

Spelling Errors Caught: 100%

Subject: Completed Request 1

[Participant Name],

I completed the task that you requested. I hope that this was done to your satisfaction. Please let me know if there is any additional room for improvement. I like feedback. I am willing to do more of this work if you need it. I've been busy but can help where I can.

Thanks,

Brad

Correspondence 2

Performance Metrics:

95% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 100%

Spelling Errors Caught: 90%

Subject: Completed Request 2

[Participant Name],

I completed the second task that you requested. I hope that this was done to your satisfaction. I like feedback from last time. It's good that I got all of the errors last time. Thanks for the feedback.

I could use for of this work if you have it. Let me know if there is additional work I can do.

Thanks,

Brad

EMPLOYEE 3: Carl: c1 w5

Correspondence 1

Performance Metrics:

75% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 70%

Spelling Errors Caught: 80%

Subject: I got this done for ya! Thanks.

Hey [Participant Name],

I hope your week is going well [Participant Name]. Thankfully I was able to get around to this given my busy schedule. Life is crazy sometimes, isn't it?

Anyhow. I think I caught all the mistakes on this, but please let me know if I can do better.

Have a good weekend with you and your family,

Best,

Carl

Correspondence 2

Performance Metrics:

70% Errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 65%

Spelling Errors Caught: 75%

Subject: I edited these for you again. Thanks

Hey [Participant Name],

I hope your week is going well [Participant Name]. My kids are the best, but they can be distracting when I am working on this. Don't kids just do the darndest things? haha

Anyhow. Sorry for the mistakes I made last time. I think I did much better this time. I'd love to do more if I have the opportunity.

Have a good week with you and your family. Go do something fun!

Best,

Carl

EMPLOYEE 4: Derek c1 w1

Correspondence 1

Performance Metrics:

75% errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 70%

Spelling Errors Caught: 60%

Subject: Task 1 done

[Participant Name],

I got this done this weekend after I got off from my other job. Here you go. Let me know if you have any feedback of expectations for next time.

-Derek

Correspondence 2

Performance Metrics:

70% errors Caught.

Punctuation Errors Caught: 75%

Spelling Errors Caught: 65%

Subject: Task 2

[Participant Name],

Here is that second assignment for you. I sucked last time, but this one is probably better. Let me know if you have any feedback of expectations for next time. Are you guys looking to hire anyone for more of this? I could use the extra cash.

-Derek