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Different Wrongs, Different Remedies? Reactions to Organizational Remedies after Procedural and Interactional Injustice

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DIFFERENT WRONGS, DIFFERENT REMEDIES? REACTIONS TO ORGANIZATIONAL
REMEDIES AFTER PROCEDURAL AND INTERACTIONAL INJUSTICE*

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ABSTRACT

To alleviate the negative effects of workplace unfairness and resulting conflict, organizations can take remedial action to atone for a perceived injustice. We argue that the effectiveness of organizational remedies may depend on the match between type of injustice perceived and type of remedy offered. Specifically, based on the multiple needs model of justice (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, & Rupp, 2001), we expect procedural injustice to be particularly associated with preference for instrumental remedies that address the need for control. On the other hand, interactional injustice should be particularly associated with preference for punitive remedies that address the need for meaning. Confirming this hypothesis, a field study involving recently terminated employees found that procedural injustice was positively associated with preference for an instrumental remedy (monetary compensation) and interactional injustice was positively associated with preference for a punitive remedy (disciplinary action against those involved in the termination). Further supporting the hypothesis, a laboratory experiment manipulating the unfairness of performance feedback found greater preference for an instrumental remedy relative to a punitive remedy following a procedural injustice than following an interactional injustice. In discussing these results, we present a taxonomy of organizational remedies as they relate to the multiple needs model of justice. Practical implications are discussed.

KEYWORDS: Interactional Justice, Justice Restoration, Multiple Needs Model, Organizational Remedy, Procedural Justice

DIFFERENT WRONGS, DIFFERENT REMEDIES? REACTIONS TO ORGANIZATIONAL REMEDIES AFTER PROCEDURAL AND INTERACTIONAL INJUSTICE

Feeling unfairly treated can lead employees to react in a variety of ways, many of which are harmful to organizations and may have long-term negative consequences for the individuals involved. These responses include employee theft (Greenberg, 1993), legal-claiming (Goldman, 2001), and reduced organizational citizenship behaviors (Organ & Moorman, 1993). Motivated by the aggrieved workers' desire to restore justice (Adams, 1965; Bies & Tyler, 1993; Greenberg & Scott, 1996), these indignant responses can lead to an escalation of conflict through a spiraling cycle of negative reciprocity (Bies, Tripp, & Kramer, 1997; Brett, Shapiro, & Lytle, 1998).

Given the general destructiveness of these conflict spirals, companies can try to provide some kind of *organizational remedy* to aggrieved employees with the intention of atoning for the perceived injustice. When properly implemented, remedies can significantly improve justice perceptions (O'Malley & Greenberg, 1983) and decrease the likelihood of retaliation and conflict escalation (Ohbuchi, Kameda, & Agarie, 1989).

Unfortunately, very little research has examined organizational remedies as a way to restore justice perceptions and de-escalate conflict, and no taxonomy of organizational remedies exists. Moreover, the scant existing research (e.g., O'Malley & Greenberg, 1983; Ohbuchi et al, 1989) focuses on organizational remedies only to distributive injustice, or the injustice of decision outcomes (Adams, 1965). However, most recent theoretical work on organizational justice, such as, for example, fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; 2001) and fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001), emphasizes two other types of justice that can create workplace conflict: procedural and interactional injustice. *Procedural justice* is the perceived fairness of the processes that lead to decision outcomes (e.g., Colquitt, 2001; Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997).

Interactional injustice is the perceived fairness of the interpersonal treatment people receive as processes are enacted (Bies, 1987; Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001). Given this dearth of research in these important theoretical areas, the present paper is concerned with remedies to procedural and interactional injustice.

A second limitation of previous work is that each study has typically been concerned with only a single remedy at a time (Ohbuchi et al, 1989; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978; O'Malley & Greenberg, 1983). As such, there has been an implicit assumption that different types of injustice require similar remedies. We argue that aggrieved workers' reactions to organizational remedies may differ depending on the type of injustice. Therefore, research is needed to assess whether the remedies needed to redress procedural and interactional injustice differ. The present paper addresses these gaps in the literature by simultaneously investigating responses to two different types of remedies (instrumental and punitive) following procedural and interactional injustice. To illustrate these ideas, we will briefly discuss the literature on procedural and interactional justice. We will then turn our attention to organizational remedies, emphasizing how each type of injustice calls for a different form of remedial action.

Procedural and Interactional Justice

Procedural Justice

Procedural justice is concerned with the processes by which benefits are assigned to workers (Folger & Greenberg, 1985). Perceptions of procedural fairness are good predictors of such criteria as organizational citizenship behavior, organizational commitment, and trust (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Fair procedures tend to include the following attributes: they are accurate, applied consistently, bias free, representative of all relevant parties, correctable, and consistent with prevailing standards (Leventhal, 1976; Leventhal, Karuza, &

Fry, 1980). Generally speaking, this work suggests that fair procedures can bring benefits to organizations in the form of effective job behaviors and positive work attitudes (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001)

Interactional Justice

In addition to formal processes, research has determined that interpersonal treatment also influences workers' justice perceptions. This notion of interactional justice was originally identified by Bies and his colleagues (Bies, 1987; 2001; 2005; Bies & Moag, 1986).

Interactionally fair treatment is respectful, affirms one's dignity, and provides employees with relevant information. Interactionally unfair treatment is disrespectful, hostile, and denies important information. As is true for procedural justice, interactional justice also predicts a host of important workplace outcomes (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001).

Comparing Procedural to Interactional Justice

Historically, some scholars argued that interactional justice should be treated as a social aspect of procedural fairness (for a review, see Cropanzano & Greenberg, 1997). Later research has called this assumption into question. More recently, factor-analytic (e.g., Colquitt, 2001) and meta-analytic (e.g., Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al, 2001) research suggests that procedural and interactional injustice are distinct in their structure as well as in their relationships with outcome variables.

While the distinction between these two types of justice is now widely accepted (e.g., Bies, 2001; Bobocel & Holmvall, 2001), the range of their differences as well as the underlying social-psychological processes that may lead to different consequences are not well enough understood. Therefore, Bies (2005) points out that answering the question of whether the two are distinct only opens up the door for new questions. More research on how procedural and

interactional injustice differ is needed to advance theories of justice. The present study should serve this objective by examining the different remedies that address the harm done by each type of unfairness.

Organizational Remedies to Injustice

We define an *organizational remedy* as an action carried out by an organization with the intention of creating in the mind of an aggrieved worker the judgment that the perceived injustice has been atoned for. Two key aspects of this definition are worth clarifying. First, the initiator of the remedy is the organization or its agents rather than the aggrieved worker. Second, if successful, a remedy – by atoning for the injustice – restores justice perceptions and eliminates the desire to engage in revenge for a perceived injustice. In this way, escalating conflict spirals can be avoided. More importantly, this second point also describes the mechanism by which remedies work. Specifically, an injustice creates in the victim a type of harm or loss. The remedy rectifies the injustice by providing adequate redress to balance the harm done.

Very little research has examined organizational remedies. Moreover, the scant existing research (e.g., Ohbuchi et al, 1989; O'Malley & Greenberg, 1983) focuses on organizational remedies only to distributive injustice. Further, previous work has typically been concerned with only a single remedy at a time (Ohbuchi et al, 1989; Walster et al, 1978; O'Malley & Greenberg, 1983). Thus, we know very little about the effectiveness of remedies in rectifying the harm done by unfairness and preventing retaliation and escalation of conflicts. Fairness heuristic theory argues that people use justice information as a proxy to judge trustworthiness (e.g., Van den Bos, Wilke, Lind, 1998). If we can extrapolate from the literature on trust, it might be that a sense of justice, once lost, is hard to restore. While trust can easily be violated, for example, through unjust treatment (Van den Bos & Lind, 2002; Van den Bos, Wilke, Lind, 1998), its recovery is

often protracted and difficult (Slovic, 1993). Interestingly, research suggests that how well trust is restored depends on a match between the type of trust violation and the type of action taken (Kim, Ferrin, & Cooper, 2004). Similarly, we argue that justice restoration may depend on the match between the type of organizational remedy offered and the type of injustice perceived, an argument we develop more fully below.

Remedies to Injustice and Human Needs

We propose that a useful taxonomy of organizational remedies can be derived from considering which aspects of the self are injured when one is treated unfairly. That is, an understanding of the types of harm that injustice creates can lead to an understanding of the remedies that are best able to repair the damage. Notice that this approach characterizes remedies by the human need that they most effectively address.

In this fashion, Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel, and Rupp (2001) have proposed a preliminary taxonomy of needs related to justice that is useful in the area of organizational remedies. They propose four sets of needs to explain why justice matters: instrumental (or control), belonging, social self-esteem, and meaning (or virtue). Later work by Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, and Schminke (2001), Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress, and Gee (2002), and Cropanzano, Goldman, and Folger (2005) collapsed social self-esteem into the belonging family, leaving only three groups of needs remaining. Belonging has been widely studied by justice scholars and is of demonstrable importance for both procedural and interactional justice (e.g., De Cremer, 2002; De Cremer & Alberts, 2004; De Cremer & Leonardelli, 2003, De Cremer & Tyler, 2005). Less research has compared the instrumental need with the meaning need, especially emphasizing how they imply different remedies to procedural and interactional

injustice. Given this dearth of empirical research, we emphasize the instrumental and meaning needs in the present paper.

Instrumental Needs, Instrumental Remedies, and Procedural Injustice

It has long been observed that individuals tend to respond more positively to allocation decisions, even unfavorable ones, so long as the distributive procedures are deemed to be fair. This finding has been termed the “fair process effect,” as it underscores the importance of procedural justice (Folger & Greenberg, 1985). Probably the first theoretical account of the fair process effect was proposed by Thibaut and Walker’s (1975; 1978) control theory. According to control theory, people are concerned with process because it allows them more instrumental control over long-term outcomes. That is, it provides employees some potential to influence allocation decisions (Shapiro, 1993), thereby reducing uncertainty in their overall prospects. Procedural injustice, on the other hand, renders future possibilities more dubious and is, therefore, unpleasant (Van den Bos, 2001; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). In sum, individuals find it disagreeable when their future outlook is in doubt, and procedural injustice creates uncertainty by reducing individuals’ ability to affect important decisions.

Control theory (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; 1978) and its recent heirs (Van den Bos, 2001; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002) imply that an effective remedy to a *procedural* injustice should address the instrumental need threatened by the procedural injustice. This can be achieved by providing instrumental remedies. *Instrumental remedies* attempt to atone for the injustice by providing primarily instrumental/economic benefits to the aggrieved worker.

Meaning Needs, Punitive Remedies, and Interactional Injustice

Our second family of needs – meaningfulness or virtue – is driven primarily by a “basic respect for human dignity and worth” (Cropanzano, Byrne et al., 2001, p. 175). While justice

can, as we have seen, help us meet our instrumental concerns, it may also matter in addressing humans' need for meaning. In particular, there is substantial research support demonstrating that individuals choose to maintain fairness even when they do not receive instrumental benefits (e.g., Kahneman, Knetsch, & Thaler, 1986; Turillo et al, 2002). Indeed, evidence indicates that individuals resort to punishment when they believe there has been a threat to social bonds and because punishment reasserts social values and the obligation to obey social rules (e.g., Miller & Vidmar, 1981; Tyler & Boeckmann, 1997). In sum, injustice is harmful to the extent that it violates our perceptions of what is "right" or morally appropriate (Folger, 1994; 1998; 2001).

People often react to these perceptions by attempting to punish the transgressor (Folger, Cropanzano, & Goldman, 2005). In other words, aggrieved workers are often motivated to see the perpetrator suffer, which can lead to revengeful behaviors, even at the expense of one's own instrumental benefit (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Bies et al., 1997; Goldman, 2003; Turillo, et al., 2002). The retaliation is driven by a sense of ethical violation (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Cropanzano, Goldman, & Folger, 2003; Folger et al, 2005). The punishment restores a sense of moral order, thereby addressing the need for meaning.

According to Folger and Cropanzano (1998), interactional injustice, which involves the direct violation of one person's dignity by another, is most likely to stir such a moralistic response. Interactional justice is especially important for providing moral meaning since it has been associated with norms of moral behavior (Bies & Moag, 1986; Colquitt, 2001). Consequently, if a person is treated interactionally unfairly, then moral meaning is threatened. Punishing the perpetrator can restore moral meaning by affirming and validating ones normative values. This research implies that an effective remedy to *interactional injustice* should address the meaning need threatened by the interactional injustice. This can be achieved by providing a

punitive remedy. *Punitive remedies* attempt to atone for the injustice by inducing harm to the perpetrator of unfairness. In the case of a punitive remedy, in other words, aggrieved workers are often motivated to see the perpetrator suffer. The desire for a punitive remedy is driven by a sense of ethical violation (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Cropanzano et al, 2003; Folger et al, 2005). Its receipt restores a sense of moral order, thereby restoring meaning.

In sum, we argue that remedies can be categorized based on the human need they address. Further, we propose that procedural injustice is likely to threaten the instrumental (or control) need (Cropanzano, Byrne et al, 2001) and is, therefore, likely to be associated with a preference for instrumental remedies; whereas interactional injustice is likely to threaten the meaning (or virtue) need (Cropanzano, Byrne et al, 2001) and is, therefore, likely to be associated with a preference for punitive remedies.

STUDY 1

In Study 1 we collected field data from recently terminated employees on procedural and interactional injustice perceptions of their termination and on their preference for instrumental and punitive organizational remedies. We used the context of a termination because recent reviews by Brockner (2002) and Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996) suggest a heightened role of procedural and interactional injustice specifically when outcomes are unfavorable as in the case of a termination. As elaborated more fully above, we predict that procedural and interactional injustice will have distinct associations with aggrieved employees' remedy preferences. Specifically, we expect a significant positive relation between procedural injustice and preference for an instrumental remedy, and a significant positive relation between interactional injustice and preference for a punitive remedy. The following two hypotheses result.

H1: Procedural injustice perceptions and preference for an instrumental remedy are positively associated.

H2: Interactional injustice perceptions and preference for a punitive remedy are positively associated.

Method

Participants and Procedure

Employees who were terminated from their employing organizations were surveyed at various unemployment offices and the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) offices of an east coast state as part of a larger study (response rate = 69%). The survey included measures of perceived procedural and interactional injustice of the termination, measures of respondents' preferences for certain remedies provided by their former employer, as well as a number of control variables.

Respondents ($N = 205$) were either fired, forced to resign, or indefinitely suspended. The present subsample only included those respondents who complained to one or more people in the management of the organization who could have their termination reversed and, therefore, indicated their perceived procedural and interactional injustice of this interaction. The sample was 55% male with mean age of 37.2 years. About 64.9% of respondents were recruited at EEOC offices, 35.1% at unemployment offices.

Measures

Injustice perceptions. Procedural and interactional injustice was measured on 7-point Likert scales (1 = "strongly disagree," 7 = "strongly agree"). The scores were reverse-coded for purposes of our analyses so that a high score on any of the scales indicates high perceived injustice. All measures were based on items developed by Moorman (1991), modified to refer

specifically to the fairness of the termination. Items for procedural injustice clearly referred to the fairness of procedures used, but not to interactional treatment. Items for interactional injustice clearly referred to the fairness of interactional treatment, but not procedures.

Four items assessed procedural injustice and measured the extent to which the person whom the respondent complained to collected correct information, ensured that decisions were made consistently, heard the concerns of all those affected, and provided helpful feedback ($\alpha = .89$). Three items assessed interactional injustice and measured the extent to which the person whom the respondent complained to about the termination treated the respondent with kindness and consideration, showed concern for the respondent's right as employee, and dealt with the respondent in a truthful manner ($\alpha = .90$).

Remedy preferences. To measure preferences for remedies provided by the former employer respondents were asked: "If you could receive *only one of the following* from your former employer, how satisfied would you be with each of the following?" Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = "extremely unsatisfied," 5 = "extremely satisfied"). Two items concerned different degrees of an instrumental remedy (from the former employer): (a) back pay and attorney fees, and (b) back pay, attorney fees, and additional money. These items were averaged into a composite ($\alpha = .69$). Two items offered a punitive remedy: (a) disciplinary action against managers or employees involved in the termination, and (b) jail time for those managers or employees involved in the termination. Jail time was a rather unpopular remedy ($M = 2.61$), did not form a scale with disciplinary action ($\alpha = .26$), and was not significantly correlated with any measure of injustice. We will, therefore, not discuss this remedy further.

Control variables. We used several control variables in our regression analyses. We controlled for three demographic variables that might affect injustice perceptions and/or remedy

preferences: gender (e.g., Eckel & Grossman, 1996), age, and race (e.g., Davidson & Friedman, 1998). Gender was coded as 0: male, 1: female. Age was measured in years. Race was measured on five categories (Black, White, Hispanic, American Indian, and Other) and for purposes of analysis was re-coded into a dichotomous variable where 0: White and 1: minority member. Further, we controlled for time elapsed between termination and survey completion which was measured on eight categories ranging from less than four days to more than eight weeks. Finally, we controlled for whether a respondent had filed a written claim with the EEOC. Overall, 122 respondents (60.4%; 105 of those had been recruited at EEOC offices, 17 at unemployment offices) indicated they had filed such a claim, whereas 80 indicated they had not (26 at EEOC offices and 54 at unemployment offices).

Results

Table 1 shows means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of the study variables. We conducted hierarchical multiple regression analyses to test the hypotheses. We first examined the relation between perceived injustice and preference for the instrumental remedy (Hypothesis 1; see Table 2 for statistics). In a first step, we entered the control variables into the regression equation. Results showed that respondents who had filed a written claim with the federal EEOC had a stronger preference for an instrumental remedy than respondents who had not filed such a claim. In a second step, we added the two injustice measures. As expected (Hypothesis 1), procedural injustice was significantly positively associated with preference for the instrumental remedy. The more unfairly the procedures were perceived, the more aggrieved workers preferred monetary compensation as a remedy. The relation between interactional injustice and preference for the instrumental remedy was not significant.

Insert Table 1 and Table 2 about here

We next examined the relation between perceived injustice and preference for the punitive remedy (Hypothesis 2; see Table 3 for statistics). Again, we entered the control variables in a first step. Results showed that respondents who had filed a written claim with the EEOC had a stronger preference for the punitive remedy than respondents who had not filed such a claim. In the next step we entered the two injustice measures. Consistent with Hypothesis 2, interactional injustice was significantly and positively related to preference for the punitive remedy. The more unfair the interactional treatment, the more aggrieved workers preferred disciplinary action as a remedy. The relation between procedural injustice and preference for the punitive remedy was not significant.

Insert Table 3 about here

Discussion

In Study 1 we conducted a field survey of recently terminated employees to examine how perceptions of procedural and interactional injustice are related to preferences for instrumental and punitive remedies. Results show that the two types of injustice were associated with preferences for different remedies as proposed in Hypotheses 1 and 2. Specifically, the higher the procedural injustice, the stronger the preference for an instrumental remedy, and the higher the interactional injustice, the stronger the preference for a punitive remedy. The results are

consistent with our theorizing that procedural and interactional injustice lead to preferences for different remedies because these remedies address the different justice needs evoked.

Limitations

While Study 1 yielded important findings regarding the relation between type of injustice and preferences for different remedies of recently terminated employees, as a cross-sectional field survey, the study has several limitations, especially with respect to internal validity and the possibility of drawing causal inferences. The purpose of Study 2 was to examine the effects of procedural and interactional injustice on remedy preferences in a much more tightly controlled laboratory experiment. Also, in Study 1 no actual remedies were provided and injustice perceptions were not measured repeatedly. Therefore, the study did not speak to whether remedies can actually improve justice perceptions. A second purpose of Study 2, thus, was to examine the effect of receiving a remedy on subsequent justice perceptions.

STUDY 2

In the present experiment participants engaged in three business task simulations with the expectation of receiving a monetary reward depending on their performance. They received performance feedback after each task. Whereas feedback to the first and third task was relatively fair, feedback to the second task was manipulated to be either procedurally or interactionally unfair. Following the unfair feedback, participants were given a choice between an instrumental and a punitive remedy. They could choose between various combinations of these two remedies with the extremes being choice of a purely instrumental and a purely punitive remedy. Based on the theorizing described in the introduction, we predicted that participants' preference for the instrumental remedy over the punitive remedy would be stronger after procedural than

interactional injustice. Because of the forced-choice nature of our single dependent variable, the theoretical prediction is captured in the following single hypothesis.

H3: An instrumental remedy is preferred more over a punitive remedy after procedural injustice than after interactional injustice.

Restoration of Justice Perceptions through Remedy Provision

Study 2 also set out to examine an additional question. We have argued that organizational remedies, if successful, restore justice perceptions (O'Malley & Greenberg, 1983). In order to test this hypothesis, we established an additional baseline by including a control condition in which participants were not given a remedy following the procedural or interactionally unfair performance feedback messages to the second task (no remedy condition). We predict that, as compared to the no remedy condition, justice perceptions would be higher in the remedy condition, in which participants could choose between the instrumental and punitive remedy. Specifically, we expect procedural justice perceptions following procedurally unfair performance feedback to be higher in the remedy condition than in the no remedy condition. (We do not expect a significant improvement in interactional justice perceptions because these perceptions are not likely to be as negatively affected by the procedurally unfair feedback in the first place.) Analogously, we expect interactional justice perceptions following interactionally unfair performance feedback to be higher in the remedy condition than in the no remedy condition. (For the same reason as above we do not expect this pattern to hold for procedural justice perceptions.) To be consistent with previous parts of this manuscript, we state the two hypotheses in terms of *injustice* perceptions.

H4: Procedural injustice perceptions following a procedural injustice will be improved by receiving a remedy as compared to not receiving a remedy.

H5: Interactional injustice perceptions following an interactional injustice will be improved by receiving a remedy as compared to not receiving a remedy.

The above hypotheses compare receiving a preferred remedy with not receiving any remedy at all. A second comparison takes into account participants' preference for the instrumental remedy relative to the punitive remedy. If our theoretical reasoning is correct, the more participants preferred the instrumental remedy over the punitive remedy, the more should their procedural injustice perceptions improve from the time they received unfair feedback to when they received a remedy. Similarly, the more participants preferred the punitive remedy over the instrumental remedy, the more should their interactional justice perceptions improve from the time they received unfair feedback to when they received a remedy. Thus, we hypothesize (again, in terms of *injustice* to be consistent) the following.

H6: Preference for an instrumental remedy over a punitive remedy is positively associated with improvement of procedural injustice perceptions.

H7: Preference for a punitive remedy over an instrumental remedy is positively associated with improvement of interactional injustice perceptions.

Method

Overview, design and participants. Participants assumed the role of employees and performed three work tasks on a computer. They received equally unfavorable and either procedurally or interactionally unfair task feedback on the second task and accurate and relatively fair feedback on the first and third task, presumably from their supervisor. After the unfair feedback participants in the remedy condition were offered a choice of remedy that either consisted in some monetary payoff to them (instrumental remedy) or some deduction of the monetary payoff to the unfair supervisor (punitive remedy) or any desired combination of these

two types of remedies (dependent variable used to test Hypothesis 3). Participants in the no remedy condition were not provided with a remedy. After each performance feedback, participants indicated their procedural and interactional injustice perceptions (dependent variables used to test Hypotheses 4-7).

Participants were 114 undergraduate students from a large Southwestern public university with an average age of 22.4 years, 51% of whom were male. They all received course credit and monetary compensation for participation.

Procedure and manipulation. Upon entering the laboratory, participants were told that they would participate in a business simulation for a study on work climate and work performance and that they would be randomly assigned to the role of employee or supervisor. Employees were required to work on three business-related tasks and submit their work to their supervisor who would evaluate their performance, assign points for their work, and give them feedback. In reality, all participants were assigned the role of employee and the feedback was a pre-programmed response. After each task, participants filled out an “employee survey” to measure “work climate”. This survey contained, among distractor items, measures of procedural and interactional injustice perceptions.

Participants were told that their payoff would be determined by their performance as evaluated by the supervisor and could reach \$2 for each task, and \$6 in total. Also, participants learned that the supervisor’s performance and payoff would be determined by the experimenter. All participants worked on computers in individual rooms. Participants were told that communication between employee, supervisor, and experimenter would take place via the computer network.

The computerized tasks were a modified version of a business simulation described in Lind, Kray, and Thompson (1998). Each participant, in the role of employee, performed three tasks ranging from five to six minutes. Employees could earn up to 100 points on each task, which participants learned translated into U.S. dollars in a 50 to 1 ratio (100 points was equivalent to \$2). After completing a task, participants received a message with feedback from the supervisor. The feedback messages to the first task (a routing task of incoming requests to the correct department) and the third task (a scheduling task of a meeting of five managers from different divisions) stated the actual number of correct answers and the points earned and were relatively fair. Specifically, the first message read in all conditions: “Hi this is your supervisor. You got [number of correct answers] answers correct. That means you earned [x] out of 100 points. I’m looking forward to receiving your next work. Good luck!” The third message read in all conditions: “You got [number of correct answers] answers correct, which means that I give you [x] points for his task. I hope this is acceptable to you.”

The feedback message to the second task contained the experimental manipulation of injustice type. The task consisted in writing an outline for a presentation of the company’s CEO. This task was selected because no obvious performance standard exists and, therefore, our feedback manipulation would not appear suspicious. One of four feedback messages was randomly selected for each participant. The two feedback messages for the procedural injustice condition were (a) “Unfortunately, I didn't have a chance to look at your work because I was too busy” and (b) “I decided to assign points randomly, rather than review your work.” The two feedback messages for the interactional injustice condition were (a) “Your work doesn't meet my standards. Can't you do a better job?” and (b) “Your work really stinks. I mean, it is lousy. You

need to get your act together.” In all conditions, participants were given 20 out of 100 points for this task.

The feedback messages had been selected based on a pretest ($N = 39$). We included two messages for each type of injustice to guard better against spurious effects. Pretest participants rated the four messages with respect to their procedural and interactional fairness on three-item scales each using a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 7 = “strongly agree”). We first conducted principal components analyses to examine whether it is appropriate to collapse across the two messages (for each type of injustice). We analyzed all twelve items (three for each message) measuring perceived procedural injustice (using Varimax rotation and setting the number of components to be extracted to 2). Consistent with our expectations, all six items of the two messages intended as procedural injustice manipulations loaded on one factor, the other six items on the other (minimum loading on factor = .68, maximum cross-loading on other factor = .39). We next analyzed in the same way all twelve items measuring interactional injustice. Again, the twelve items split along the six items for the two messages intended as procedural injustice manipulation on the one side, and the six items for the two messages intended as interactional injustice manipulation on the other side (minimum loading on factor = .63, maximum cross-loading on other factor = .47). To further examine whether the feedback messages differed in the type of injustice manipulated we conducted several paired-sample *t*-tests. Results showed that the two interactionally unfair feedback messages were each considered significantly more interactionally unfair than procedurally unfair and the reverse was true for each of the two procedurally unfair feedback messages (minimum $t = 4.93$; $p < .001$ for all paired-samples *t*-tests). On a separate sample ($N = 31$) we tested whether the procedural and interactionally unfair feedback messages were perceived as equally severe as we intended. On

two different measures concerning the extent to which the feedback was (1) severe and (2) a bad outcome, paired-sample t-tests did not find significant differences between the procedural and interactional injustice conditions ($t = .34$ and $t = .74$, respectively).

While working on the third task participants received a message from the experimenter as the superior authority stating that he had read the supervisor's feedback message and thought that it should not have been written as it was. In the remedy condition only ($N = 78$), the experimenter's message went on to state that similar problems in the past had been solved by giving the employee a choice between adding up to 100 points (\$2) to his or her account (instrumental remedy), or subtracting up to 100 points (\$2) from the supervisor's account (punitive remedy), or any mixture of the two that resulted in the distribution of the 100 points. In counterbalanced order, participants then entered the number of points to be added to their account and the number of points to be subtracted from the supervisor's account and the program checked that the two add up to 100. No remedy was offered in the no remedy condition ($N = 36$). All participants then returned to the third task. In the remedy condition only, participants soon received a second message from the experimenter and were told that the points had been distributed as requested. After finishing the third task, participants filled out another employee survey. At the end of the experiment, they were fully debriefed. At this time all participants received \$6, the amount for optimal performance.

Measures. Our preference measure was changed somewhat from Study 1. In Study 1 participants rated the expected satisfaction provided by each remedy on separate scales. In Study 2, participants had to decide between the two remedies such that choosing more of one automatically meant choosing less of the other, thus putting the two remedies into direct competition with each other. Preference for the remedies was measured as the difference

between the number of points asked for oneself and the number of points asked to be subtracted from the supervisor. Thus, this measure could range from +100 to -100, with any number > 0 indicating stronger preference for the instrumental remedy.

Procedural and interactional injustice in the “employee survey” were measured with three items each on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 7 = “strongly agree”). The items were selected such that procedural justice items clearly referred to procedures, but not interpersonal treatment and interactional items clearly referred to interpersonal treatment, but not procedures. Procedural justice items assessed the extent to which participants perceived that they had influence on the performance points received, that the procedures used to assess performance were fair, and that performance was determined based on accurate information ($\alpha = .91$). Interactional justice items assessed the extent to which employees felt that the supervisor treated them in a polite manner, with dignity, and refrained from improper remarks or comments ($\alpha = .83$). The scales were reverse-scored so that higher values indicate higher perceived *injustice*.

We assessed perceptions of procedural and interactional injustice at three points of time: (1) before the injustice occurred (and after the feedback to the first task), (2) after the manipulated unfair feedback to the second task, and (3) after the feedback to the third task. At Time 3, participants in the remedy condition had received their chosen remedy, whereas those in the no remedy condition had not received a remedy. Procedural and interactional injustice were correlated at Time 1 $r = .59, p < .001$, at Time 2 $r = .30, p = .001$, and at Time 3 $r = .53, p < .001$. Thus, while moderately correlated, the scales clearly measured distinct constructs. As one would expect, the correlation was lowest at Time 2 after the manipulation was administered.

Results

Table 4 shows means, standard deviations and intercorrelations of the study variables.

Manipulation check. Our manipulation of perceived procedural and interactional injustice through either procedurally or interactionally unfair feedback to the second task was successful (see also Figures 1a and 1b). Between-subjects ANOVAs showed that perceived procedural injustice was higher in the procedural injustice condition ($M = 5.89$) than in the interactional injustice condition ($M = 4.58$), $F(1, 110) = 29.96, p < .001$. In contrast, perceived interactional injustice was higher after interactionally unfair feedback ($M = 5.36$) than after procedurally unfair feedback ($M = 4.51$), $F(1, 110) = 7.31, p < .01$. Also, paired-samples t-tests revealed that participants receiving procedurally unfair feedback rated the message significantly more procedurally unfair ($M = 5.89$) than interactionally unfair ($M = 4.51$), $t(56) = 6.38, p < .001$. In contrast, in the interactional injustice condition, perceived interactional injustice ($M = 5.36$) was higher than perceived procedural injustice ($M = 4.58$), $t(54) = 4.67, p < .001$. In addition, between-subjects ANOVAs comparing the two procedurally unfair feedback messages showed no differences in procedural or interactional injustice perceptions ($ps > .1$). The same was the case for the two interactionally unfair feedback messages ($ps > .1$) suggesting that it is appropriate to collapse across the two messages within each injustice condition.

Preference for remedies. Consistent with Hypothesis 3, Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) with type of injustice as a between-subjects factor and gender as a covariate revealed a significant main effect for type of injustice, $F(1, 72) = 5.18, p < .05$.¹ Participants in the procedural injustice condition ($M = 59.16$) exhibited a stronger preference for an instrumental remedy over a punitive remedy than did participants in the interactional injustice condition ($M = 42.00$).

Insert Table 4 about here

Improvement of injustice perceptions. In order to test Hypotheses 4 and 5, we analyzed injustice perceptions at Time 3 using ANOVAs with remedy condition as between-subjects factor. When the feedback was procedurally unfair, ANOVA revealed no significant difference between procedural injustice perceptions depending on whether a remedy was given ($M = 3.47$) or not ($M = 3.56$), $F(1, 57) = .04, ns$ (see Figure 1a). Thus, Hypothesis 4 was rejected. Additional analyses showed that remedy condition also did not affect interactional injustice perceptions, $F(1, 57) = .82, ns$.

When feedback was interactionally unfair, ANOVA showed a significant effect of remedy condition on interactional injustice perceptions, $F(1, 53) = 6.82, p = .01$ (see Figure 1b). When a remedy was received ($M = 3.02$) justice perceptions were improved as compared to when no remedy was received ($M = 4.02$). Thus, Hypothesis 5 was supported. Additional analyses showed that remedy condition did not affect perceptions of procedural injustice, $F(1, 53) = .42, ns$. Also, interactional injustice perceptions did not differ significantly depending on remedy condition at Time 2, $F(1, 53) = .48, ns$, and Time 1, $F(1, 52) = 1.01, ns$. Thus, the effect of receiving a remedy on improving justice perceptions after interactional injustice was specific to interactional injustice perceptions and was not due to differences in interactional injustice perceptions pre-existing to the implementation of the remedy manipulation.

Insert Figure 1a and Figure 1b about here

To test Hypotheses 6 and 7, we first calculated two difference scores by subtracting, respectively, procedural and interactional injustice perceptions at Time 2 (after the unfair feedback) from Time 3 (after the remedy was received). We then correlated these measures with the preference measure. Consistent with Hypothesis 6, the more participants preferred the instrumental remedy over the punitive remedy, the more did their procedural injustice perceptions improve from Time 2 to Time 3, $r(78) = -.23, p \leq .05$. Consistent with Hypothesis 7, the more participants preferred the punitive remedy over the instrumental remedy, the more did their interactional injustice perceptions improve from Time 2 to Time 3, $r(76) = .23, p \leq .05$.

Discussion

Study 2 had two important purposes. First, the experiment examined the effect of type of injustice experienced on relative preference between an instrumental and a punitive remedy. We manipulated whether participants received procedurally or interactionally unfair performance feedback and then measured participants' relative preference for the two remedies using a forced-choice measure. Consistent with Hypothesis 3, we found that participants who were given a choice of remedy preferred an instrumental remedy relatively more strongly over a punitive remedy after receiving procedurally unfair feedback (as compared to when they received interactionally unfair feedback). The results of this laboratory experiment complement the findings of the field survey reported in Study 1.

Second, the study examined the role of remedies in restoring justice perception. To do so, we (1) manipulated whether participants received a remedy or not and tested the effect of receiving a preferred remedy (or not) on subsequent justice perceptions, and (2) examined the relation between the relative preference for one type of remedy over the other with improvement in procedural and interactional justice perceptions, respectively.

With respect to the first issue, interestingly, the effect of receiving a remedy differed depending on the type of injustice experienced. In the interactional injustice condition, those receiving a remedy (regardless of which remedy was chosen) showed higher interactional justice perceptions than those not receiving a remedy. However, when the feedback was procedurally unfair, receiving a remedy did not lead to significantly higher procedural injustice perceptions than not receiving a remedy. In our experiment, participants received only a single unfair feedback (to the second task) but received accurate and relatively fair feedback to the first and third task before injustice perceptions at Time 3 were assessed. Thus, it appears that only after the interactionally unfair feedback (but not after the procedurally unfair feedback) did receiving a remedy improve injustice perceptions over and above the effects of the subsequent fair feedback. Implementing only a single unfair feedback preceded and followed by fair feedback constitutes a conservative test of the need for remedies in restoring justice perceptions. While experiencing a single injustice is an important case (as injustice is likely the exception rather than the norm in most workplaces) the results suggest that a fruitful direction for future research would be to investigate the role of remedies in restoring fairness perceptions after repeated unfair incidents, which might require stronger and/or different remedies.

Because we did not manipulate which remedy participants received, as we were interested in their choice of remedy, we could not test any experimental effect of type of remedy on subsequent remedy preferences. However, it was still possible to correlate participants' remedy preferences with subsequent procedural and interactional justice perceptions. When doing so we found, as expected, that those who preferred the instrumental remedy relatively more strongly over the punitive remedy tended to have higher subsequent *procedural* justice perceptions, whereas those who preferred the instrumental remedy relatively less over the

punitive remedy tended to have higher subsequent *interactional* justice perceptions. In other words, consistent with our theorizing, receiving an instrumental or punitive remedy seemed to particularly improve the matching justice perceptions (procedural and interactional, respectively).

Limitations

Study 2 allowed us to establish a causal relationship between the type of injustice and preference for remedies because of the experimental control over the type of injustice experienced. In this manner it complements and extends the findings of Study 1. A possible shortcoming of this study is that, perhaps, participants did not take the feedback messages seriously because the stakes were quite low. Although we have no evidence that this was the case (i.e., when asked after the experiment participants did not say so), this tendency would actually work against the prediction of a main effect for type of injustice. Any participant who did not take the study seriously can be expected to give the 100 points, or \$2 of real money, to him- or herself. Indeed, we did find that overall preference for the instrumental remedy was substantially stronger than for the punitive remedy ($M = 50.36$), $t(77) = 9.62$, $p < .001$, consistent with this possibility. Thus, this tendency would have made our significance test more conservative. Nevertheless, we *did* find a significant effect for type of injustice, and a substantial number of participants were willing to give up real money, and more so in the interactional than the procedural injustice condition.

Another aspect of the present experiment might have led to the overall preference for an instrumental remedy. Notice that Study 1 and Study 2 differ in that in the latter the organization (i.e., the experimenter) had admitted fault before a remedy was offered whereas in the former it had not admitted fault. It might be that demanding punishment after an admission of wrongdoing

(even though not from the wrongdoer him- or herself, but the superordinate authority) appeared less justified (or “too mean”) to participants. Future research should examine in more detail the effect of admission of wrongdoing and guilt from the wrongdoer (e.g., supervisor) and/or the superordinate authority (i.e., organization) on remedy preferences.

Because our main interest in this experiment was to test the effect of type of injustice on remedy preferences, participants were allowed to choose their preferred remedy, rather than being randomly assigned to receive an instrumental or a punitive remedy. As a consequence, we could not assess the experimental effect of receiving an instrumental or a punitive remedy specifically on subsequent procedural and interactional justice perceptions, but only conduct correlational analyses linking remedy preferences to subsequent justice perceptions. In our study, participants either received their preferred remedy or no remedy at all, which allowed us to examine the effect of receiving a remedy on justice restoration. Future research could experimentally manipulate both type of injustice (procedural versus interactional) and type of remedy received (instrumental versus punitive).

Finally, whereas Study 1 measured preference for the instrumental and punitive remedies on two separate scales, Study 2 used a forced-choice (or ipsative) measure to assess preference. Both approaches have advantages and disadvantages. We decided to use a forced-choice measure to reflect that preferences are inherently relative: we prefer one thing *over* another. Having two separate measures runs into the danger of respondents indicating high preferences for both, since more of a remedy is typically more desirable (we tried to address this problem in Study 1 by asking respondents to assume that they could only receive *one* remedy). In this way, a forced-choice measure provides a more accurate and realistic measure of preference in a world of scarcity in which employees are not likely to receive all the remedies they would like to have. A

disadvantage of this approach is that it results in a single dependent variable for statistical analysis. Thus, finding that procedural injustice (as compared to interactional injustice) led to a stronger preference for an instrumental remedy automatically implies that interactional injustice (as compared to procedural injustice) led to a stronger preference for a punitive remedy.

However, if one considers preferences to be inherently relative, this result is completely sensible as the experimental manipulation affected relative preference for one remedy over the other remedy.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

While past research has revealed a lot about aggrieved workers' attempts to restore a sense of justice through retaliatory and other actions, very little research has examined how organizations can initiate efforts to atone for perceived injustice through the help of organizational remedies. In two studies, using different methodologies, we examined reactions to instrumental and punitive remedies after procedural and interactional injustice.

The results consistently showed that participants' preferences for organizational remedies differed after procedural and interactional injustice. As predicted, procedural injustice was particularly associated with preference for an instrumental remedy whereas interactional injustice was particularly associated with preference for a punitive remedy. Study 1, a field survey of recently terminated employees, found that procedural injustice was positively related to preference for an instrumental remedy (monetary compensation) whereas interactional injustice was positively related to preference for a punitive remedy (disciplinary action against the perpetrator[s] of injustice). In Study 2, a laboratory experiment, we manipulated whether participants experienced procedurally or interactionally unfair performance feedback in a

business simulation and found that, as expected, the instrumental remedy was preferred more over the punitive remedy after procedural injustice than interactional injustice.

Study 2, measuring injustice perceptions at several points in time during the experiment, allowed us to examine not only the effect of injustice type on remedy preferences, but also of remedy provision on subsequent justice perceptions (justice restoration). To achieve this, the experiment included an additional control condition in which no remedy was provided. The experiment provided mixed results with respect to the need for remedies to restore justice perceptions. Consistent with predictions, receiving a remedy improved interactional justice perceptions as compared to not receiving a remedy when the feedback was interactionally unfair. Interestingly, when the injustice was procedural, no effect for remedy provision was found on subsequent justice perceptions, which were just as high in the no remedy condition. We believe that to understand this result, one needs to consider that in this experiment, participants received a single unfair performance feedback on a work task, in between two relatively fair performance feedback messages on two other work tasks. The result suggests that a single procedural injustice might be more easily forgiven than a single interactional injustice. As can be seen from Figures 1a and 1b, it was not the case that respective injustice perceptions were affected less by the procedural than the interactional injustice manipulation (which a pretest showed to be equally severe), ruling out the alternative explanation that there was simply “nothing to be restored” after the procedural injustice. Future research should examine the effect of providing remedies after repeated injustices. We would expect that in this case provision of remedies will have a beneficial impact on justice perceptions after procedural injustice as well.

Remedies to Injustice: A Preliminary Taxonomy

A major assumption in our research is that there are different types of remedies that correspond to different human needs threatened by different types of injustice, thus allowing organizations to “tailor” their remedy to the injustice that was perceived. We distinguished between instrumental and punitive remedies based on the different human justice needs they address: whereas instrumental remedies address the instrumental (or control) need, punitive remedies address the meaning (or virtue) need (Cropanzano, Byrne et al, 2001). We also focused on procedural and interactional injustice in the presence of an unfavorable outcome because of the emphasis placed on such situations in fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; 2001) and the existing gap in the literature, even though relatively little is known about reactions to organizational remedies after distributive injustice (Ohbuchi et al., 1989; O’Malley & Greenberg, 1983).

We now develop our model of the relation between human justice needs and type of remedy beyond the two studies presented in this paper more fully to include the three major needs proposed and the three major types of justice studied (see Table 5). In keeping with the work of Cropanzano, Byrne et al. (2001) and Cropanzano, Rupp et al. (2001) we consider three major families of justice needs: instrumental (or control), meaning (or virtue), and belonging (or interpersonal).

When the instrumental need has been violated an instrumental remedy, such as monetary compensation, is called for. Based on control theory (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; 1978), procedural injustice is expected to activate instrumental needs, since it deprives one of control. While the process is important and examined here, a copious body of literature indicates the distributive injustice also raises instrumental concerns (e.g., Tyler, 1990). In this regard, the impact of

distributive unfairness may be even more powerful than that of procedural (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Since instrumental concerns have to do with the loss of control, then an appropriate remedy is one that restores what is missing through an instrumental remedy. One way to do that would be to provide the outcome that was taken away. A different way would be to change the procedures in a way to make them fairer, thus giving more control over future valued outcomes. This remedy might be especially appropriate in atoning for a procedural injustice.

Insert Table 5 about here

When the meaning need has been violated a punitive remedy, such as punishment of the transgressor, is called for. Based on research indicating that individuals are concerned with moral duty (e.g., Folger, 1994; 1998; Folger et al., 2005), interactional justice is expected to activate meaning needs. Meaning, as the term is used here, has to do with moral or what Folger (2001) terms “deontic” concerns. Thus, an appropriate remedy following an interactional injustice that violated one’s dignity and, thus, threatened one’s moral meaning is one that restores justice through a punitive remedy that holds transgressors accountable and has them suffer to atone for the injustice.

A third set of needs, not tested in our two studies, concerns interpersonal affiliation. Based on the work of De Cremer and his colleagues (e.g., De Cremer, 2002; De Cremer & Alberts, 2004; De Cremer & Leonardelli, 2003, De Cremer & Tyler, 2005) we argue that individuals also seek to maintain a sense of belonging to important groups. When the belonging need has been violated a socio-emotional remedy, such as a public apology or an overt attempt to rebuild the relationship, seems most appropriate. Both procedural and interactional justice should

serve to compromise one's standing with others (e.g., Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler, 1990). Thus, an appropriate remedy would be one that atones for the injustice through an affirmation of social standing.

Parenthetically, it bears mention that Table 5 also illustrates why we did not examine the belonging need in these first two tests of our taxonomy. These interpersonal concerns are more complex, in that they are engaged by both procedurally and interactionally-relevant events. Thus, we could not use need for belonging to distinguish between these two types of injustice. Moreover, and as noted earlier, belonging has been more thoroughly examined by previous scholars than has the instrumental and meaning needs.

We have argued that conflict can be restored through organizational remedies. Conflict is triggered by the violation of different needs. Depending on which need has been violated, a different type of remedy may be most effective in avoiding conflict escalation. While we have argued that certain types of fairness violations are typically more likely than others to engage certain needs it is also important to realize that any type of injustice could potentially engage any and all of these needs under the right circumstances. Consider as a specific example the relationship of procedural justice to the meaning need. Based on previous conceptual thinking (e.g., Folger & Cropanzano, 1998), we have here argued that interactional justice tends to be particularly morally charged. In many situations an interactional injustice will register as an especially salient and obvious violation of a normative standard. This will often not be true for process fairness. While the evidence presented here is consistent with this contention, there may well be certain situations in which a procedural injustice clearly violates a moral standard as well. Indeed, in his early work on process fairness, Leventhal (1976) explicitly noted that a fair process should be consistent with prevailing ethical standards. Future research could explore

situations in which the moral aspect of procedures is evident to individuals. In these settings, we would anticipate that a procedural injustice might engender a preference for punitive responses, much as interactional justice has done in our present studies.

According to our model, organizational remedies restore justice by addressing general human needs such as meaning and belongingness. Further, the model considers remedy provision as an attempt to atone for the perceived injustice. We can cautiously attempt to contrast remedies with explanations. A considerable amount of research has examined explanations as a way to restore justice perceptions (e.g., Bies, 1987; Sitkin & Bies, 1993; cf. Schlenker, 1980; Scott & Lyman, 1968). Most attention has been given to justifications and excuses (e.g., Shaw, Wild, & Colquitt, 2003). According to fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 2001) three conditions need to be met for injustice to be attributed to a social entity: (1) harm that is (2) attributable to someone's discretionary conduct that (3) violates an applicable moral tenet. Excuses address the second condition by denying responsibility for the conduct (Shaw et al, 2003). Justifications do not deny responsibility for the act that led to harm, but deny amorality (that a moral tenet has been violated) (Shaw et al, 2003).

Based on this characterization, we can see that remedies and explanations are similar in that organizations can use them to restore justice perceptions and avoid retaliatory behaviors and escalating conflicts. However, they attempt to do so in different ways. When giving explanations a social actor is trying to avoid the attribution of injustice to itself. When offering a remedy, a social actor is not denying responsibility, but trying to atone for the injustice instead by addressing the human needs that have been threatened and harmed through the injustice. (Therefore, we would categorize an apology as a remedy, not an explanation.) Thus, we can say that explanations differ in their proximal purposes but may be similar in their distal purposes.

The proximal purpose of an explanation is to deflect the attribution of blame, whereas the proximal purpose of a remedy is to atone for the injustice. However, in many cases, organizations provide explanations and remedies to achieve the distal purpose of restoring injustice perceptions and avoiding retaliation. From this perspective, we can understand and study remedies and explanations as alternative (and perhaps complementary) tools available to organizations.

Limitations and Future Research

A strength of the current paper is the consistency of our findings across two widely varied methodological approaches and participant populations. In conducting a multimethod research project (Campbell & Fiske, 1959), we believe that the use of different methods and measures had largely complementary effects and strengthened our research more than it potentially introduced confounds. Nevertheless, the two studies are not without limitations.

First, in Study 2 individuals were given a choice between remedies, whereas in Study 1 they indicated their expected satisfaction with different remedies. One can wonder whether there is any intrinsic benefit in being given a choice. Having a choice of remedies could be perceived as more fair and desirable than simply being given a remedy (even if it is one's most preferred type of remedy) and as such improve justice perceptions. In addition, aggrieved workers might be somewhat reluctant to *choose* a punitive remedy (as they seem to have been in our Study 2), perhaps out of self-presentational reasons, even though they would be quite happy if the organization decided to punish the perpetrator. Future research should examine the advantages and disadvantages of being given a choice of remedy versus simply being given a specific remedy.

Second, Study 1 examined regression coefficients between severity of injustice perceptions and preferences for remedies, whereas Study 2 held injustice severity constant at a relatively high level. Future research could manipulate both severity and type of injustice to examine whether the pattern found in the present experiment at a relatively high level of injustice replicates at different levels of severity, or whether severity and type of injustice interact in their effects on reactions to organizational remedies. Further, in our studies, we focused on particular instances of instrumental and punitive remedies, such as disciplinary action and monetary compensation. Clearly, as can be seen from our proposed remedy taxonomy, there are other instances of these remedies that we did not examine but that future research should investigate.

Third, as our dependent variables, we measured preferences for remedies as well as justice perceptions subsequent to receiving a remedy or not. As we have described above, we see the proximal purpose of a remedy in atoning for the perceived injustice by addressing the employee's needs. In so doing, remedies can restore justice perceptions and eliminate the desire to engage in retaliation. The present research only assessed justice perceptions after an injustice but not retaliatory behaviors. Future research should investigate the relation between remedy provision and retaliatory intentions and behaviors as well as justice perceptions. The two may not behave in the same way. For example, it might be possible for a remedy to avoid retaliation but not restore justice perceptions because the threshold for engaging in revenge might be higher than for revising one's justice judgments. In this case, bad feelings might remain, but the pernicious behaviors are curtailed. We would not advise such an approach, except where sincere attempts to address unfairness have already failed. An assumption of this paper is the pernicious effects of injustices; an action which caused a reduction of vengeful acts would still leave in place the cause of these vengeful acts, injustice. Eventually, the ill-will that remained from this

constrained sense of injustice would likely manifest itself in other harmful ways, such as creating employee stress (Cropanzano, Goldman, & Benson, 2005).

Practical Implications

One can draw several cautious, yet important, practical implications from the present research. Retaliation is a common occurrence in organizational life. While not all retaliation is necessarily bad (Bies & Tripp 1996), such actions, through a tit-for-tat kind of negative reciprocity, often escalate into devastating conflicts. These escalated conflicts can lead to immense economic and emotional costs to all parties involved, for example, through subsequent litigation. Organizational remedies can be useful in mollifying the sense of injustice and the desire to retaliate. However, our results suggest that when it comes to providing remedies, one size may not fit all. Rather, the choice of remedy an organization provides should take into account which kind of human justice need was violated through the specific injustice the aggrieved employee perceived. Specifically, an instrumental remedy, such as monetary compensation, may be relatively preferable in response to the violation of the instrumental need through a procedural injustice and a punitive remedy, such as disciplinary action, may be relatively preferable in response to a violation of the meaning need through an interactional injustice.

Our research shows that organizational remedies can help to improve justice perceptions. However, our results also suggest that for single incidents of procedural injustice, it may not be necessary to provide a remedy at all in order to restore justice perceptions and avoid retaliation. This result highlights a broader issue. From an organization's perspective, whether a remedy should be provided has to be decided within an overall analysis of the (monetary and non-monetary) costs and benefits to the various parties affected (aggrieved worker, perpetrator,

organization) of providing or not providing organizational remedies. Research such as the present supplies the kind of knowledge organizational decision makers need to make balanced and effective choices about the provision (or not) of organizational remedies.

Moreover, by implication, this paper suggests that organizational remedies may indeed diffuse conflicts between workers and organizational representatives. Since the majority of workers experience this representative in the form of their front-line supervisors, organizations would be well-advised to train supervisors in conflict management techniques that include improved sensitivity to, and understanding of, appropriate matching of the remedy to the injustice.

Conclusion

We opened this paper by observing the pernicious effects of injustice in stimulating destructive workplace conflict. Fortunately, our findings suggest that aggrieved workers of injustice are at least open to the possibility of justice restoration by means of organizational remedies. Our findings also suggest that the success of an organization's attempt to restore justice depends in part on whether a match exists between the type of injustice the aggrieved worker experienced and the kind of remedy that is offered. This research leaves us optimistic that attention to the justice restoration needs of employees can mitigate conflicts between employees and employers and thereby help to create more humane work environments. Hopefully, the present research stimulates further work in the as-of-yet relatively unexplored area of organizational remedies to injustice.

FOOTNOTES

¹ We included gender as a covariate in order to reduce the error variance and because male and female participants were unevenly distributed across conditions. Past experiments that also used monetary incentives, such as the ultimatum game, have sometimes found gender differences (even though there still is debate as to the direction of the difference, see e.g., Eckel & Grossman, 1996; Solnik, 2001).

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Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Study 1 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Time since left job	6.18	2.40	--							
2. Gender	.45	--	.14*	--						
3. Age	37.21	11.32	.14*	-.06	--					
4. Race	.83	--	-.12*	-.06	-.15*	--				
5. EEOC claim	.58	--	.26**	.02	.15*	-.04	--			
6. Procedural injustice	5.26	1.71	.08	.15*	.10	-.10	.25**	(.89)		
7. Interactional injustice	5.23	1.82	.12	.13*	.09	-.05	.21**	.62**	(.90)	
8. Preference for instrumental remedy	3.81	1.17	.08	-.07	.16*	.06	.25**	.23**	.17*	(.69)
9. Preference for punitive remedy	3.85	1.25	.05	.01	.09	.05	.23**	.23**	.25**	.43**

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$. Coefficient alphas in parentheses where applicable.

Notes: All injustice measures were taken on 7-point scales (1-7) with higher values indicating higher perceived injustice. Preference for remedies was measured on 5-point scales (1-5). Gender was coded 0: male, 1: female. Race was coded 0: White, 1: minority member; EEOC claim was coded 0: no claim filed, 1: claim filed.

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regression with Preference for Instrumental Remedy as
Dependent Variable, Study 1

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t-value</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t-value</i>
<i>Constant</i>	2.81	.39		7.18**	3.32	.43		7.73**
Time since left job	.02	.03	.03	.43	.02	.03	.03	.49
Gender	-.25	.16	-.11	-1.59	-.30	.15	-.13	-1.95
Age	.01	.01	.14	2.02*	.01	.01	.12	1.78
Race	.29	.21	.10	1.38	.31	.20	.10	1.51
EEOC claim	.51	.16	.22	3.13**	.41	.17	.18	2.47*
Procedural injustice					.14	.06	.20	2.31*
Interactional injustice					.01	.05	.01	.14
R^2				.10**				.14**
ΔR^2								.04*

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$

Notes: Gender was coded 0: male, 1: female. Race was coded 0: White, 1: minority member.

EEOC claim was coded 0: no claim filed, 1: claim filed.

Table 3: Hierarchical Multiple Regression with Preference for Punitive Remedy as Dependent Variable, Study 1

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t-value</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	β	<i>t-value</i>
<i>Constant</i>	3.04	.45		6.81**	3.79	.48		7.87**
Time since left job	-.01	.04	-.01	-.14	-.01	.04	-.02	-.23
Gender	.01	.18	.01	.06	-.05	.17	-.02	-.26
Age	.01	.01	.06	.81	.00	.01	.04	.54
Race	.23	.24	.07	.96	.27	.23	.08	1.15
EEOC claim	.62	.19	.24	3.32**	.47	.19	.18	2.49*
Procedural injustice					.08	.07	.11	1.28
Interactional injustice					.12	.06	.17	2.03*
R^2				.06*				.12**
ΔR^2								.06**

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$

Notes: Gender was coded 0: male, 1: female. Race was coded 0: White, 1: minority member.

EEOC claim was coded 0: no claim filed, 1: claim filed.

Table 4: Means, Standard Deviations, and Intercorrelations among Study 2 Variables

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>N</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Remedy condition	.32	--	114								
2. Type of injustice	.48	--	114	-.09							
3. Relative preference	50.36	46.25	78	(a)	.24*						
4. IIJ Time 1	2.44	.92	113	.03	-.01	-.01					
5. PIJ Time 1	2.89	1.04	114	-.09	.02	-.07	.59**				
6. IIJ Time 2	4.98	1.57	114	.05	.10	-.16	.19	.27**			
7. PIJ Time 2	5.21	1.50	112	.13	-.05	.17	-.09	.14	.30**		
8. IIJ Time 3	3.35	1.39	114	.22*	-.06	.09	.16	.02	.31**	.12	
9. PIJ Time 3	3.37	1.45	114	.06	.13	-.14	.09	.21*	.13	.13	.53**

* $p \leq .05$. ** $p \leq .01$.

(a) Cannot be computed because no remedy was given in the no remedy condition.

Notes: IIJ: interactional injustice perceptions; PIJ: procedural injustice perceptions

Relative preference indicates relative preference for instrumental remedy over punitive remedy (100 to -100). Remedy condition was coded as 0: remedy provided, 1: no remedy provided. Type of injustice was coded as 0: procedural injustice, 1: interactional injustice.

Table 5: A Taxonomy of Organizational Remedies Based on the Multiple Needs Model of Justice

Need Violated	Type of Remedy	Purpose of Remedy	Example of Remedy
Instrumental (or Control)	Instrumental	Restore lost control over outcomes	Providing monetary compensation
Meaning (or Virtue)	Punitive	Restore sense of morality	Punishing transgressor
Belonging (or Interpersonal)	Socio-Emotional	Affirm social standing and restore group identity	Giving public apology

Figure 1: Injustice Perceptions Depending on Injustice Condition, Remedy Condition and Time of Measurement, Study 2

Figure 1a: Procedural Injustice Condition

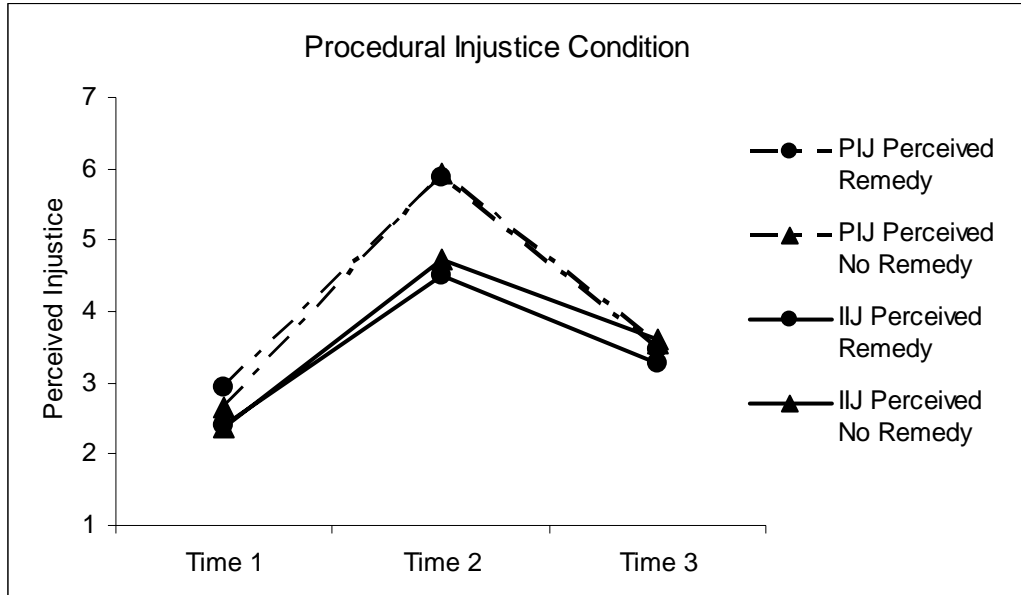
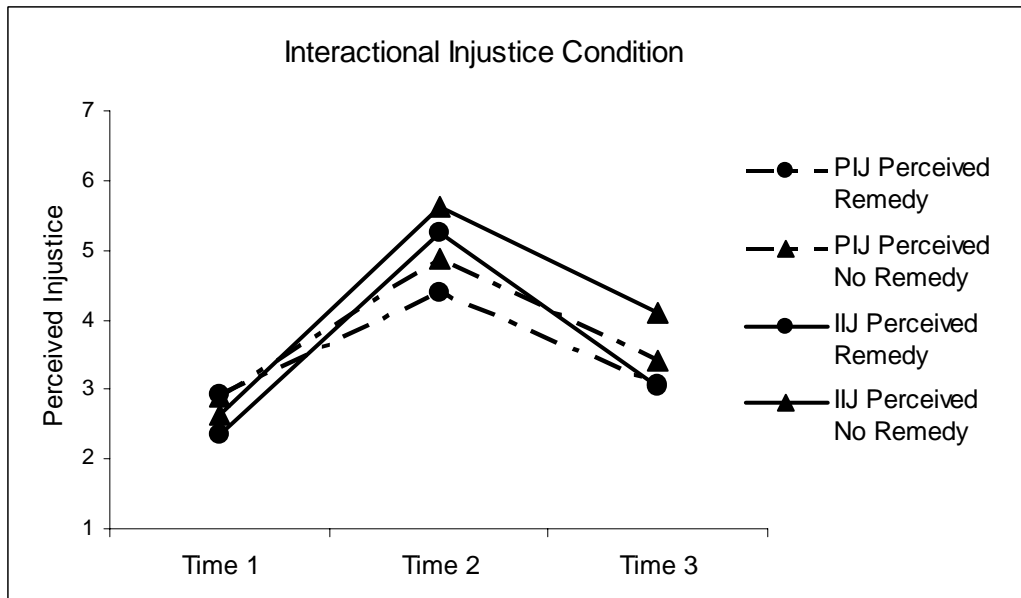


Figure 1b: Interactional Injustice Condition



Notes: PIJ = Procedural Injustice; IIJ: Interactional Injustice