

When our co-workers share their unfair experiences, do we believe them? Perceptions of workplace fairness are negatively related to perceived credibility of coworkers' claims of injustice

by

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. This is a true copy of the thesis, including any required final revisions, as accepted by my examiners.

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Abstract

Prior research shows that when observing a co-worker being treated unfairly, employees who are third parties to the incident feel angry and want to punish the perpetrator. However, research has focused on situations in which third parties have unambiguous information about the unfair incident, such as when they witnessed the incident directly. I argue that in many situations, third parties merely hear a co-worker's claim about an unfair experience, which often provides ambiguous information about the incident. To compensate for ambiguity, I argue that third parties rely on their perceptions of their organization's overall fairness when interpreting a claim, such that the more they perceive the organization to be fair, the less credible they perceive the claim to be. Across five studies using correlational and experimental designs, I found that third parties' overall justice perceptions negatively affected their perceptions of claim credibility. In turn, perceived claim credibility was positively related to subsequent reactions, including anger and intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant. Consequently, the more third parties perceived their organization to be fair, the less they reacted to a claim of unfairness. However, the negative effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was reduced when third parties had unambiguous information about the incident. Although prior research has focused on beneficial effects of employees' justice perceptions, I show that there can also be harmful effects. Thus, even if an organization is generally fair, its leaders must remain vigilant to ensure that victims of injustice receive proper support.

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Introduction

Almost everyone has had a co-worker tell them about an unfair incident that happened at work. For example, a colleague might claim that they were unfairly passed over for a promotion or that a manager treated them in a demeaning way (Baer et al., 2018). Upon hearing a co-worker's account, some people might feel angry and seek to support the claimant, whereas other people might doubt the veracity of the claim and do nothing. These reactions are consequential, as claimants who are dismissed by their peers can feel anxious and continue to ruminate about the incident (Afifi et al., 2013; Jones & Wirtz, 2006). Moreover, without peer support, claimants can feel discouraged about addressing the incident (e.g., by consulting their manager), which can ultimately contribute to the persistence of injustice in the workplace (Hershcovis et al., 2021). Thus, it is critical to understand how employees react to co-workers' claims of unfairness.

Employees who hear a co-worker's claim of unfairness are "third parties," defined as individuals who are not directly affected by the incident in question (Skarlicki & Kulik, 2005). Prior research on third party reactions to unfairness has primarily drawn on the deontic model of justice (Folger, 2001; Folger & Glerum, 2015). According to this model, humans have evolved to hold each other accountable for acting unfairly. Consequently, they react negatively to injustice even when the incident does not affect them directly (Folger & Glerum, 2015). In line with the model, numerous studies have shown that third parties experience anger and seek to restore justice in response to others' unfair experiences (Skarlicki et al., 2015).

However, prior research has focused on contexts in which third parties receive unambiguous information about the unfair incident. For instance, studies have examined third party reactions to incidents that they have witnessed (e.g., Priesemuth & Schminke, 2019) or incidents that were described as facts (e.g., Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). In contrast, mere *claims* of

unfairness are much more ambiguous to third parties, because claims often contain incomplete and fragmented information about the incident (Hohl & Conway, 2017). Thus, I suggest that the extent to which third parties perceive the claim to be credible will vary. I define *perceived claim credibility* as third parties' perceptions that the account of the unfair incident offered by the claimant is truthful and accurate. Moreover, because claims can be ambiguous, I argue that other sources of information, such as third parties' pre-existing perceptions of their organization as generally fair, will influence third parties' perceptions of claim credibility.

Specifically, according to fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015), individuals rely on their holistic impressions of their organization's fairness—referred to as *overall justice perceptions* (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009)—to interpret ambiguous fairness-related situations.¹ Thus, I predict that third parties' overall justice perceptions will negatively influence their perceptions of claim credibility, such that greater overall justice perceptions will reduce perceived claim credibility. In turn, I suggest that perceived claim credibility will affect third parties' reactions to the incident in a way that is consistent with the deontic model of justice. Specifically, perceived claim credibility will positively predict third parties' anger toward the person accused of injustice, which in turn will motivate third parties to punish the accused and support the claimant. Finally, if my reasoning is correct that overall justice is used to interpret claims of unfairness because claims are ambiguous, then reducing ambiguity in the information about the incident is expected to weaken the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. The conceptual model is shown in Figure 1.

¹ Several scholars have distinguished “justice” and “fairness” by defining justice perceptions as “perceived adherence to rules that reflect appropriateness in decision contexts” and fairness perceptions as “global perceptions of appropriateness” (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015, p. 76). However, I use the terms justice perceptions and fairness perceptions interchangeably in this dissertation because “overall justice perceptions” is the term widely used in the literature to refer to employees' global impressions of their organization's *fairness*.

I empirically tested the model across five studies, using correlational and experimental designs. In doing so, I make several contributions to the literature. First, research drawing on the deontic model of justice explains why and how third parties react to unfair incidents, yet this literature rarely addresses the fact that in many situations, third parties only have ambiguous information about the incident in question. I suggest that fairness heuristic theory complements the deontic model, given that the theory identifies overall justice as a determinant of employees' interpretations of ambiguous information. Although fairness heuristic theory and the deontic model of justice are usually examined separately, I show that integrating the two perspectives contributes toward building a complete picture of how third parties interpret and react to unfair experiences of others.

Second, I reveal that perceived claim credibility is a critical determinant of employees' reactions to fairness-related information they receive from others. The fact that employees receive information about unfair incidents from co-workers has been recognized in the organizational justice literature (Masterson & Tong, 2015; Skarlicki & Kulik, 2005). However, whether employees believe such information has rarely been examined, despite a large body of basic research in cognitive and social psychology showing that believing a piece of information influences people's subsequent judgment and decision making (Lewandowsky et al., 2012). Indeed, I show that the degree to which employees perceive a claim about an unfair incident to be credible determines their reactions to the incident. By highlighting the role of perceived claim credibility, I contribute to building a thorough understanding of how people process fairness-related information that they receive from others.

Finally, organizational justice research has focused almost exclusively on benefits of employees' justice perceptions, such as increased well-being, commitment, and satisfaction (for

review, see Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). I challenge the assumption that justice perceptions are always beneficial by showing that employees' perceptions that their organization is fair can hinder their support toward a co-worker who claims to have experienced unfairness. Although the idea that fairness may be a double-edged sword is not new (e.g., Brockner et al., 2009; Gilliland, 1994; Holmvall & Bobocel, 2008; Schroth & Pradhan Shah, 2000), the "dark side" of justice has received relatively little research attention (Rupp et al., 2017). Moreover, no research to my knowledge has examined inadvertent negative effects of employees' overall justice perceptions, nor how such perceptions may shape their interpretations of others' unfair experiences. Given the paucity of research, it is currently unclear when and why promoting justice in the workplace might have inadvertent negative side-effects. By showing that overall justice can have undesirable effects in certain situations, I contribute to building a complete understanding of the effects of fairness perceptions.

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

Third Party Reactions According to the Deontic Model of Justice

Early research on organizational justice tended to focus solely on employees' responses to their own fairness-related experiences, but since the late 1980's, research has expanded to examine employees' concerns about other people's unfair experiences (DeGoey, 2000). Today, there is a large body of research on third party reactions to injustice, which shows that individuals care about injustice even when they are not directly affected by it (Skarlicki & Kulik, 2005; Skarlicki et al., 2015). Although multiple theories have been used to understand why and how third parties react to injustice (e.g., fairness theory; Folger & Cropanzano, 2001), the deontic model of justice (Folger, 2001; Folger et al., 2005; Folger & Glerum, 2015) is one of the most influential frameworks in the literature.

According to the deontic model of justice, humans view fairness as a moral standard and hold each other accountable for unfair acts. Moreover, the model suggests that humans evolved to experience an automatic negative reaction in response to injustice, because such a reaction was adaptive for protecting oneself and others from being exploited (Folger et al., 2005; Folger & Glerum, 2015). Consequently, the model suggests that when individuals observe another person being treated unfairly, the observers experience anger and seek to restore justice. This proposition has received empirical support. For instance, witnessing a co-worker being mistreated by a supervisor (Priesemuth & Schminke, 2019; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010), by another employee (O'Reilly et al., 2016; Reich & Hershcovis, 2015), or by a customer (Spencer & Rupp, 2009) leads employees to feel angry, and in turn anger motivates employees to punish the perpetrator.

Notably, third parties show these reactions even when they do not have strong ties with the victim. For example, studies have observed similar third party reactions to unfair treatment of other participants in laboratory experiments (e.g., O'Reilly et al., 2016; Spencer & Rupp, 2009), restaurant servers (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017), and even hypothetical co-workers described in vignettes (e.g., Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). Together, the current literature on third party reactions to injustice seems to suggest that upon hearing a co-worker's claim of unfairness, employees may typically react with anger and motivation to restore justice.

However, prior research on third party reactions to injustice has been mostly limited to situations in which third parties receive relatively *unambiguous* information about the incident. For example, in field studies, third parties were asked to recall incidents that they have witnessed at work (e.g., Priesemuth & Schminke, 2019) or were exposed to incidents that were staged by researchers (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017). Similarly, in laboratory studies, individuals were led to believe that they were observing an interaction between two other participants, in which one treated the other unfairly (e.g., Lotz, Baumert, et al., 2011; Lotz, Okimoto, et al., 2011; O'Reilly et al., 2016; Reich & Hershcovis, 2015). Within these study contexts, there was little ambiguity in the information about the unfair incident, because third parties personally obtained the information about the incident (such as what the perpetrator did). In turn, I argue that participants readily believed what they saw.

Similarly, vignette-based experiments have been typically designed to ensure that information about unfair incidents was relatively unambiguous. For instance, participants were asked to imagine that they witnessed an incident (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017) or asked to respond to a scenario that was portrayed as a factual description of the incident (e.g., O'Reilly et al., 2016; Skarlicki & Rupp, 2010). Although participants in these studies did not actually

witness an incident, they were asked to imagine that the event occurred as it was described. Consequently, these participants also received unambiguous information about the incident, which ensured that the veracity of the information was not questioned.

Claims of Unfairness Provide Ambiguous Information about the Incident

In contrast, in many cases, third parties merely hear about an unfair incident from the individual claiming to be the victim (Baer et al., 2018; Degoey, 2000; Skarlicki & Kulik, 2005). In those cases, there is a great deal of ambiguity in the information third parties receive about the incident (Degoey, 2000; Lind et al., 1998) because claimants' accounts of an incident are often incomplete and fragmented. For one, human memory is imperfect, which means that claimants often forget the details of the incident and consequently omit those details when describing the incident (Hohl & Conway, 2017; Sekeres et al., 2016). Even if claimants can accurately recall the incident, their accounts will naturally omit some information, as individuals typically do not include every detail of an event when describing it to another person (DeFleur & Cronin, 1991). Consequently, claimants' descriptions of unfair incidents are often ambiguous.

Ambiguity in the claimant's account has at least two important implications. First, ambiguous information is much more open to interpretation than is unambiguous information. For instance, most people are likely to believe what they personally witnessed (low ambiguity). In contrast, when hearing a claimant describing the incident (high ambiguity), some people are likely to doubt the veracity of the claim. Thus, I suggest that third parties' perceptions of claim credibility are likely to vary when they merely hear a claim of unfairness. Second, I expect perceived claim credibility to vary in a predictable way. Specifically, because claims are often ambiguous, I suggest that third parties' perceptions of claim credibility will be affected by other

sources of information, such as their pre-existing perceptions about the overall fairness of their organization.

Indeed, decades of research in cognitive and social psychology suggest that individuals frequently rely on their pre-existing beliefs and perceptions to interpret ambiguous information (Gigerenzer & Gaissmaier, 2011; Kunda, 1990; Lewandowsky et al., 2012). Within the organizational justice literature, fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015) is the dominant theoretical perspective that builds on this insight. Thus, I turn to fairness heuristic theory to shed light on how third parties judge the credibility of claims of unfairness.

Fairness Heuristic Theory: The Effect of Overall Justice on Perceived Claim Credibility

According to fairness heuristic theory, individuals compensate for ambiguity in fairness-related situations by relying on their holistic impressions of an organization's fairness as a mental shortcut when interpreting the situation (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015). The theory suggests that employees form holistic impressions of their organization's fairness relatively early in their involvement with the organization, based on available fairness-related information, such as the degree to which the organization uses fair procedures, pays its employees equitably, and treats its employees respectfully when implementing decisions (Ambrose et al., 2015; Hollensbe et al., 2008; Jones & Martens, 2009).

A key proposition from this theory is that holistic impressions of fairness affect individuals' interpretations of new fairness-related situations, *especially* when the situation is ambiguous (Lind & van den Bos, 2002). Indeed, there is empirical support for this proposition (for a review, see Proudfoot & Lind, 2015). For instance, See (2009) found that the more individuals felt uninformed about an issue, the more their support for a policy addressing the issue was influenced by their perceptions that the organization introducing the policy typically

used fair procedures. Moreover, Walker et al. (2013) conducted an experiment in which participants role-played as job applicants and communicated with a company by email. Some participants received information about the way the company treats its employees, whereas others did not. Relative to participants who had this information, those without it relied more heavily on the fairness of the company's email correspondence to judge the company's attractiveness as an employer. Together, research on fairness heuristic theory shows that individuals rely on their holistic impressions of an organization's fairness to interpret new fairness-related situations, particularly when the situation is ambiguous.

Drawing on fairness heuristic theory, I suggest that third parties often rely on their holistic impressions of their organization's fairness—referred to as overall justice perceptions (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009)—to judge the credibility of their co-workers' claims of unfairness. In line with the theory, I expect employees to rely on overall justice to compensate for the ambiguity in the co-worker's claim when interpreting it. In doing so, employees with higher overall justice perceptions will be more likely to perceive the unfair incident to be inconsistent with their perceptions of the organization, relative to employees with lower overall justice perceptions. Importantly, basic research in cognitive psychology shows that individuals are less likely to perceive a claim to be credible the more it deviates from their pre-existing perceptions (Brashier & Marsh, 2020; Lewandowsky et al., 2012). Consequently, I expect employees' overall justice perceptions to negatively affect their perceptions of claim credibility.

Hypothesis 1: Overall justice perceptions will be negatively related to perceived claim credibility.

The Effect of Perceived Claim Credibility on Anger Toward the Accused

I suggest that the degree to which employees perceive a claim of unfairness to be credible will, in turn, positively affect their anger toward the individual accused of enacting injustice. As

noted earlier, third parties tend to feel angry in response to observed injustice (Skarlicki et al., 2015). Presumably, anger stems from being aware that someone had indeed acted unfairly. However, if third parties do not believe a claim in which a person is accused of injustice, there is little basis to be angry; after all, the incident may not have happened. Indeed, criminal justice research on third party reactions toward legal cases suggests that third party perceptions that a claimant's story is credible are positively associated with their anger toward the defendant (Golding, Lynch, et al., 2015; Malik et al., 2018; Wasarhaley et al., 2017). Relatedly, individuals presented with strong, as opposed to weak, evidence in favor of the prosecution reported greater anger toward the defendant (Bright & Goodman-Delahunty, 2006; Golding, Wasarhaley, et al., 2015). Although these studies were not conducted in organizational contexts, they nevertheless suggest a positive link between the degree to which third parties believe a claim about a wrongdoing and their anger toward the person accused of perpetrating it. Thus, I expect a positive relationship between third party perceptions of claim credibility and their anger toward the individual accused of injustice.

Hypothesis 2: Perceived claim credibility will be positively related to anger toward the accused.

Deontic Model of Justice: The Effects of Anger on Intentions to Restore Justice

Drawing on the deontic model of justice, I predict that anger, in turn, will motivate third parties to restore justice. Anger is a negative emotion that arises when goals are thwarted and is characterized by motivation to strive toward those goals (Carver & Harmon-Jones, 2009). Because an unfair incident interferes with the goal to uphold justice, anger that arises in response to injustice motivates third parties to engage in justice-restorative acts (Van Doorn et al., 2014). Specifically, research on third party reactions to injustice has identified two ways in which third parties attempt to restore justice: punishing the perpetrator and supporting the victim (Folger &

Glerum, 2015; Van Doorn et al., 2018). I suggest that similar reactions will be observed in the context of a claim of unfairness. I develop my predictions below.

First, empirical research shows that third party anger indeed fuels punitive reactions toward the perpetrator of injustice (Folger et al., 2005). For instance, O'Reilly et al. (2016) found that the more anger third parties felt toward a company that treated its employees unfairly, the more they intended to sign a petition against the company. Similarly, Hershcovis and Bhatnagar (2017) found that individuals' anger toward a customer who mistreated a restaurant employee was positively associated with intentions to retaliate (e.g., by treating the customer rudely). Moreover, in laboratory studies, participants observed a game in which one player unfairly withheld money from another player; participants' anger toward the offender was positively associated with the amount of money participants charged the offender as a form of punishment (Lotz, Baumert, et al., 2011; Lotz, Okimoto, et al., 2011). Extending these findings to third party reactions to a *claim*, I expect third party anger toward the accused will positively affect third party intentions to punish the accused.

Hypothesis 3a: Anger toward the accused will be positively related to intentions to punish the accused.

Although research drawing on the deontic model of justice has historically focused on punishment as the primary response to injustice (Rupp & Bell, 2010), anger can motivate third parties to support the victim as well (Van Doorn & Brouwers, 2017; Van Doorn et al., 2014). For instance, in the laboratory studies described above (Lotz, Baumert, et al., 2011; Lotz, Okimoto, et al., 2011), individuals could punish the player who distributed money unfairly, yet many individuals also opted to monetarily compensate the player who was victimized. Moreover, anger toward the perpetrator was positively associated with the amount of money allocated toward compensating the victim. Similarly, field studies have shown that third party anger toward a

perpetrator of mistreatment is positively related to the extent to which third parties protect (Priesemuth & Schminke, 2019) and emotionally support (Hershcovis et al., 2017; Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017) the victim. Building on these findings, I expect anger toward the accused to positively affect intentions to support the claimant.

Hypothesis 3b: Anger toward the accused will be positively related to intentions to support the claimant.

Combining Hypotheses 1 through 3 yields the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 4a: Overall justice perceptions will have a negative indirect effect on intentions to punish the accused through perceived claim credibility and anger toward the accused.

Hypothesis 4b: Overall justice perceptions will have a negative indirect effect on intentions to support the claimant through perceived claim credibility and anger toward the accused.

Reducing Ambiguity Weakens the Effect of Overall Justice on Perceived Claim Credibility

I have drawn on fairness heuristic theory to predict that third parties' overall justice perceptions will affect the degree to which they perceive a co-worker's claim about an unfair incident to be credible. However, this proposition rests on the assumption that overall justice is used as a mental shortcut *because* claimants' descriptions are often ambiguous. If there is unambiguous information about the incident to begin with, overall justice is not needed to interpret the claim. Thus, if my assumption is correct, then reducing ambiguity in the information about the incident is expected to weaken the influence of overall justice on perceived claim credibility.

Specifically, although there are situations in which third parties have no other information apart from the claim, in other situations, third parties can obtain unambiguous information in addition to hearing the claim. For example, a co-worker claiming to have been treated unfairly by a manager can share a record of the manager's behavior (e.g., an email from

the manager) with the employees. Doing so allows employees to observe the incident directly, thereby reducing the overall ambiguity in the information that they receive. In turn, reducing ambiguity is expected to weaken the influence of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. As a result, I expect a moderation effect in which reducing ambiguity in the information about the incident will attenuate the relationship between overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility.

Hypothesis 5: Ambiguity in the information about the incident will moderate the negative relationship between overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility such that the negative relationship will weaken as ambiguity decreases.

Combining Hypotheses 4a, 4b, and 5 yields the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 6a: Ambiguity in the information about the incident will moderate the negative indirect effect of overall justice perceptions on intentions to punish the accused through perceived claim credibility and anger, such that the negative indirect effect will weaken as ambiguity decreases.

Hypothesis 6b: Ambiguity in the information about the incident will moderate the negative indirect effect of overall justice perceptions on intentions to support the claimant through perceived claim credibility and anger, such that the negative indirect effect will weaken as ambiguity decreases.

Overview of Studies

I conducted five studies to empirically test the model depicted in Figure 1. In Studies 1 and 2, I used archival data collected from vignette studies to test the prediction that overall justice perceptions negatively affect the extent to which employees perceive a co-worker's claim of unfairness to be credible (Hypothesis 1). In both studies, participants were recruited across different organizations, which meant that results may have been influenced by variability in objective levels of justice between organizations. To address this concern, in Study 3, I recruited individuals from a single organization. Study 3 also extended the findings from Studies 1 and 2 by testing the effects of perceived claim credibility on subsequent reactions—namely, anger,

intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant (Hypotheses 1 through 4). In Study 4, I conducted an experiment using a sample of full-time employees to test whether reducing ambiguity in the information about the incident attenuates the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility as well as the indirect effects of overall justice on subsequent reactions (Hypotheses 1 through 6). Finally, I conducted Study 5 to replicate and extend Study 4 by also manipulating overall justice perceptions, which strengthens the causal inferences regarding the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility (Hypotheses 1 through 6).

Study 1

I tested Hypothesis 1 using unpublished archival data from an online study conducted by members of my advisor's laboratory. The study included a two-group experimental manipulation unrelated to this dissertation, but the original study hypothesis concerning the manipulation was not supported. Thus, I report my results collapsed across conditions. As detailed in the Supplemental Materials, including the manipulation in my analyses did not affect my conclusions (see Appendix A, Study 1: Experimental Manipulation in the Original Study).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). The study was visible only to individuals who resided in the United States and had task approval rates of 80% or more (Aguinis et al., 2021; Cheung et al., 2017). Individuals completed an eligibility screening questionnaire prior to the study. Individuals were eligible to participate if they were at least 18 years old, had a job outside of MTurk, and worked 35 hours or more per week at their primary job. The study was separated across two surveys, administered approximately two days apart, to reduce common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Overall justice perceptions were measured in Part 1. In Part 2, participants were asked to imagine having a conversation with a co-worker named Pat at their organization. Participants read a vignette in which Pat claimed to have experienced a procedural injustice (i.e., a promotion procedure was unfair; see Appendix B). Next, participants completed a measure of perceived claim credibility. Upon completing Part 2, participants were thanked and debriefed. Participants received \$0.10 (USD) for completing Part 1 and \$2.00 (USD) for completing Part 2.

Of the participants ($N = 301$) who completed Part 1, 229 participants completed Part 2.

Data from participants ($n = 7$) who failed one or more of the three attention check questions were removed from analyses (DeSimone et al., 2015). In addition, four participants withdrew their data after completing the study.² The final sample ($N = 218$) was 48.17% male, 51.83% female, and 77.06% identified as White, 8.72% as Hispanic, and 6.88% as Black. Participants were 34.42 years old on average ($SD = 9.30$), worked 42.16 hours per week on average ($SD = 7.52$), and have worked at their current organization for 5.15 years on average ($SD = 5.73$). Participants worked in a range of industries, including health care (16.51%), information technology (10.09%), and education (7.34%).

Measures

Overall Justice Perceptions. Overall justice was measured with the six-item scale developed by Ambrose and Schminke (2009). Participants were asked to indicate how they generally feel about their current organization. Example items include “In general, I can count on my organization to be fair,” and “For the most part, this organization treats its employees fairly.” Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). The Cronbach’s alpha reliability was .95.

Perceived Claim Credibility. Participants were asked to imagine that a co-worker named Pat claimed to have experienced an injustice. Immediately after reading the claim, participants responded to four items measuring perceived claim credibility.³ Items were adapted from measures of perceived credibility of advertisements and online news reports (e.g., Rowley et al., 2018; Sungur et al., 2016). The items were: “Would you believe that the event happened

² Given the use of deception in the original study, research ethics protocol required participants’ consent to the use of their data after they were debriefed.

³ Perceived claim credibility was part of a set of items measuring participants’ evaluations of the scenario. Details of the measures can be found in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 1: Participants’ Evaluation of the Scenario).

the way Pat described it?,” “Would you believe Pat’s version of the events?,” “Would you believe that Pat is distorting the truth?” (reverse-coded) and “Would you think that there is another side to the story?” (reverse-coded). Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = *Not at all*, 7 = *Extremely*). The Cronbach’s alpha reliability was .80.

Analysis Plan

I first tested my measurement model via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Specifically, I tested the fit of my proposed measurement model in which overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility items loaded on separate factors. I next compared the fit of the proposed measurement model against a model in which overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility items loaded on one factor. Then, I examined the bivariate correlation between overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility to test Hypothesis 1.

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

My proposed two-factor measurement model fit the data well based on conventional criteria ($\chi^2 = 146.90$, $df = 34$, $p < .001$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .12, SRMR = .05) and the fit was better ($\Delta\chi^2 = 262.80$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$) than the alternative model ($\chi^2 = 409.70$, $df = 35$, $p < .001$, CFI = .78, RMSEA = .22, SRMR = .15).

Hypothesis Test

Supporting Hypothesis 1, overall justice perceptions ($Mean = 5.11$, $SD = 1.38$) and perceived claim credibility ($Mean = 3.66$, $SD = 1.03$) were negatively correlated ($r = -.21$, $p < .01$).

Discussion

Study 1 provided support for Hypothesis 1, such that the more employees perceived their

organization to be generally fair, the less they perceived a claim of unfairness to be credible. However, it is possible that the observed effect is limited to the particular type of injustice (i.e., procedural injustice) that was described in the vignette. Thus, in Study 2, I tested Hypothesis 1 using a claim about an interactional injustice to ensure that the observed effect is replicable and generalizes to other types of claims.

Study 2

I tested Hypothesis 1 using an unpublished archival data from a correlational study conducted by other members of my advisor's laboratory. I report the details of the original study goals and results in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 2: Original Study Goals and Results). In Study 2, participants were asked to respond to a claim about an interactional injustice (i.e., a manager acted unfairly when interacting with the claimant).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Participants were recruited from MTurk. The study was visible only to individuals in the United States who had task approval rates of 90% or more. The study used the same eligibility screening questionnaire and eligibility criteria as Study 1. The study procedure was identical to Study 1, except for the nature of the injustice; here, the co-worker claimed to have experienced an interactional injustice (i.e., a manager was rude and did not explain a decision; see Appendix B). Upon completing the study, participants were debriefed. Participants received \$0.75 (USD) for completing Part 1 and \$2.25 (USD) for completing Part 2.

Of the participants who completed Part 1 ($N = 438$), 366 completed Part 2. Data from participants ($n = 7$) who failed one or more of the four attention check questions were removed from analyses. The final sample ($N = 359$) was 61.56% men, 38.16% women, and 70.75% identified as White, 10.58% as Black, 6.96% as Hispanic and 6.96% as East Asian. Participants were 37.98 years old on average ($SD = 10.01$), worked 41.70 hours per week on average ($SD = 5.30$), and have worked at their current organization for 6.84 years on average ($SD = 5.81$). Participants worked in a range of industries, such as information technology (12.81%), education (11.4%), and financial services (9.19%).

Measures

Overall justice ($\alpha = .95$) and perceived claim credibility⁴ ($\alpha = .78$) were measured using the same scales as in Study 1.

Analysis Plan

I tested the same measurement models as Study 1 via CFA. I tested Hypothesis 1 by examining the bivariate correlation between overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility.

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

My proposed measurement model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 515.76$, $df = 34$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .86$, $RMSEA = .20$, $SRMR = .07$), although the fit was better ($\Delta\chi^2 = 382.58$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$) than the alternative model in which all items were set to load on one factor ($\chi^2 = 898.34$, $df = 35$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .75$, $RMSEA = .26$, $SRMR = .13$). Prior research suggests that responses to reverse-coded items within a scale are partly driven by factors other than the construct of interest, such as response styles (e.g., DiStefano & Motl, 2006; Hevey et al., 2012). Thus, to account for the effects of such factors, I allowed the residuals of reverse-coded items to covary. As expected, this modification improved the model fit ($\chi^2 = 124.13$, $df = 32$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .97$, $RMSEA = .09$, $SRMR = .06$).

Hypothesis Test

There was a significant negative relationship ($r = -.40$, $p < .001$) between overall justice perceptions ($Mean = 5.34$, $SD = 1.38$) and perceived claim credibility ($Mean = 3.91$, $SD = 1.11$),

⁴ Like in Study 1, perceived claim credibility was part of a set of items measuring participants' evaluations of the scenario. Further details can be found in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 2: Participants' Evaluation of the Scenario).

supporting Hypothesis 1.

Auxiliary Analyses

Intentions to Punish the Accused. I also predicted that there would be a negative indirect effect of overall justice perceptions on intentions to punish the person accused of enacting injustice, via perceived claim credibility and anger (Hypothesis 4a). Although Study 2 was not designed to test this hypothesis, the study contained a measure of intentions to punish the accused. A negative *total effect* of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused would be consistent with Hypothesis 4a, assuming that there are no opposing effects that cancel out the negative indirect effect of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused (MacKinnon et al., 2007). Moreover, overall justice negatively relates to perceived claim credibility and the effect of perceived claim credibility on intentions to punish the accused via anger is expected to be positive. Thus, a significant negative indirect effect of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused via perceived claim credibility would also be consistent with Hypothesis 4a.

Intentions to punish the accused was measured with a four-item scale developed by Skarlicki and Rupp (2010). Participants responded to items on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*; $\alpha = .87$). A sample item is “The manager should be reprimanded for the way they treated Pat.” Consistent with the above rationale, overall justice perceptions were negatively related to intentions to punish the accused ($r = -.20, p < .001$). Next, I tested the indirect effect of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused via perceived claim credibility. I modeled relationships between observed variables (i.e., aggregate of item scores) using structural equation modeling (SEM).⁵ Perceived claim credibility was regressed on overall

⁵ An alternative way to test the indirect effect is to model relationships between latent variables. As detailed in the Supplemental Materials, results did not substantively differ when latent variables were used (see Appendix A, Study 2: Mediation Model using Latent Variables).

justice, and intentions to punish the accused was regressed on perceived claim credibility. The model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 3.67$, $df = 1$, $p = .055$, $CFI = .97$, $RMSEA = .09$, $SRMR = .03$). Overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility ($b = -.32$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$) and perceived claim credibility was positively related to intentions to punish the accused ($b = .35$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). I then computed the product of the two paths forming the indirect effect and computed the 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect using bias-corrected bootstrap method with 5000 resampling (MacKinnon et al., 2004). As expected, there was a negative indirect effect of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused via perceived claim credibility (indirect effect = $-.112$; 95% CI = $-.171$, $-.065$).

Organizational Identification. Prior research suggests that organizational identification, which refers to employees' perceptions of oneness with their organization (Ashforth & Mael, 1989), might also lead employees to dismiss claims that criticize their organization (Conroy et al., 2017). For example, the more employees identify with their organization, the more defensive they act toward a lawsuit against their organization (Ploeger & Bisel, 2013). Moreover, overall justice and organizational identification are both positive perceptions that employees hold about their organization and are often positively correlated with each other (e.g., Arnéguy et al., 2018; De Roeck et al., 2014; Soenen & Melkonian, 2017). Thus, it is possible that the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility is driven by employees' positive perceptions about the organization in general, rather than their perceptions of their organization's fairness. Study 2 contained a measure of organizational identification, which allowed me to test whether there is a unique effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility that is not accounted for by organizational identification.

Organizational identification was measured with a six-item scale ($\alpha = .92$) developed by

Mael and Ashforth (1992). A sample item is “When someone praises this organization, it feels like a personal compliment.” Participants responded to items on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). First, I examined bivariate correlations among the key variables. As expected, overall justice was positively correlated with organizational identification ($r = .50$, $p < .001$). Like overall justice, organizational identification was negatively correlated to perceived claim credibility ($r = -.31$, $p < .001$). Second, I conducted a multiple regression analysis to test whether the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remained significant after controlling for organizational identification. Including organizational identification as a covariate ($b = -.10$, $SE = .04$, $p = .012$) did not substantively affect the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility ($b = -.26$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). Thus, although organizational identification negatively relates to employees’ perceptions of claim credibility, overall justice has a separate and unique effect on perceived claim credibility.

Discussion

Together, Studies 1 and 2 support Hypothesis 1: Employees’ overall justice perceptions were negatively related to their perceived credibility of a co-worker’s claim of unfairness. Moreover, auxiliary analyses in Study 2 showed that overall justice was negatively related to employees’ intentions to punish the accused. I also found that perceived claim credibility mediated the relationship between overall justice and intentions to punish the accused. Thus, employees’ evaluations of the co-worker’s claim were colored by overall justice, such that the more employees perceived their organization as fair, the less they viewed the co-worker’s claim to be credible. Consequently, lower perceived claim credibility meant that employees were less likely to punish the manager who was accused of unfairness. Finally, the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remained after controlling for organizational identification. Thus,

overall justice has a unique effect on perceived claim credibility that is not accounted for by organizational identification.

Although Studies 1 and 2 provide initial support for my hypotheses, there are limitations to both studies. For one, within each of the studies, participants were recruited across different organizations. This means that the observed negative effects of overall justice perceptions on perceived claim credibility could have been driven by a third variable (MacKinnon et al., 2000), such as variability in objective levels of justice across organizations. For example, an organization's use of fair procedures may have positively influenced its employees' overall justice perceptions, but also negatively influenced perceived claim credibility; a claim about a procedural unfairness (like in Study 1) may have appeared less credible to employees who worked in organizations that use fair procedures, because the event described in the claim was objectively less likely to occur at their organization, compared to employees who worked in organizations that use unfair procedures. Thus, in this example, an organization's use of fair procedures acts as a confound that creates a negative observed relationship between overall justice perceptions and perceived claim credibility. Such a confound would undermine my argument that employees rely on their overall justice perceptions to interpret the co-worker's claim.

Study 3 was conducted to address this limitation. I controlled for variability in fairness across organizations by recruiting participants from a single organization (i.e., graduate students from one university). I asked participants to read a claim that was based on a real incident that occurred at their organization. I did so to ensure that the claim was realistic to the participants. Moreover, I built upon Studies 1 and 2 by examining the effect of perceived claim credibility on anger, as well as examining the effects of anger on intentions to punish the accused and

intentions to support the claimant.

Study 3

In Study 3, I asked graduate students from the University of Waterloo to respond to a claim made by a former graduate student about an unfair experience at the university. I examined the effect of overall justice perceptions on perceived claim credibility (Hypothesis 1), the effect of perceived claim credibility on anger (Hypothesis 2), and the effects of anger on intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant (Hypotheses 3a and 3b). I also examined the indirect effects of overall justice on intentions (Hypotheses 4a and 4b). The hypotheses, design, and sampling plan for Study 3 were preregistered prior to data collection on Open Science Framework (OSF; <https://osf.io/phc8a>).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Eligibility and Data Screening. I recruited graduate students using various methods, including e-newsletters, social media, and email listservs. Individuals were eligible if they were at least 18 years old, enrolled in a graduate program at the university, and were not enrolled in a program offered by my department. Of the participants ($N = 304$) who completed the study, I excluded participants ($n = 18$) who failed an attention check. Four participants provided partial responses; their data were retained and included in the analyses. The final sample ($N = 286$) was 48.95% men, 45.80% women, and 3.49% identified with other gender identities or multiple gender identities. Participants were 27.12 years old on average ($SD = 5.62$) and 42.66% identified as White, 21.33% as South Asian, and 18.18% as East Asian. Participants had been graduate students at the university for 1.74 years on average ($SD = 1.94$), had been at the university in any capacity for 3.09 years on average ($SD = 3.10$), and were from different faculties, including engineering (37.41%), mathematics (18.88%), science (17.13%), and arts

(13.99%).

Focal Study. Participants completed a 15-minute online survey. First, participants completed a measure of overall justice perceptions and a demographics questionnaire. Next, participants read a claim by an alumnus, who said that the university officials stole his intellectual property (see Appendix B). The incident is an example of injustice because the claim suggests that the university officials were not being truthful in their interactions with the alumnus (Bies, 2015). Participants were told that the alumnus' account was based on a real claim made by a former student at the university. Participants completed measures of perceived claim credibility, anger toward the university officials, intentions to punish the university officials, and intentions to provide emotional support to the alumnus. Upon completing the study, participants were debriefed and invited to enter a draw to win one of four \$50 (CAD) e-gift cards.

Measures

Overall Justice Perceptions. I adapted the six-item scale used in Studies 1 and 2 to refer to the university. An example item is “In general, I can count on the University of Waterloo to be fair.” Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .94.

Perceived Claim Credibility. Participants were asked to think about the alumnus' claim and respond to a five-item scale. I revised the four-item scale used in Studies 1 and 2 by removing two items and adding three new items.⁶ I then adapted the items to fit the current study (e.g., “Do you believe his version of the event?”). Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 =

⁶ I removed the items, “Would you believe that Pat is distorting the truth?” and “Would you think that there is another side to the story?” because participants may interpret these items to be about the extent to which the claimant is being deceptive. I wrote three new items that focused on perceived claim credibility: “Would you believe Pat's claim?”, “Would you think that Pat's claim is true?” and “Would you believe that Pat's story reflects what actually happened?”.

Not at all, 7 = Very much). The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .93.

Anger. I adapted the four-item scale developed by Harmon-Jones et al. (2016). Participants were asked to “think about the University of Waterloo (UW) officials that the alumnus was talking about” and to rate the extent to which “the UW officials’ actions make [them] feel...” “angry,” “pissed off,” “mad,” and “enraged.” Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .93.

Intentions to Punish the Accused. I adapted Skarlicki and Rupp's (2010) four-item scale which was used in Study 2. An example item is “The UW officials should be reprimanded for what they did.” Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .88.

Intentions to Support the Claimant. I adapted the four-item emotional support scale developed by Hershcovis et al. (2017). Emotional support involves attempts to improve another person's affect through expressing friendliness and solidarity (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008; Jolly et al., 2021). Example items include “I would show my support for him” and “I would make it clear that I am on his side.” Participants responded on a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .87.

Analysis Plan

First, I verified the factor structure of the measures via CFA. I tested the fit of a measurement model with five factors, in which the items from the five focal scales—overall justice perceptions, perceived claim credibility, anger, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant—loaded on their respective factors. I then compared this model against five alternative models: (1) a four-factor model in which items for intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant loaded on the same factor, (2) a three-factor model

in which items for anger, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant loaded on the same factor, (3) a three-factor model in which items for perceived claim credibility and anger loaded on the same factor, and items for intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant loaded on the same factor, (4) a two-factor model in which items for anger, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant loaded on the same factor, and items for overall justice and perceived claim credibility loaded on the same factor, and finally (5) a one-factor model in which all items loaded on one factor. Given that there were missing data, I used full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation following current recommendations (Enders, 2001; Enders & Bandalos, 2010; Newman, 2014).

I next tested my hypotheses via structural equation modeling (SEM) using observed variables (i.e., composite mean of the indicators rather than latent variables).⁷ I used FIML to test the structural model as well. I specified a model in which perceived claim credibility was regressed on overall justice perceptions, anger was regressed on perceived claim credibility, and intentions to punish the accused and intentions to support the claimant were both regressed on anger. Intentions to punish the accused and intentions to support the claimant were allowed to covary, given that they were both measures of intentions to engage in justice-restorative actions. I tested the indirect effects using bias-corrected bootstrap method with 5000 resampling (MacKinnon et al., 2004). The indirect effect was considered statistically significant if the 95% CI excluded zero.

⁷ Observed variables were used instead of latent variables for consistency across studies. Because Studies 4 and 5 involved testing interaction effects with manipulated variables, I used observed variables to simplify the analyses and results. Importantly, as detailed in the Supplemental Materials, results for Study 3 did not substantively differ from those reported in the main text of the dissertation when latent variables were used (see Appendix A, Study 3: Hypothesis Testing using Latent Variables). Moreover, I report in the Supplemental Materials the results of Studies 4 and 5 in which I modeled all measured variables as latent constructs. The main conclusions drawn from the results did not differ from those reported in this dissertation (see Appendix A, Study 4: Hypothesis Testing using Latent Variables and Study 5: Hypothesis Testing using Latent Variables).

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

CFA results are presented in Table 1. The proposed measurement model fit the data reasonably well ($\chi^2 = 797.35$, $df = 220$, $p < .001$, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .06) and the fit was better than the alternative models.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the variables. The correlations were in the expected direction, but I tested my hypotheses fully via SEM.

Hypothesis Tests

The proposed structural model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 65.03$, $df = 5$, $p < .001$, CFI = .86, RMSEA = .21, SRMR = .10). I modified the model such that I added a path from perceived claim credibility to intentions to punish the accused and a path from perceived claim credibility to intentions to support the claimant, because perceived claim credibility may influence these outcomes directly, in addition to its effects through anger. This modification improved the model fit ($\chi^2 = 23.98$, $df = 3$, $p < .001$, CFI = .95, RMSEA = .16, SRMR = .06).⁸ Results are summarized in Figure 2. In line with Hypothesis 1, overall justice perceptions were negatively related to perceived claim credibility ($b = -.31$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). Supporting Hypothesis 2, perceived claim credibility was positively related to anger toward the university officials ($b = .47$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$). Supporting Hypotheses 3a and 3b, anger was in turn positively related to intentions to punish the university officials ($b = .56$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$) and intentions to provide emotional support to the alumnus ($b = .33$, $SE = .05$, $p < .001$). Finally, in line with

⁸ Results from the test of the proposed model prior to the modification are reported in the Supplemental Materials (see Appendix A, Study 3: Proposed Model Results). Importantly, the conclusions based on the regression coefficients do not substantively differ from those reported in the main text of the dissertation.

Hypotheses 4a and 4b, there were significant negative indirect effects of overall justice perceptions on intentions to punish the university officials (indirect effect = $-.081$; 95% CI = $-.132, -.042$) and intentions to provide emotional support to the alumnus (indirect effect = $-.048$; 95% CI = $-.086, -.023$).

Auxiliary Analyses

Like Study 2, I tested whether the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remained after controlling for organizational identification. I used the same six-item scale ($\alpha = .88$) as Study 2, except that the scale instruction and items were modified so that participants were asked to rate the extent to which they identified with the university. An example item is “When someone praises this University, it feels like a personal compliment.” First, I examined the bivariate correlations between key variables. Consistent with Study 2, organizational identification was positively correlated with overall justice ($r = .39, p < .001$) and negatively correlated with perceived claim credibility ($r = -.17, p < .01$).⁹

I tested a structural model that was identical to the one presented in Figure 2, except that perceived claim credibility was regressed on overall justice perceptions and organizational identification. Overall justice perceptions and organizational identification were allowed to covary. The model provided a reasonable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 38.82, df = 6, p < .001, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .14, SRMR = .06$). As shown in Figure 3, organizational identification was not significantly related to perceived claim credibility and including it as a covariate did not substantively affect my results. Thus, the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was not accounted for by organizational identification.

⁹ The full correlation matrix along with means and standard deviations can be found in the Supplemental Materials (see Appendix A, Study 3: Organizational Identification).

Discussion

Study 3 provides additional support for my prediction that overall justice perceptions are negatively related to individuals' perceived credibility of another organizational member's claim of unfairness. Study 3 also extends Studies 1 and 2 by demonstrating that perceived claim credibility plays a pivotal role in determining individuals' reactions to the claim. Specifically, the more individuals perceived the claim to be credible, the angrier they were, which positively influenced their intentions to engage in justice-restorative actions. In addition, I found significant direct effects of perceived claim credibility on intentions to engage in justice-restorative actions, which I did not hypothesize. I return to the implications of these direct effects in the General Discussion. Finally, auxiliary analyses showed that although organizational identification was negatively related to perceived claim credibility, the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remained after controlling for organizational identification. Thus, overall justice had a unique effect on perceived claim credibility that was not accounted for by organizational identification.

Across Studies 1 through 3, overall justice was consistently negatively related to perceived claim credibility. Next, I sought to test my rationale for why overall justice negatively affects perceived claim credibility. I argued that individuals compensate for ambiguity in the claim by relying on overall justice perceptions to interpret the claim. In Studies 1 through 3, participants did not have access to any information beyond the claim, which meant that the information they had about the unfair incident was ambiguous. If individuals indeed rely on their overall justice perceptions *because* claims are ambiguous, then reducing ambiguity, such as by providing unambiguous information that corroborates the claim, is expected to weaken the effect of overall justice perceptions on perceived claim credibility. I conducted Study 4 to test this

prediction by manipulating information ambiguity.

Study 4

I conducted a between-subjects experiment manipulating information ambiguity and tested the model depicted in Figure 1 (i.e., Hypotheses 1 through 6). Manipulating ambiguity allowed me to test my argument that ambiguity is responsible for the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. The hypotheses, design, and sampling plan for Study 4 were preregistered prior to data collection on OSF (<https://osf.io/5p8a2>).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Eligibility and Data Screening. Like Studies 1 and 2, participants were recruited from MTurk. The study was visible only to individuals who resided in the United States and had task approval rates of 95% or above. Individuals completed a brief screening questionnaire and were deemed eligible if they were at least 18 years old, lived in the United States, had a job outside of MTurk, worked 30 or more hours per week, and passed a question intended to screen out “bots” (Aguinis et al., 2021). Eligible individuals were invited to participate in a two-part study. Among the participants who completed Part 1 ($N = 567$), 466 completed Part 2. Data from participants ($n = 17$) who incorrectly answered one or more of the three attention check questions were removed. I also included a comprehension check question to assess whether participants understood the vignette used to manipulate information ambiguity. Data from participants ($n = 34$) who incorrectly answered this question were removed. Two participants skipped an item within a focal measure, but I retained their data for analyses. The final sample ($N = 415$) was 52.77% men, 46.75% women, and 72.22% identified as White, 9.90% as Asian, and 7.00% as Black. Participants were 39.51 years old on average ($SD = 11.59$), worked 40.79 hours per week on average ($SD = 6.49$), and have been working at their job for 7.34 years on average ($SD =$

6.98). Participants worked in a range of industries, including education (14.70%), health care (12.29%), and finance (11.08%).

Focal Study. Participants completed two surveys. In Part 1, participants completed a measure of overall justice perceptions and a demographics questionnaire. Approximately 24 hours later, participants were invited to Part 2, in which they completed a between-subjects experiment manipulating ambiguity. Participants were asked to imagine that they were having a conversation with a co-worker named Pat who claimed to have experienced an interactional injustice. Information ambiguity was manipulated via the vignette containing the claim (see Manipulation and Measures section below). Participants then completed measures of perceived claim credibility, anger toward the accused, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to provide emotional support to the claimant. Upon completing the study, participants were thanked and debriefed. Participants received \$0.50 (USD) per survey.

Manipulation and Measures

Information Ambiguity Manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to either a low or high information ambiguity condition (see Appendix C). In both conditions, participants read a vignette in which Pat claimed that a manager named Larry sent a rude email to Pat, and that the email did not include an explanation for a promotion decision. In the high ambiguity condition, participants were only shown Pat's description of the email. That is, in this condition there was ambiguity regarding the manager's actual behavior, such as what the manager said in the email. On the other hand, participants in the low ambiguity condition were shown the manager's verbatim email in addition to Pat's claim about the incident. In other words, these participants were provided with unambiguous information about the manager's behavior, thus reducing the overall ambiguity in the information participants received about the incident.

Overall Justice Perceptions. I used the same six-item scale used in Studies 1 and 2. The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .96.

Perceived Claim Credibility. I adapted the five-item scale used in Study 3 to match the study context (e.g., "Would you believe Pat's version of the event?"). The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .98.

Anger. I adapted the four-item scale used in Study 3 to match the study context. Following the stem, "Larry's actions toward Pat would make me feel...", participants rated the items "angry," "pissed off," "mad," and "enraged." The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .94.

Intentions to Punish the Accused. I used the same four-item scale used in Study 2. A sample item is "The manager should be reprimanded for the way he treated Pat." The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .90.

Intentions to Support the Claimant. I adapted the four-item scale used in Study 3 to match the study context. Example items include "I would show my support for Pat" and "I would make it clear that I am on Pat's side." The Cronbach's alpha reliability was .93.

Analysis Plan

I conducted CFAs to test the proposed measurement model following the steps used in Study 3; I used FIML given that there were missing item scores. I tested my hypotheses using SEM. As was done in Study 3, I used observed variables (i.e., aggregate of item scores) rather than latent variables. To facilitate the interpretation of main effects in the presence of interactions, the information ambiguity manipulation was operationalized using effect coding (low = -1, high = 1) and overall justice was centered at the mean. I tested the proposed structural model by specifying the same paths as in Study 3, as well as a main effect of the ambiguity manipulations and the overall justice perceptions \times ambiguity interaction term as predictors of

perceived claim credibility. The interaction term was allowed to covary with ambiguity and overall justice perceptions because they are the constituent parts of the interaction term. I then probed the interaction via simple slopes analyses. I computed indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused and intentions to support the claimant at low and high ambiguity conditions using the simple slopes. Indirect effects were computed and tested for statistical significance using the same method as in Study 3.

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

CFA results are presented in Table 3. The proposed measurement model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 976.82$, $df = 220$, $p < .001$, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .09, SRMR = .04) and the fit was better than the alternative models.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 shows scale means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the study variables. Interestingly, overall justice was not significantly correlated to perceived claim credibility. However, recall that I expected the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility to be weakened in the low ambiguity condition relative to the high ambiguity condition. It is possible that the ambiguity manipulation weakened the average effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility across the two conditions. I report the results of the formal hypothesis tests below.

Hypothesis Tests

The proposed structural model fit the data reasonably well ($\chi^2 = 76.56$, $df = 12$, $p < .001$, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .07). Figure 4 shows the results. Contrary to Hypothesis 1, overall justice perceptions were not significantly related to perceived claim credibility ($b = -.07$,

$SE = .05, p = .147$). As noted in the previous section, it is possible that the average effect of overall justice was weak in this study because half of the participants received unambiguous information about the unfair incident. In line with Hypothesis 2, perceived claim credibility was positively related to anger ($b = .36, SE = .05, p < .001$). Supporting Hypotheses 3a and 3b, anger was in turn positively related to intentions to punish the accused ($b = .66, SE = .04, p < .001$) and intentions to support the claimant ($b = .41, SE = .03, p < .001$). Given that the main effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was not significant, Hypotheses 4a and 4b were not supported.

Hypothesis 5 stated that ambiguity would moderate the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility. Specifically, I expected that the negative effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility would be weaker in the low ambiguity condition relative to the high ambiguity condition. The overall justice \times ambiguity interaction was not statistically significant by traditional conventions ($b = -.09, SE = .05, p = .067$). However, tests of interactions in which the moderator attenuates an effect (as in the current study) are often low-powered (Blake & Gangestad, 2020) and Hypothesis 5 was a directional prediction, such that the observed effect is significant if a one-tailed test is used. Thus, I probed this interaction effect via simple slopes analyses to examine whether the pattern of results approximated my predictions.

Consistent with Hypothesis 5, the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility was negative and significant in the high ambiguity condition ($b = -.15, SE = .07, p = .029$), whereas this relationship was non-significant in the low ambiguity condition ($b = .02, SE = .06, p = .775$). The interaction plot is shown in Figure 5. Table 5 shows the conditional indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant. In line with Hypotheses 6a and 6b, the indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the

accused and intentions to support the claimant were negative and significant in the high ambiguity condition, but non-significant in the low ambiguity condition. However, the indirect effects were not significantly different between conditions. Thus, Study 4 provided partial support for Hypotheses 5, 6a, and 6b.

Auxiliary Analyses

As in Studies 2 and 3, I examined whether the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remains when controlling for organizational identification. In Part 1, participants responded to the same six-item measure of organizational identification used in Study 2 ($\alpha = .91$). As expected, organizational identification was significantly positively correlated with overall justice ($r = .50, p < .001$). However, it was not significantly correlated with perceived claim credibility ($r = -.02, p = .662$).¹⁰

Like Study 3, I tested the proposed structural model again, but added organizational identification as a predictor of perceived claim credibility. I also included organizational identification \times ambiguity interaction term as a predictor. I did so because it is plausible that more identified employees dismiss claims of unfairness to a larger extent than less identified employees when it is easy to do so—such as when the situation is open to interpretation. Overall justice and organizational identification were centered at the mean and ambiguity was effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). The structural model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 244.35, df = 22, p < .001, CFI = .75, RMSEA = .16, SRMR = .10$). I proceeded to examine the results without modifying the model, because the purpose of this analysis was to examine the impact of adding organizational identification to the hypothesized model.

As shown in Figure 6, organizational identification was not significantly related to

¹⁰ I present the full correlation matrix along with the mean and standard deviations in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 4: Organizational Identification).

perceived claim credibility ($b = -.01, SE = .05, p = .813$) and the organizational identification \times ambiguity interaction term was not significant ($b = .03, SE = .04, p = .528$). Moreover, the rest of the results were virtually unchanged relative to the results from the proposed model. One exception is that the overall justice \times ambiguity interaction was now statistically significant ($b = -.10, SE = .05, p = .030$). However, I caution against interpreting this change in p -value as a meaningful one, because this model was not hypothesized, and adding organizational identification in fact provided poor fit to the data. In summary, I found little evidence that organizational identification operates similarly to overall justice or that it accounts for the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility.

Discussion

In Study 4, I replicated the findings of Studies 1 through 3. First, I replicated the effects of perceived claim credibility on individuals' reactions to an organizational member's claim of unfairness, such that the more individuals perceived the claim to be credible, the stronger their reactions. Second, although the main effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was not significant in Study 4, I found a significant simple effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility in the high ambiguity condition, in which participants only read the claim. This result is consistent with Studies 1 through 3; recall that in those studies, participants only read the claim as well and overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility. Finally, auxiliary analyses showed that the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was again not accounted for by organizational identification.

Study 4 also extended the findings from Studies 1 through 3. Importantly, I found partial support for the notion that ambiguity is responsible for the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. Specifically, the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was

diminished in the low ambiguity condition, in which the claim was accompanied by unambiguous information about the unfair incident. Thus, Study 4 supports my argument that individuals rely on their overall justice perceptions to make up for the ambiguity that is often present in claims. However, the overall justice \times ambiguity interaction was not statistically significant by conventional standards. Thus, it is important to replicate my findings before drawing firm conclusions. I conducted Study 5 to ensure that the pattern of results found in Study 4 are replicable.

Moreover, Study 4 has several limitations, which I address in Study 5. For one, it is possible that the ambiguity manipulation was not highly effective for some participants in Study 4. Specifically, some participants in the low ambiguity condition might not have thought that reading the manager's email reduced the overall ambiguity in the information they received about the incident. This is because, given that the entire scenario was hypothetical, some participants may not have understood that the email was meant to simulate a situation in which a co-worker shows them the verbatim email that was written by a manager. Moreover, other aspects of Pat's claim (e.g., that Pat applied for a promotion) were never corroborated by other sources of information, which means that the claim overall might still have appeared ambiguous from the participants' perspective. Thus, in Study 5, I added details to the vignette used in the low ambiguity condition to emphasize that the manager's email verifies Pat's claim and that other sources of information (e.g., an announcement) matches several aspects of Pat's claim (e.g., the promotion decision).

Another limitation of Study 4, which is also present across Studies 1 through 3, is that overall justice was measured and not manipulated. The implication is that I cannot draw strong causal conclusions regarding the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility, as there

may be other plausible explanations for this relationship. For instance, perhaps some individuals are more likely than others to perceive both their organization and the incident as relatively fair (e.g., Colquitt et al., 2018). Thus, the claim that the incident was “unfair” might seem less credible to some individuals relative to others, which could have exaggerated the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility. Randomized experiments are useful for ruling out such alternative explanations and for drawing causal inferences (Shadish et al., 2002). Thus, in Study 5, I manipulated overall justice in addition to information ambiguity.

Study 5

I conducted a between-subjects experiment in which I manipulated overall justice and information ambiguity. I tested the model depicted in Figure 1 (i.e., Hypotheses 1 through 6). The hypotheses, design, sampling plan, measured variables, and a brief analytic plan for Study 5 were preregistered prior to data collection on OSF (<https://osf.io/tmh9a>).

Method

Participants and Procedure

Eligibility and Data Screening. Participants were recruited and screened for eligibility using the same procedure as Study 4. Eligible individuals were invited to participate in a two-part study. Of the participants ($N = 570$) who completed Part 1, 427 participants completed Part 2. I removed data from participants ($n = 3$) who incorrectly answered one or more of two attention checks. I included the same comprehension check question as Study 4 to verify participants' understanding of the vignette used to manipulate ambiguity. Data from participants ($n = 30$) who answered this question incorrectly were removed. One participant did not complete two focal scales, but their data were retained for analyses. The final sample ($N = 394$) was 50.76% women, 48.48% men, and 74.87% identified as White, 8.12% as Black, and 5.84% as Asian. Participants were 39.68 years old on average ($SD = 11.43$), worked 41.57 hours per week on average ($SD = 6.82$), and have worked at their current organization for 6.78 years on average ($SD = 6.28$). Participants were employed in various industries, including education (13.96%), health care (11.68%), and manufacturing (11.17%).

Focal Study. Participants completed two surveys. Part 1 included a demographics

questionnaire.¹¹ Approximately 24 hours after completing Part 1, participants were invited to Part 2. Part 2 was a 2 × 2 between-subjects experiment manipulating overall justice (low vs. high) and information ambiguity (low vs. high). Participants completed the overall justice manipulation and then read a vignette in which I manipulated ambiguity (see Manipulations and Measures below). Like Study 4, the vignette contained a claim by a co-worker named Pat. Participants completed measures of perceived claim credibility, anger toward the accused, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant. Upon completing the study, participants were thanked and debriefed. Participants received \$0.50 (USD) per survey.

Manipulations and Measures

Overall Justice Manipulation. Participants were randomly assigned to either a low or high overall justice condition. Prior to reading the claim of unfairness, participants were asked to think about their current organization. Participants in the low overall justice condition were asked to list two to three ways in which their organization is unfair, whereas participants in the high overall justice condition were asked to list two to three ways in which their organization is fair (see Appendix D for instructions).

The overall justice manipulation was validated in an independent sample of full-time employees ($N = 147$) recruited via MTurk. The validation study was preregistered on OSF (<https://osf.io/6sweu>). Participants were randomly assigned to the low or high overall justice condition, completed the manipulation task, and responded to Ambrose and Schminke's (2009) overall justice perceptions scale. The validation study showed that participants in the high overall justice condition ($Mean = 5.60, SD = 1.17$) perceived their organization as significantly fairer

¹¹ In line with Studies 1-4, a measure of overall justice perceptions was also included in Part 1, but this measure is not considered in the main text of the dissertation because overall justice was manipulated in Part 2. As detailed in the Supplemental Materials, including the measured overall justice perceptions variable in my focal analyses did not substantively affect the results (see Appendix A, Study 5: Baseline Overall Justice).

than participants in the low overall justice condition ($Mean = 3.84, SD = 1.32$), $t(145) = 8.58, p < .001, d = 1.43$. Further details of this validation study are reported in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 5: Overall Justice Manipulation Validation Study).

Information Ambiguity Manipulation. In the focal study, participants were randomly assigned to either a low or high ambiguity condition. Participants were asked to imagine having a conversation with a co-worker named Pat at their organization. Participants read the same claim as in Study 4. Like Study 4, participants in the high ambiguity condition only read Pat's claim about an email from Larry (the manager), whereas participants in the low ambiguity condition additionally read Larry's verbatim email. As noted earlier, I sought to bolster the low ambiguity condition in Study 5; thus, I added some background information that matched the claim and included statements to remind participants that the email verifies Pat's claim. The vignette used in the high ambiguity condition was identical to Study 4 (see Appendix C for the vignettes).

I validated the ambiguity manipulation with an independent sample of full-time employees ($N = 213$) recruited via MTurk. This validation study was also preregistered on OSF (<https://osf.io/mgubz>). Participants were randomly assigned to read one of the two vignettes (low ambiguity or high ambiguity) and rated the degree to which the claim was ambiguous using five items ($\alpha = .94$) that I developed for this study (e.g., "What exactly happened between Pat and Larry is not clear to me at all"). Participants in the low ambiguity condition viewed the claim as significantly less ambiguous ($Mean = 2.86, SD = 1.46$) than participants in the high ambiguity condition ($Mean = 5.32, SD = 1.15$), $t(210.37) = -13.76, p < .001, d = -1.86$. Additional details of this validation study are reported in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 5: Information Ambiguity Manipulation Validation Study).

Measures. I used the same scales as in Study 4 to measure perceived claim credibility (α

= .98), anger ($\alpha = .95$), intentions to punish the accused ($\alpha = .91$), and intentions to support the claimant ($\alpha = .91$).

Analysis Plan

I first tested my proposed measurement model via CFAs. Given that there were missing data, I used FIML estimation. I tested the fit of a measurement model with four factors, with the items from the four measures—perceived claim credibility, anger, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant—loaded on their respective factors. I then compared this model against three alternative models: (1) a three-factor model in which items for intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant loaded on the same factor, (2) a two-factor model in which items for anger, intentions to punish the accused, and intentions to support the claimant loaded on the same factor, and (3) a one-factor model in which all items loaded on one factor.

I next tested my hypotheses via SEM using observed variables and FIML estimation. Overall justice and ambiguity manipulations were effect coded (low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1; low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). I specified the same paths as in Study 4 to test the proposed structural model. Overall justice \times ambiguity interaction was probed via simple slopes analyses, and indirect effects were computed and tested using the same methods as in Study 4.

Results

Confirmatory Factor Analyses

Table 6 shows the results from CFAs. The proposed measurement model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 676.71$, $df = 113$, $p < .001$, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .05) and the fit was better than the alternative models.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 7 shows means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations among the variables. Overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility and perceived claim credibility was positively related to anger. Moreover, anger was positively related to intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant. These results provide initial support for my hypotheses.

Hypothesis Tests

The proposed structural model did not fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 96.26$, $df = 11$, $p < .001$, CFI = .89, RMSEA = .14, SRMR = .08). Thus, I modified the model by adding paths from perceived claim credibility to intentions to punish the accused and intentions to support the claimant. This modification improved the model fit ($\chi^2 = 17.33$, $df = 9$, $p < .05$, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .05, SRMR = .03).¹² Results are shown in Figure 7. Supporting Hypotheses 1 and 2, overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility ($b = -.29$, $SE = .07$, $p < .001$) and perceived claim credibility was positively related to anger ($b = .50$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$). In line with Hypotheses 3a and 3b, anger was in turn positively related to intentions to punish the accused ($b = .49$, $SE = .04$, $p < .001$) and intentions to support the claimant ($b = .29$, $SE = .03$, $p < .001$). Supporting Hypotheses 4a and 4b, there were significant negative indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused (indirect effect = $-.071$; 95% CI = -0.113 , $-.040$) and intentions to support the claimant (indirect effect = $-.042$; 95% CI = $-.070$, $-.022$) via perceived claim credibility and anger.

Supporting Hypothesis 5, ambiguity manipulation significantly moderated the

¹² I report the results from the test of the proposed model prior to the modification in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 5: Proposed Model Results). The conclusions based on the regression coefficients do not substantively differ from those reported in the main text of the dissertation.

relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility ($b = -.23, SE = .07, p < .001$). Simple slopes analyses showed that, as expected, the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was negative and significant in the high ambiguity condition ($b = -.52, SE = .10, p < .001$), but non-significant in the low ambiguity condition ($b = -.06, SE = .09, p = .488$). The interaction plot is shown in Figure 8. Conditional indirect effects are reported in Table 8. Consistent with Hypotheses 6a and 6b, the negative indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused and intentions to support the claimant were significant in the high ambiguity condition but not in the low ambiguity condition. Moreover, the indirect effects were significantly stronger in the high ambiguity condition than in the low ambiguity condition.

Auxiliary Analyses

Like Studies 2 through 4, I tested whether the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remains after controlling for organizational identification. I measured organizational identification in Part 1 using the same six-item scale used in Studies 2 and 4 ($\alpha = .88$). Organizational identification was not significantly correlated with any of the key variables, which suggests that it is unlikely to impact my results.¹³

For completeness, I tested the structural model again by including organizational identification and organizational identification \times ambiguity interaction term as predictors of perceived claim credibility. Organizational identification was centered at the mean. Ambiguity and overall justice manipulations were effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1; low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1). The structural model provided a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 21.71, df = 15, p = .116, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .03, SRMR = .02$). As shown in Figure 9, organizational identification was not significantly related to perceived claim credibility ($b = -$

¹³ The full correlation matrix along with the mean and standard deviations can be found in the Supplemental Materials (Appendix A, Study 5: Organizational Identification).

.06, $SE = .05$, $p = .223$), and organizational identification \times ambiguity interaction was not significant ($b = -.02$, $SE = .05$, $p = .734$). Moreover, the focal results did not substantively change. Thus, overall justice has a unique effect on perceived claim credibility that is not accounted for by organizational identification.

Discussion

Study 5 provides strong support for my hypotheses. First, I replicated the negative effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility as well as the downstream effects of perceived claim credibility on employees' reactions to a claim of unfairness. Second, ambiguity significantly moderated the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility, replicating the pattern of results found in Study 4. Third, because overall justice and ambiguity were experimentally manipulated in Study 5, the results provide strong support for the causal effects of overall justice and ambiguity on perceived claim credibility. Finally, as in the other studies, auxiliary analyses showed that the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remained after controlling for organizational identification. Thus, overall justice had a unique effect on perceived claim credibility that was not accounted for by organizational identification.

General Discussion

Employees often hear their co-workers claiming to have experienced unfairness, yet prior research has overlooked how third parties react to mere claims of unfairness. In my dissertation, I drew on fairness heuristic theory and the deontic model of justice to understand third party reactions to claims of unfairness. I found that third parties' overall justice perceptions were negatively related to their perceptions of claim credibility. Moreover, perceived claim credibility was positively associated with anger toward the person accused of injustice. In turn, anger increased third parties' intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant. Finally, I tested my assumption that ambiguity is responsible for the effect of overall justice on perceptions of claim credibility. Consistent with my assumption, I found that unambiguous information about the incident weakened the influence of overall justice on perceived claim credibility.

My research has several theoretical implications and generates interesting directions for future research. In the next section, I highlight the implications and directions for future research on three topics. In the first subsection, I discuss the implications and future directions for research on third party reactions to claims of unfairness. Specifically, I suggest that my research generates new research directions regarding (a) the integration of the deontic model of justice and fairness heuristic theory, (b) the distinction between claims of unfairness and witnessed incidents, and (c) emotions other than anger as third party reactions to claims of unfairness. In the second subsection, I discuss the implications for research on how employees share fairness-related information among themselves. I argue that future research that examines recipient's perceived credibility of such information may reveal (a) why certain information sources (e.g., friends) are preferred over others and (b) how employees try to make sense of unfair incidents. In the third subsection, I suggest that my research builds on prior works on the undesirable effects

of employee justice perceptions in several ways: (a) My research suggests that undesirable effects of employee justice perceptions might occur in a wide range of domains and might actually be widespread. In addition, (b) my research generates new questions on how overall justice and organizational identification independently, or jointly, create undesirable effects.

Theoretical Implications and Future Directions

Third Party Reactions to Claims of Unfairness

The deontic model of justice (Folger et al., 2005; Folger & Glerum, 2015) and research on third party reactions to injustice (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017; Priesemuth & Schminke, 2019) suggest that third parties respond to injustice with anger and desire to punish perpetrators. However, the empirical work to date has focused on situations in which third parties have relatively unambiguous information about unfairness, such as when they directly witnessed an unfair incident. I suggested that third parties often encounter ambiguous situations, such as when they merely hear a co-worker claiming to have experienced unfairness. I further suggested that, to compensate for ambiguity, third parties rely on their perceptions of their organization's overall fairness when judging the credibility of a claim of unfairness. Consequently, their overall justice perceptions can reduce their reactions toward the incident. These findings build upon prior research on third party reactions to injustice in at least three ways, which I discuss next.

Integration of the Deontic Model of Justice and Fairness Heuristic Theory. First, by illuminating the key role of ambiguity of information about unfair incidents, I demonstrate the utility of integrating two organizational justice theories that are often studied separately.

Whereas the deontic model of justice (Folger, 2001; Folger & Glerum, 2015) does not account for how third parties react to ambiguous situations, fairness heuristic theory (Lind, 2001; Proudfoot & Lind, 2015) helps to explain the role that information ambiguity plays in how

individuals react to fairness-related situations. In line with fairness heuristic theory, I found that third parties' overall justice perceptions colored their perceptions of claim credibility. However, to the extent that third parties believed the claim, they reacted in a way that is consistent with the deontic model: They were angry and were motivated to restore justice. Thus, by drawing on fairness heuristic theory, I was able to build upon the deontic model of justice and show when and why third parties are unlikely to react to injustice with anger and hostility.

There are also interesting implications of integrating the deontic model of justice and fairness heuristic theory for future research. In particular, doing so might contribute to a better understanding of when and why third parties' perceptions of *others' unfair experiences* can change third parties' *own overall justice perceptions*. Specifically, fairness heuristic theory suggests that in certain situations, employees stop relying on—and begin to revise—their global impressions of their organization's fairness (Lind & van den Bos, 2002; Tost & Lind, 2010). Indeed, empirical research has found that employees' global impressions of their organization's fairness can change over time (Holtz & Harold, 2009; Soenen et al., 2017). However, research has largely focused on how employees' *own* fairness-related experiences change their own global fairness perceptions. The possibility that other people's fairness-related experiences can change employees' global impressions of their organization's fairness has received little research attention (for a theoretical discussion, see Jones & Skarlicki, 2013; Tost & Lind, 2010). Perhaps the more employees believe their co-workers' claims of injustice and react against the incident, the more likely that employees' global impressions of their organization's fairness change as a result. Examining this possibility in future research will contribute to a better understanding of when and why third parties' fairness perceptions are affected by other people's unfair experiences.

Differences Between Claims and Witnessed Incidents. Second, I differentiated between claims and witnessed incidents, arguing that the ambiguous nature of claims is important to understand third party reactions to claims of unfairness. Future research that further examines the differences between claims and witnessed incidents will likely be fruitful. Whereas my research focused on the ambiguous nature of claims, ambiguity might not be the only feature of claims that matters. For instance, merely hearing about an incident can mean that third parties are temporally and physically more distant from the incident, relative to when they witness it in real-time. Research on the effects of distance on individuals' cognition suggests that global impressions are more salient when individuals are more distant from an event than when they are closer to it (Liberman & Trope, 2008; Trope & Liberman, 2010). Thus, distance from the unfair incident might be another reason employees' global impressions of their organization's fairness influenced their reactions to claims of unfairness.

Moreover, when third parties merely hear a claim of unfairness rather than witness the incident, their reactions might be susceptible to *competing* narratives. For example, in addition to the claimant, employees can hear about the incident from the accused, who might not necessarily feel that they acted unfairly (Whiteside & Barclay, 2015). In such situations, the accused might provide an account of the incident that conflicts that of the claimant. Research in cognitive psychology suggests that exposure to conflicting information increases individuals' perceptions of ambiguity, relative to having limited but consistent information (e.g., Brenner et al., 1996). Thus, whereas information that corroborates the claimant's story can reduce ambiguity in the claim, hearing a competing account might enhance ambiguity. However, competing accounts might only have a small impact on third parties' perceptions of ambiguity when third parties

have witnessed the incident directly. Future research can examine these different scenarios to clarify when and why claims appear ambiguous to third parties.

Emotions Other than Anger. Third, when third parties merely hear a claim, their motivation to restore justice might not only be driven by anger. One unexpected finding in my studies was that perceived claim credibility had direct effects on intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant, in addition to the indirect paths via anger. Thus, whereas the deontic model of justice suggests that third party anger is the key emotional reaction to injustice, third party reactions to claims might be more varied. For example, when third parties did not witness the incident but are listening to the claimant's story, their attention might be focused on the claimant, rather than the accused, such that the more third parties believe the claim, the more they feel empathetic toward the claimant. Empathy, in turn, has been shown to increase supportive behaviors toward victims of mistreatment (e.g., Hershcovis & Bhatnagar, 2017). Future research can test this possibility by examining different emotions, including anger and empathy, as third party reactions to claims of unfairness.

Perceived Credibility and Sharing of Fairness-Related Information Among Employees

My research also suggests that employees do not always believe fairness-related information that is conveyed by their co-workers and that employees' perceptions that the information is credible affect their reactions to that information. As noted throughout the dissertation, research on third party reactions to injustice rarely examines how third parties respond to a victim's account of injustice. However, there is a separate body of work on "social information" that examines how employees share fairness-related information with each other (Degoey, 2000; Masterson & Tong, 2015; Roberson & Colquitt, 2005). For example, research has examined from whom employees receive fairness-related information and whose information

is more likely to influence employees' own fairness perceptions. However, the degree to which recipients perceive the information to be credible has been largely overlooked. The idea that perceived credibility of fairness-related information determines employees' reactions to that information has several implications for research on social information, which I discuss below.

Perceived Credibility of Information from Different Sources. First, perceived credibility of information might explain why employees accept fairness-related information from certain colleagues but not others. For example, research has found that co-workers with closer ties (e.g., friendship) are more willing to share information about unfair incidents with each other (Chia et al., 2006) and have more similar fairness perceptions with one another (Lamertz, 2002; Umphress et al., 2003) than co-workers who are less close. Moreover, employees report that they would accept information about unfair incidents from co-workers who are well-connected than co-workers with less connections (Fang & Shaw, 2009). It is possible that employees discriminate sources of information as a function of the degree to which information from the source appears credible to them; information conveyed by friends and well-connected co-workers might be perceived as particularly reliable and truthful. Thus, future research can examine recipients' perceptions of information credibility to illuminate why certain information sources are preferred over others.

Perceived Credibility of Information and Sense-Making Processes. Second, employees' perceived credibility of the claim could evolve as they try to make sense of the unfair incident. My research focused on situations in which third parties passively receive fairness-related information from a co-worker. However, prior research on social information processes suggests that third parties are likely to seek out (Bell & Main, 2011; Chia et al., 2006; Fang & Shaw, 2009) and discuss such information with others to make sense of the situation as well

(Roberson, 2006). Thus, it is plausible that although third parties are initially skeptical toward claims of unfairness, they are nevertheless motivated to obtain information about the incident *until* they feel that they have an accurate understanding of it. Moreover, some employees are more motivated to engage in deliberate thinking and information search than others (Frederick, 2005; Kruglanski & Webster, 1996), such that they are more likely to continue to evaluate the credibility of the claim beyond their initial reactions (Pennycook & Rand, 2019). Future research can examine why and how employees' perceived credibility of a claim changes as they engage in sense-making processes, as well as individual differences that influence those changes.

Undesirable Effects of Employee Justice Perceptions

To date, organizational justice research has mostly focused on desirable effects of employees' justice perceptions. For example, employees' justice perceptions are positively associated with their job satisfaction, task performance, and affective commitment (for meta-analytic reviews, see Colquitt et al., 2013; Colquitt et al., 2001; Rupp et al., 2014). In contrast, I demonstrated that employees' justice perceptions can be detrimental, given that overall justice perceptions reduced employees' support toward a co-worker claiming to have experienced injustice. Although some research in the late 1990s and early 2000s examined adverse effects of employee justice perceptions (e.g., Brockner et al., 2009; Gilliland, 1994; Holmvall & Bobocel, 2008; Janssen et al. 2010; Khan et al., 2014; Schroth & Pradhan Shah, 2000; van den Bos et al., 1999), research on this topic has stagnated in recent years (Bobocel, 2021; Rupp et al., 2017). Moreover, as I expand below, my findings reveal novel future directions for research on undesirable effects of employee justice perceptions.

Expanding The Scope of Undesirable Effects of Employee Justice Perceptions. Prior research on undesirable effects of employee justice perceptions has mostly focused on how

employees can feel worse about themselves (e.g., lower self-esteem) when they receive an unfavorable outcome through a fair process. This is because when employees receive an outcome via a fair (rather than unfair) decision process, they are more likely to attribute the cause of the negative outcome to something about themselves, such as their lack of ability (van den Bos et al., 1999). Whereas this line of research is important, it has focused specifically on employees' *procedural* justice perceptions and on how procedural justice can influence their own feelings of self-regard. My research extends the scope of the ways in which employees' justice perceptions can have undesirable effects by suggesting that employees' *global* impressions of their organization's fairness may have detrimental effects on their *co-workers*. These extensions have several implications.

First, the detrimental effects of employees' overall justice perceptions might be more wide-ranging than the effects of their procedural justice perceptions. Employees' procedural justice perceptions refer to their evaluations of the degree to which certain rules reflecting appropriate procedures have been upheld, such as whether decisions were made consistently and without bias (Leventhal, 1980). In contrast, employees' overall justice perceptions reflect their holistic evaluations of appropriateness of their organization's conduct (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Colquitt & Zapata, 2015; Goldman & Cropanzano, 2015). As suggested by fairness heuristic theory, employees might rely on their global impressions of their organization's fairness to a larger extent than their evaluations on specific justice rules to inform their judgments and decisions (Le & Pan, 2021). Thus, employees' overall justice perceptions may influence their thoughts and behaviors in a wider range of domains compared to their procedural justice perceptions (Rupp et al., 2014).

Relatedly, my research suggests that employees' justice perceptions may have detrimental effects on their *co-workers* and not just themselves. This means that undesirable effects of employee justice perceptions might actually be widespread. Given that working with other people is an important part of both in-person and remote work (Wu et al., 2021), most employees are likely to have some influence on their co-workers. Moreover, the impact that employees have on their co-workers is not necessarily small. In a meta-analytic review of positive and negative co-worker interactions, Chiaburu and Harrison (2008) found that co-workers' influences on one another (e.g., support) were as large as, and sometimes larger than, the influences that their leaders have on the employees' work attitudes. Future research is needed to understand the range of ways in which employee justice perceptions can be detrimental and to determine the size of such effects.

Undesirable Effects of Employees Justice Perceptions That Are Not Accounted for By Organizational Identification. Independent from prior work on the undesirable effects of employee justice perceptions, recent research has examined the “dark sides” of organizational identification (Conroy et al., 2017). However, examining the effects of employees' justice perceptions and organizational identification separately might be problematic, given that they may have similar effects on employees' interpretations of fairness-related situations. In my research, I found the negative effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility more consistently than the negative effect of organizational identification on perceived claim credibility. Moreover, overall justice often uniquely predicted perceived claim credibility when accounting for organizational identification. These results raise several possibilities to test in future research.

First, it is possible that even if organizational identification affects perceived claim credibility in some situations, its mechanism may be relatively independent from how overall justice affects perceived claim credibility. For example, as I have argued, overall justice may affect perceived claim credibility because employees judge whether the unfair incident that the claimant describes seems consistent with their own perceptions of their organization. In contrast, organizational identification might affect employees' interpretations of a claim because the more employees identify with their organization, the more they feel threatened by information that paints their organization in a negative light, which leads them to react defensively (Conroy et al., 2017).

Second, it is possible that employees' justice perceptions and organizational identification are interrelated in more complex ways; indeed, prior studies suggest that employees' justice perceptions are antecedent to organizational identification (Arnéguy et al., 2018; De Roeck et al., 2014; Soenen & Melkonian, 2017) yet other studies have found that identification moderates the effects of employees' justice perceptions on their attitudes (Sguera et al., 2022). Thus, more research is needed to clarify how employees' justice perceptions and organizational identification might independently, or jointly, produce undesirable effects.

Practical Implications

In addition to the theoretical implications that I highlighted above, my research has several practical implications for organizations and employees. First, the findings that employees' fairness perceptions can "backfire" might be alarming for organizational leaders. To be clear, I am not recommending that organizations should stop striving to increase employees' overall justice perceptions by ensuring that decision-making procedures are fair, that resources are allocated equitably, and that employees are treated with respect and dignity (Ambrose &

Schminke, 2009; Colquitt & Zipay, 2015). Clearly, employees' holistic fairness perceptions benefit organizations and employees (Ambrose et al., 2015; Colquitt & Zipay, 2015) and organizations have an ethical responsibility to treat their members fairly (Fortin & Fellenz, 2008). However, I suggest that even if employees perceive the organization to be fair, organizational leaders need to remain vigilant about identifying and resolving instances of injustice. For example, victims might not report unfair incidents to proper authorities (e.g., human resource department) because their peers did not believe their claims. Indeed, feeling that others would not believe them (Lonsway & Archambault, 2020) and that the issue would not be addressed (Brinsfield, 2013) are common reasons that victims remain silent. Thus, assessing when and why employees remain silent about unfair incidents (Brinsfield, 2013) may be a step toward identifying whether this is a concern at one's organization.

Second, my research suggests that employees who hear a claim of unfairness may need to be aware of how their own impressions of their organization's fairness can affect their reactions to the claim. Specifically, employees who perceive their organization to be fair may need to resist dismissing claims of unfairness, given that lack of peer support can be detrimental to victims of injustice (Afifi et al., 2013; Jones & Wirtz, 2006; Lonsway & Archambault, 2020). That said, employees who perceive the organization to be unfair might not be "correct" in believing a mere claim of unfairness, either. Compared to employees who perceived their organization to be fair, those who perceived their organization to be less fair were more willing to believe the claim and punish the accused in the absence of clear evidence. Either way, my research suggests that employees may need to consciously reduce the influence of their own overall justice perceptions on their judgments of a claim.

To do so, my results suggest that obtaining unambiguous information about the incident can be helpful. Unfortunately, such information is often unavailable (e.g., because the incident occurred unexpectedly). In the absence of unambiguous information, preventing one's preconceptions from influencing one's judgments is likely to be quite difficult (Lilienfeld et al., 2009). However, research on confirmation bias suggests that considering alternatives or opposites to one's judgments can help reduce the tendency to dismiss information that contradicts one's beliefs and to favor information that validates those beliefs (e.g., Anderson & Sechler, 1986; Hirt & Markman, 1995; Hoch, 1985; Koriat et al., 1980). Thus, when evaluating a claim of unfairness, employees who perceive their organization to be fair might benefit from considering plausible scenarios regarding how the unfair incident could have indeed occurred. Similarly, employees who perceive their organization to be unfair can consider the possibility that there is a reasonable explanation for the actions taken by the accused (e.g., a misunderstanding).

Finally, if victims of injustice wish to garner peer support, my research points to several ways they can do so. For one, the more that claimants can provide unambiguous information about the incident (e.g., a record of the incident), the better are their chances of receiving peer support. However, as stated above, unambiguous information is often unavailable. As an alternative strategy, results from Study 5 suggests that asking third parties to generate examples of how their organization is unfair might be sufficient to increase their support of the claimant. Thus, given that most employees are likely to be able to identify some aspects of their organization that are unfair, claimants can ask their peers to share those views prior to discussing the focal incident. Similar strategies in which individuals are first led to acknowledge a position that is consistent with a claim have been found to reduce the influence of their beliefs on their

evaluations of the claim (e.g., Gehlbach et al., 2019). However, it is unclear how to execute this strategy in a natural setting (e.g., during a conversation) and whether doing so would be effective and without inadvertent negative consequences (e.g., upsetting the peers).

Strengths and Limitations

Implications of my research must be considered alongside its strengths and limitations. First, one limitation is that participants were asked to respond to a written vignette about a person with whom they did not have a prior relationship, instead of directly hearing a colleague describe an unfair experience. When employees hear a claim of unfairness, various factors are likely to influence their perceptions of claim credibility, such as the quality of their relationship with the claimant (Jones & Skarlicki, 2013) and the claimant's demeanor when recounting the incident (Van Doorn & Koster, 2019). Given that these factors were not present in my studies, the observed effect of overall justice perceptions on participants' reactions could have been inflated.

However, using vignettes provided several methodological strengths. For one, vignettes allowed me to directly manipulate the ambiguity of information that participants received in Studies 4 and 5. Doing so provided support for my theoretical arguments and allowed me to draw strong causal inferences regarding the role of information ambiguity (Shadish et al., 2002). Moreover, I was able to vary the type of injustice described by the claimant across studies. For example, the claim was about an unfair promotion procedure in Study 1 and a violation of intellectual property rights in Study 3. I found consistent results across studies, which suggests that the findings are generalizable across various types of injustice. Finally, presenting participants with a vignette prevented the claim itself from affecting participants' overall justice perceptions. For instance, if I had asked participants to recall a claim they had heard, it would

have been difficult to determine whether their overall justice perceptions had changed as a result of hearing the claim. Of course, it is conceivable to measure overall justice and then wait until participants hear a claim of unfairness. However, such a study is resource-intensive, because only a subset of the sample will hear a claim within a reasonable timeframe.

A second limitation that runs across my studies is that I largely relied on self-reported correlational data, which can raise concerns about inflated effect sizes and causality. Regarding the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility, I aimed to mitigate common method variance by separating measures in time (Podsakoff et al., 2003). In Studies 1, 2, and 4, overall justice perceptions were measured at least a day prior to the rest of the key variables. Nevertheless, given that the data were correlational, inferring causality remains an issue; it is possible that the observed relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility was due to a third variable. I addressed this limitation in several ways.

In Study 3, I addressed the possibility that objective levels of justice at participants' organizations could have affected both overall justice and perceived claim credibility. Employees from a fair organization could have perceived the claim to be less credible than employees from an unfair organization, not because they relied on their overall justice perceptions to interpret the claim, but because an unfair incident is truly unlikely to occur at a fair organization. In Study 3, I recruited participants from a single organization, which controlled for variability in objective levels of justice. Even when participants belonged to the same organization, overall justice perceptions negatively affected perceived claim credibility, which supports the idea that individuals are using their overall justice perceptions to interpret the claim.

In Study 5, I further aimed to exclude alternative explanations for the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. For instance, it was possible that individual differences,

such as participants' tendencies to perceive events and organizations as fair (Colquitt et al., 2018), could explain the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility. Thus, I manipulated overall justice and found strong support for the causal effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. Consequently, the set of studies suggests that the observed relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility was neither unduly inflated nor spurious.

However, my studies cannot rule out alternate causal directions for the effect of perceived claim credibility on anger, and the effects of anger on intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant. Perceived claim credibility, anger, and intentions were always measured in one sitting. I expected perceived claim credibility to influence anger because anger toward the accused presupposes that the injustice described by the claimant occurred; there is little reason to be angry at the accused if the incident did not happen. Moreover, prior research in criminal justice supports this prediction (e.g., Bright & Goodman-Delahunty, 2006; Golding, Lynch, et al., 2015). However, it is also plausible that third parties gauged the credibility of the claim based on how angry they felt upon reading it. Indeed, emotions have pervasive effects on people's judgments and decision making (Greifeneder et al., 2011; Horberg et al., 2011; Lerner et al., 2015). Thus, although I have strong conceptual and empirical reasons to expect perceived claim credibility to affect anger, the reverse might also occur. Further research is needed to clarify the causal relationship between perceived claim credibility and anger.

As for the effects of anger on third party intentions to engage in justice-restorative acts, my studies also cannot rule out reverse causality. However, prior empirical research supports the causal direction that I hypothesized. Studies in which anger was manipulated have shown that anger leads to punitive behaviors toward perpetrators of unfairness and supportive behaviors

toward victims of unfairness (Gummerum et al., 2016; Seip et al., 2014). Thus, these studies are consistent with the idea that anger causes justice-restorative behaviors.

Some readers may be concerned about threats to internal and external validity arising from the use of MTurk in four of my studies. Regarding threats to internal validity, I followed recommended best practices for MTurk studies to minimize this concern (Aguinis et al., 2021; Cheung et al., 2017). For instance, to limit inattentive and random responses, I restricted participation to MTurk users with good track records of completing tasks. I also excluded respondents that failed “bot” check, attention check, or comprehension check questions. Moreover, to limit participation of individuals who are familiar with my study materials and goals, I prevented participants from completing more than one study across the four studies. Finally, to further limit participants from altering their responses, I did not disclose my research goals and hypotheses until participants completed the study.

Regarding external validity, there are several reasons to expect that my results will generalize across workers. For example, I selected MTurk participants with full-time jobs and was able to sample workers from a range of industries in the United States. Moreover, prior research has shown that MTurk samples recruited from the United States are similar to nationally representative samples of adults in terms of demographic characteristics and occupations in which individuals are employed (Huff & Tingley, 2015). In addition, correlations between various work attitudes (e.g., work engagement and satisfaction) obtained from MTurk samples are often comparable to meta-analytic estimates (Michel et al., 2018). Of course, any convenience sample, including MTurk samples, is subject to range restriction (e.g., due to self-selection into MTurk) and omitted variables (Landers & Behrend, 2015). However, in Study 3, I adopted a different sampling strategy by recruiting graduate students and found similar results to

those obtained in my studies that used MTurk. Thus, self-selection into MTurk is unlikely to be a major driver of the observed effects. Moreover, I manipulated overall justice and ambiguity in Study 5, which addresses concerns regarding the effects of omitted variables (e.g., third variables) that could have biased my results. Thus, I argue that my results are likely to generalize across workers.

Conclusion

In many situations, third parties only have ambiguous information about an unfair incident, like when they merely hear a co-worker claiming to have experienced injustice. Drawing on fairness heuristic theory, I argued that third parties rely on their overall justice perceptions to interpret a claim of unfairness, such that overall justice will negatively affect their perceived credibility of the claim. Across five studies, I found that third parties' overall justice perceptions are negatively related to their perceptions of claim credibility. Consequently, overall justice perceptions negatively affected third parties' reactions, such as anger and intentions to punish the accused and support the claimant. However, when third parties had unambiguous information about the incident, the influence of overall justice on their perceptions of claim credibility was reduced. My research suggests that sometimes third parties do not believe a mere claim of unfairness and that their reactions to such a claim are affected by their own perceptions of their organization's fairness. Moreover, given that overall justice reduced third parties' support toward the claimant, the current research suggests that employees' justice perceptions can have inadvertent negative effects.

Table 1

Confirmatory Factor Analyses Results (Study 3)

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δ df	<i>p</i>	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Proposed five-factor model	797.35	220				.899	.096	.062
Four-factor model	1099.87	224	302.53	4	<.001	.847	.117	.074
Three-factor model 1	1378.15	227	580.80	7	<.001	.800	.133	.087
Three-factor model 2	1943.62	227	1146.27	7	<.001	.701	.163	.131
Two-factor model	2493.70	229	1696.35	9	<.001	.606	.186	.191
One-factor model	3580.14	230	2782.79	10	<.001	.417	.226	.168

Note. *N* = 286. FIML estimation was used for all models. Model comparison statistics ($\Delta\chi^2$ and Δ df) are in reference to the proposed five-factor model. Proposed five-factor model = overall justice, perceived claim credibility, anger, punish, and support items set to load on respective factors. Four-factor model = punish and support items load on one factor. Three-factor model 1 = anger, punish, and support items load on one factor. Three-factor model 2 = perceived claim credibility and anger items load on one factor; punish and support items load on one factor. Two-factor model = overall justice and perceived claim credibility items load on one factor; anger, punish, and support items load on one factor. One-factor model = all items load on one factor.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 3)

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	Correlations			
				1	2	3	4
1 Overall justice	286	5.21	1.24				
2 Claim credibility	285	4.12	1.23	-.31 ***			
3 Anger	284	4.07	1.37	-.23 ***	.42 ***		
4 Intentions to punish	282	3.59	1.35	-.37 ***	.48 ***	.67 ***	
5 Intentions to support	283	4.50	1.15	-.14 *	.44 ***	.51 ***	.50 ***

Note. Pairwise deletion was used to compute correlations. Intentions to punish = intentions to punish the accused. Intentions to support = intentions to support the claimant. *SD* = standard deviation. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 3
Confirmatory Factor Analyses Results (Study 4)

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δ df	<i>p</i>	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Proposed five-factor model	976.82	220				.935	.091	.044
Four-factor model	1610.38	224	633.56	4	<.001	.882	.122	.065
Three-factor model 1	2591.10	227	1614.29	7	<.001	.798	.158	.085
Three-factor model 2	4804.94	227	3828.12	7	<.001	.610	.220	.235
Two-factor model	5764.19	229	4787.37	9	<.001	.528	.241	.240
One-factor model	8696.29	230	7719.47	10	<.001	.278	.298	.350

Note. *N* = 415. FIML estimation was used for all models. Model comparison statistics ($\Delta\chi^2$ and Δ df) are in reference to the proposed five-factor model. Proposed five-factor model = overall justice, perceived claim credibility, anger, punish, and support items set to load on respective factors. Four-factor model = punish and support items load on one factor. Three-factor model 1 = anger, punish, and support items load on one factor. Three-factor model 2 = perceived claim credibility and anger items load on one factor; punish and support items load on one factor. Two-factor model = overall justice and perceived claim credibility items load on one factor; anger, punish, and support items load on one factor. One-factor model = all items load on one factor.

Table 4
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 4)

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlations				
			1	2	3	4	5
1 Overall justice	.00	1.35					
2 Ambiguity	-.03	1.00	.04				
3 Claim credibility	5.19	1.43	-.07	-.45 ***			
4 Anger	4.85	1.40	-.11 *	-.23 ***	.37 ***		
5 Intentions to punish	4.12	1.54	-.06	-.30 ***	.41 ***	.60 ***	
6 Intentions to support	5.33	1.06	.03	-.24 ***	.46 ***	.55 ***	.60 ***

Note. $N = 415$. Overall justice was centered at the mean. The mean of overall justice prior to centering was 5.31. Ambiguity (manipulated) was effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Intentions to punish = intentions to punish the accused. Intentions to support = intentions to support the claimant. SD = standard deviation. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 5
Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 4)

Outcome variables	Indirect effect	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper
Low ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	.004	-.024	.035
Intentions to support claimant	.003	-.015	.022
High ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.037 *	-.081	-.003
Intentions to support claimant	-.023 *	-.052	-.002
Difference between conditions			
Intentions to punish accused	.041 †	-.003	.095
Intentions to support claimant	.026 †	-.002	.061

Note. Indirect effects of overall justice on the outcome variables via perceived claim credibility and anger. Lower and upper bounds reflect 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect constructed using bias-corrected bootstrap method (5000 resampling). † $p < .10$, * $p < .05$.

Table 6

Confirmatory Factor Analyses Results (Study 5)

Model	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δ df	<i>p</i>	CFI	RMSEA	SRMR
Proposed four-factor model	676.71	113				.933	.113	.054
Three-factor model	1122.40	116	445.70	3	<.001	.881	.148	.058
Two-factor model	2038.08	118	1361.37	5	<.001	.773	.203	.116
One-factor model	3865.65	119	3188.94	6	<.001	.557	.283	.197

Note. $N = 394$. FIML estimation was used for all models. Model comparison statistics ($\Delta\chi^2$ and Δ df) are in reference to the proposed four-factor model. Proposed four-factor model = perceived claim credibility, anger, punish, and support items set to load on respective factors. Three-factor model = punish and support items load on one factor. Two-factor model = anger, punish, and support items load on one factor. One-factor model = all items load on one factor.

Table 7
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 5)

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Correlations				
				1	2	3	4	5
1 Overall justice	394	.02	1.00					
2 Ambiguity	394	-.04	1.00	.04				
3 Claim credibility	394	5.22	1.51	-.20 ***	-.45 ***			
4 Anger	394	4.92	1.51	-.10	-.26 ***	.50 ***		
5 Intentions to punish	393	4.31	1.55	-.11 *	-.37 ***	.54 ***	.62 ***	
6 Intentions to support	393	5.54	1.05	-.08	-.27 ***	.57 ***	.59 ***	.64 ***

Note. Pairwise deletion was used to compute correlations. Overall justice and information ambiguity were manipulated variables and were effect coded (low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1; low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Intentions to punish = intentions to punish the accused. Intentions to support = intentions to support the claimant. *SD* = standard deviation. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

Table 8
Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 5)

Outcome variables	Indirect effect	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper
Low ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.015	-.063	.027
Intentions to support claimant	-.009	-.039	.015
High ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.127 ***	-.193	-.079
Intentions to support claimant	-.075 ***	-.119	-.045
Difference between conditions			
Intentions to punish accused	.111 ***	.051	.193
Intentions to support claimant	.066 ***	.030	.115

Note. Indirect effects of overall justice on the outcome variables via perceived claim credibility and anger. Lower and upper bounds reflect 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect constructed using bias-corrected bootstrap method (5000 resampling). *** $p < .001$.

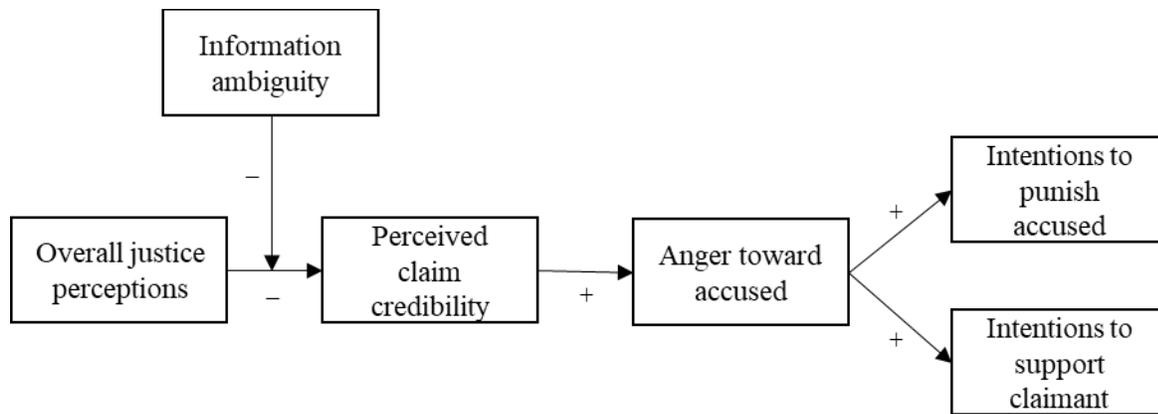


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

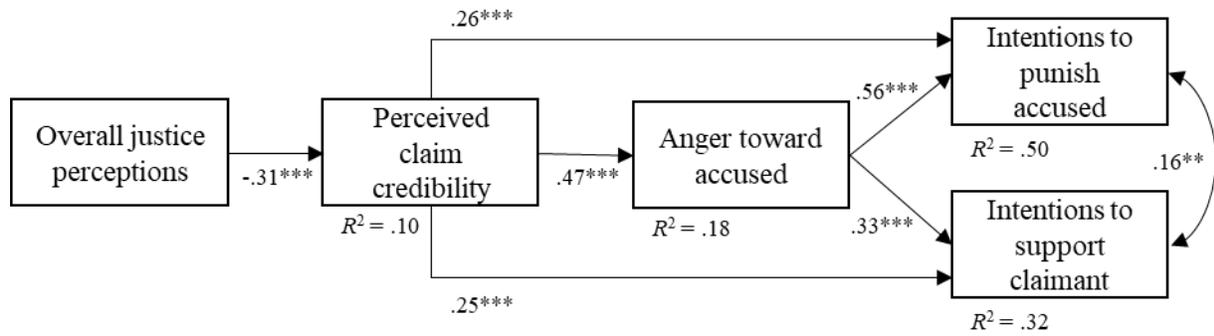


Figure 2. SEM results (Study 3). $N = 286$. FIML estimation was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

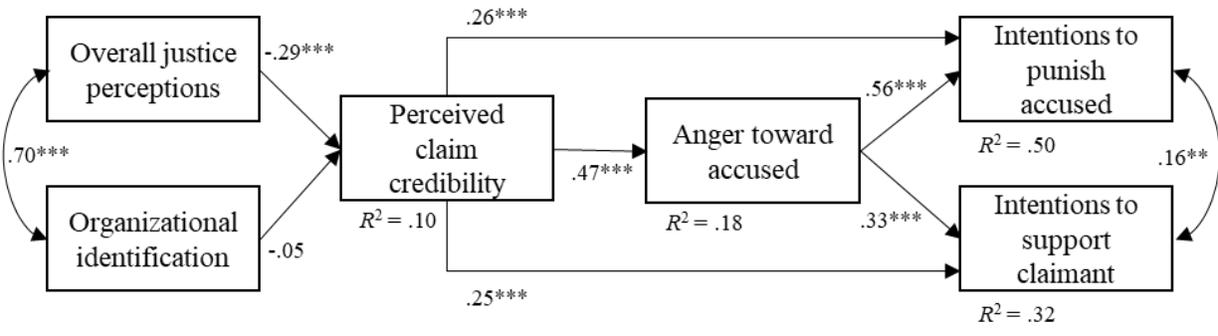


Figure 3. SEM results with organizational identification as a covariate (Study 3). $N = 286$. FIML estimation was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. $***p < .001$.

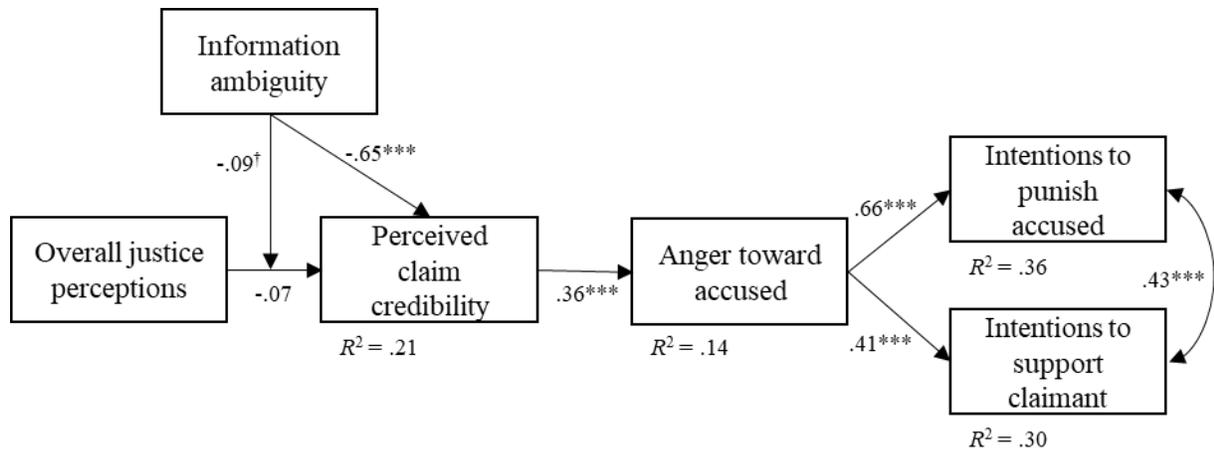


Figure 4. SEM results (Study 4). $N = 415$. Overall justice perceptions were centered at the mean. Ambiguity was effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. $^\dagger p < .10$, $^{***} p < .001$.

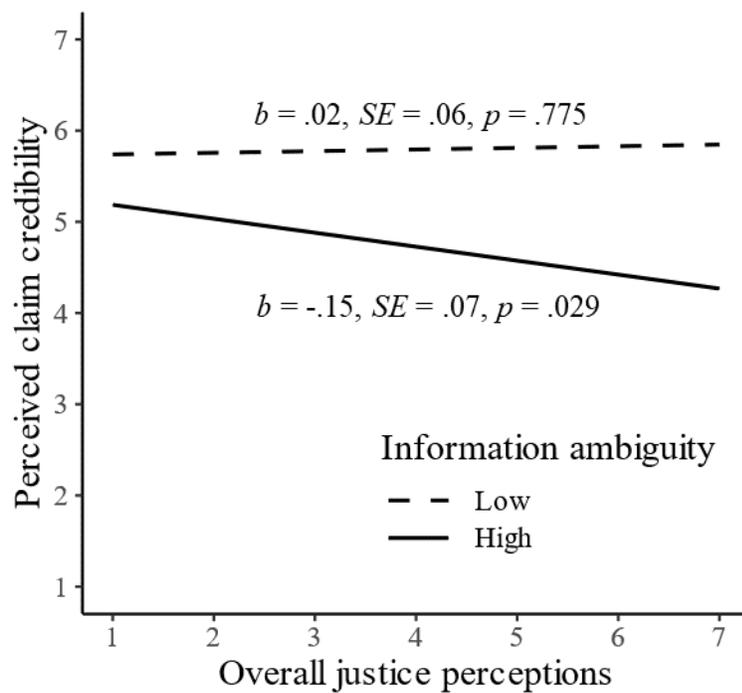


Figure 5. Effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility at low and high ambiguity (Study 4). $N = 415$. Information ambiguity was manipulated.

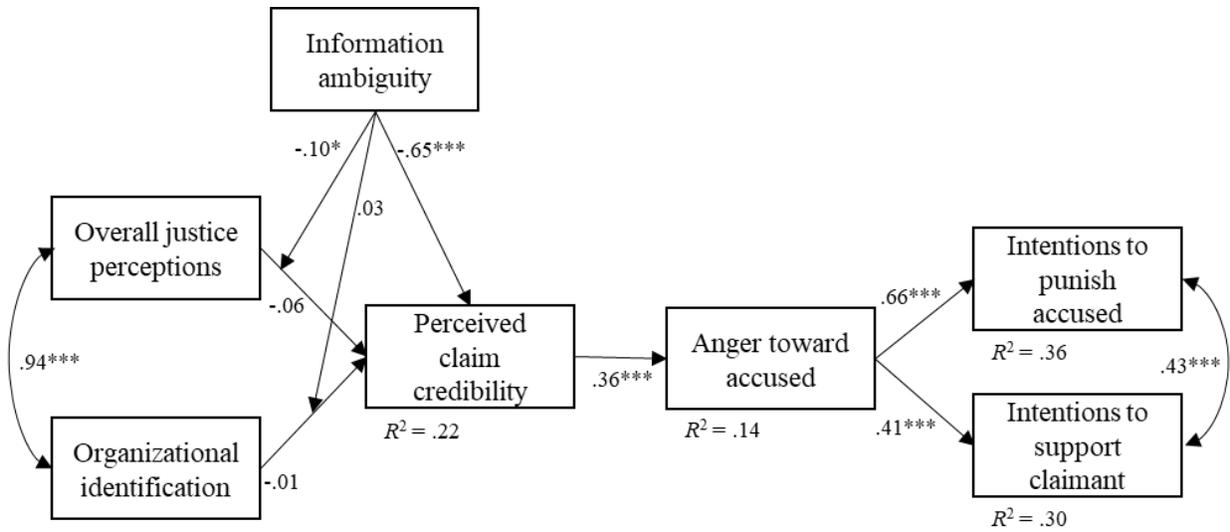


Figure 6. SEM results (Study 4). $N = 415$. Overall justice perceptions and organizational identification were centered at the mean. Information ambiguity was effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

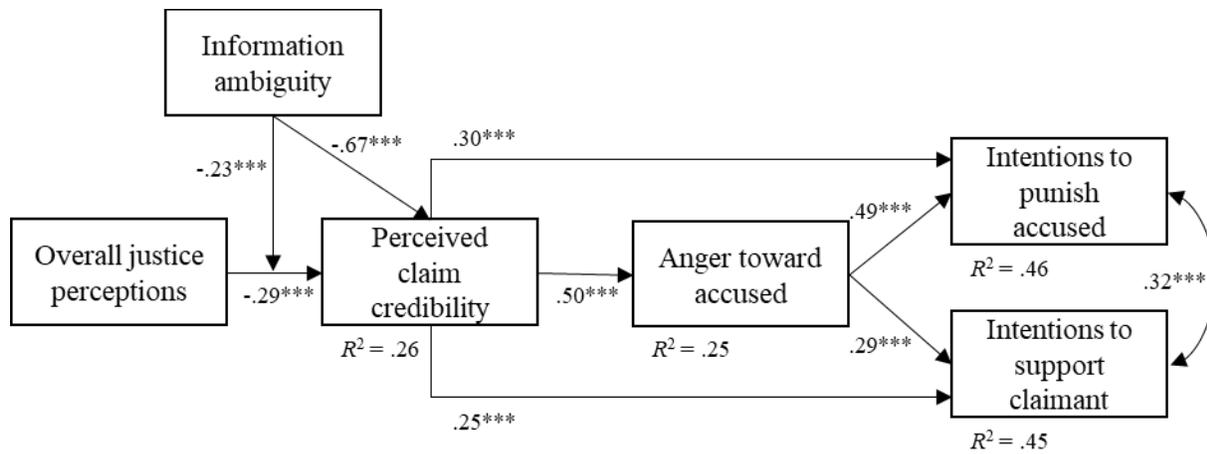


Figure 7. SEM results (Study 5). $N = 394$. FIML estimation was used. Overall justice and ambiguity (manipulated) were effect coded (low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1; low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. $***p < .001$.

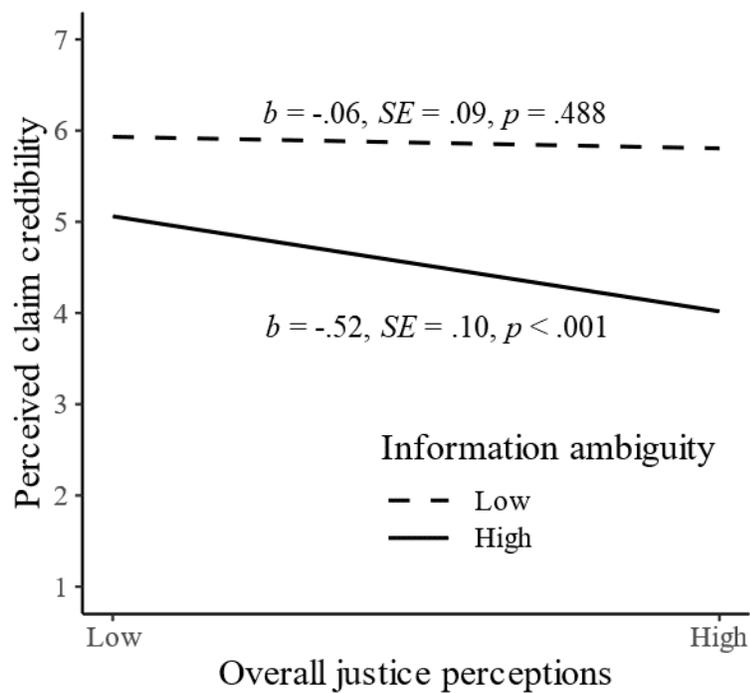


Figure 8. Effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility at low and high ambiguity (Study 5). $N = 394$. Overall justice and ambiguity were manipulated.

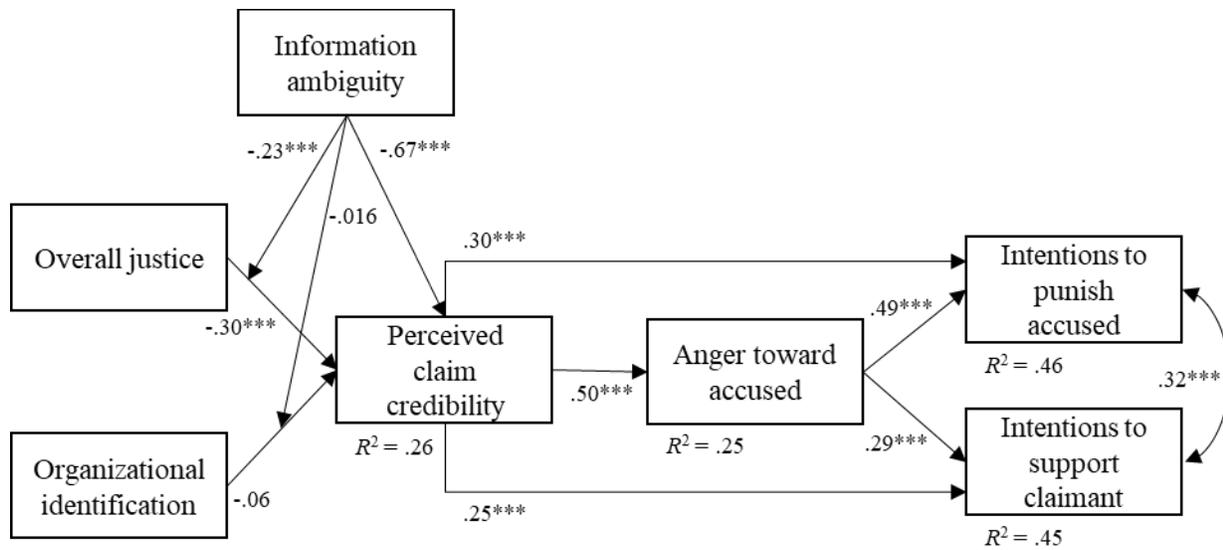


Figure 9. SEM results (Study 5). $N = 394$. FIML was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. Organizational identification was centered at the mean. Ambiguity and overall justice manipulations were effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1; low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1). *** $p < .001$.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Supplemental Materials

Study 1

Experimental Manipulation in the Original Study

In Study 1, I used unpublished archival data collected from a study that included a two-group experimental manipulation. The original study hypothesis concerning the manipulation was not supported. Below, I describe the manipulation and show that including the manipulation in my analyses did not change the conclusion I drew from this dataset.

The original study was conducted to examine employees' feelings of dependency toward their organization. Participants were randomly assigned to low or high dependency condition. Participants were asked to read a fictitious article ostensibly published in the Harvard Business Review. In the low dependency condition, the article stated that employees are not influenced by, and are not dependent on, their organization (e.g., "many aspects of your life are not dependent on your company") whereas in the high dependency condition, it stated that employees are largely influenced by, and somewhat dependent on, their organization (e.g., "aspects of your life are to some degree dependent on your company").

I conducted a series of multiple regression to examine whether including the dependency manipulation in my analyses affects the conclusion that overall justice perceptions are negatively related to perceived claim credibility. To facilitate the interpretation of the main effects of overall justice and dependency, I centered overall justice at the mean and effect-coded the dependency manipulation (low = -1, high = 1). As shown in Table 9, when dependency manipulation was included as a covariate or as a moderator, the negative relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility remained significant. Moreover, dependency did not significantly moderate the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility. In summary, my decision to collapse across experimental conditions was justified, given that the manipulation had little impact on perceived claim credibility or on the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility.

Table 9

Multiple Regression Results Predicting Perceived Claim Credibility (Study 1)

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²	ΔR^2
Step 1					.047	
Intercept	3.66	.07	53.50	<.001		
Overall justice	-.15	.05	-3.01	.003		
Dependency	.07	.07	1.05	.293		
Step 2					.050	.002
Intercept	3.67	.07	53.36	<.001		
Overall justice	-.15	.05	-3.06	.003		
Dependency	.07	.07	1.05	.296		
Overall justice × Dependency	.04	.05	.74	.459		

Note: *N* = 218. Overall justice was centered at the mean. Dependency manipulation was effect-coded: low dependency condition = -1, high dependency condition = 1.

Participants' Evaluation of the Scenario

In addition to perceived claim credibility, Study 1 included other measures assessing participants' evaluation of the unfair incident scenario. Specifically, the study included measures of perceived severity of the unfair event described by the claimant and trustworthiness of the claimant. Items for all three measures are presented in Table 10. To ensure that perceived claim credibility was distinct from the other two measures, I conducted confirmatory factor analyses (CFA). I tested the proposed measurement model in which the items from the three measures loaded onto separate factors. The fit for the proposed three-factor model was good ($\chi^2 = 72.83$, $df = 32$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .97$, $RMSEA = .07$, $SRMR = .04$). I also compared this model against an alternative model in which all items loaded onto one factor. The alternative one-factor model fit the data poorly ($\chi^2 = 189.99$, $df = 35$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .86$, $RMSEA = .14$, $SRMR = .07$) and the fit was worse than the three-factor model ($\Delta\chi^2 = 117.16$, $\Delta df = 3$, $p < .001$). Although perceived claim credibility was strongly correlated with severity ($r = .59$, $p < .001$) and trustworthiness ($r = .74$, $p < .001$), the factor analytic results support my decision to isolate perceived claim credibility in my research.

Table 10

Scale Items for Measures of Participants' Evaluation of the Scenario (Study 1)

Item
Perceived claim credibility
Would you believe that the event happened the way Pat described it?
Would you think that there is another side to the story? (R)
Would you believe Pat's version of the events?
Would you believe that Pat is distorting the truth? (R)
Severity
Would you think that the promotion decision is unfair?
How serious would you rate the situation described by Pat?
How concerned would you be about the situation described by Pat?
Trustworthiness
Would you perceive Pat as an honest person?
How trustworthy would you perceive Pat to be?
Would you perceive Pat to be a reliable person?

Study 2

Original Study Goals and Results

In Study 2, I used unpublished archival data collected from a correlational study. Below, I describe the original study goals and show that the original study hypotheses were not supported. In addition, I show that the negative effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility remained even after including variables that were pertinent to the original study hypotheses in the analyses.

The study was originally designed to test predictions derived from system justification theory (Jost & Banaji, 1994). Specifically, employees' feelings that they are unable to leave their organization and their sense of control at work were expected to moderate the relationship between their overall justice perceptions and their evaluations of a claim of unfairness. Thus, in addition to the measures reported in the dissertation, the study included two measures of individuals' feelings of inability to leave their organization (i.e., continuance commitment and

perceived lack of employment alternatives) and two measures of their sense of control at work (i.e., sense of control at work and perceived dependency to the organization). In summary, the study contained four measures that were expected to moderate the relationship between overall justice and participants' evaluations of the claim.

Below, I present the results from multiple regression analyses in which I test whether any of the four measures moderates the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility. The four moderator measures and overall justice were centered at the mean to facilitate interpreting the main effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility. As shown in Table 11, the original study hypotheses were not supported. None of the four proposed moderators significantly moderated the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility. Importantly, overall justice was consistently negatively related to perceived claim credibility across all the regression models. Thus, including variables that were pertinent to the original study hypotheses in my analyses did not change my conclusion from Study 2: overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility.

Table 11
Multiple Regression Results Predicting Perceived Claim Credibility (Study 2)

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²
Model 1					.17
Intercept	3.90	.05	71.49	<.001	
Overall justice	-.30	.04	-7.20	<.001	
Continuance commitment	-.04	.05	-.92	.358	
Overall justice × Continuance commitment	-.05	.03	-1.52	.129	
Model 2					.16
Intercept	3.91	.05	72.30	<.001	
Overall justice	-.32	.04	-7.97	<.001	
Lack of employment alternatives	-.02	.04	-.45	.654	
Overall justice × Lack of employment alternatives	-.04	.02	-1.45	.148	
Model 3					.18
Intercept	3.93	.06	66.00	<.001	
Overall justice	-.25	.05	-4.73	<.001	
Control at work	-.14	.04	-3.23	.001	
Overall justice × Control at work	-.02	.02	-.77	.444	
Model 4					.17
Intercept	3.91	.05	72.80	<.001	
Overall justice	-.32	.04	-8.05	<.001	
Dependency	-.10	.04	-2.29	.023	
Overall justice × Dependency	-.02	.03	-.77	.440	

Note: *N* = 359. Overall justice, continuance commitment, lack of employment alternatives, control at work, and dependency were all centered at the mean.

Participants' Evaluation of the Scenario

As in Study 1, Study 2 included measures of perceived severity and trustworthiness of the claimant in addition to perceived claim credibility. Again, I conducted CFAs to test the proposed measurement model. The fit for the proposed three factor model was good ($\chi^2 = 264.23$, *df* = 51, *p* < .001, CFI = .92, RMSEA = .11, SRMR = .08) and was better than the alternative one-factor

model ($\chi^2 = 834.60$, $df = 54$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .70$, $RMSEA = .20$, $SRMR = .12$; model comparison: $\Delta\chi^2 = 570.38$, $\Delta df = 3$, $p < .001$). Although perceived claim credibility was, once again, correlated with severity ($r = .39$, $p < .001$) and trustworthiness ($r = .64$, $p < .001$), the results from CFAs support my decision to separate perceived claim credibility from the other two measures.

Mediation Model using Latent Variables

In the dissertation, I reported results from auxiliary analyses in which I tested the indirect effect of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused via perceived claim credibility. I tested the indirect effect via SEM in which relationships between observed variables (i.e., scale scores) were examined. Here, I show that the results do not substantively change when I model relationships between latent variables.

I specified a model in which overall justice, perceived claim credibility, and intentions to punish the accused were operationalized as latent factors using their respective indicators. Consistent with the measurement model that is reported in the dissertation, I allowed reverse-coded items to covary. Perceived claim credibility was regressed on overall justice and intentions to punish the accused was regressed on perceived claim credibility. I computed the product of the two paths forming the indirect effect and computed the 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect using bias-corrected bootstrap method with 5000 resampling (MacKinnon et al., 2004).

The model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 297.17$, $df = 73$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .95$, $RMSEA = .09$, $SRMR = .09$). As shown in Figure 10, overall justice perceptions were negatively related to perceived claim credibility, and perceived claim credibility was positively related to intentions to punish the accused. Finally, the indirect effect of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused via perceived claim credibility was negative and significant (indirect effect = $-.084$; 95% CI = $-.138$, $-.046$). Thus, using latent variables as opposed to aggregate of indicators did not change my conclusions.

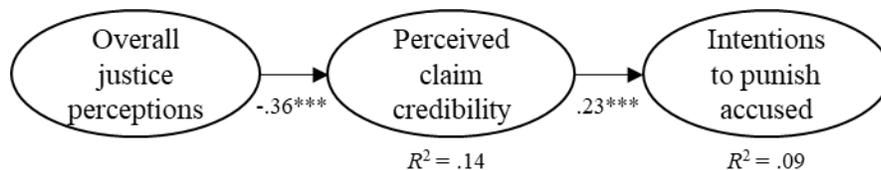


Figure 10. SEM results using latent variables (Study 2). $N = 359$. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. *** $p < .001$.

Study 3

Hypothesis Testing using Latent Variables

I noted in the dissertation that I tested the structural model using observed variables (i.e., aggregate of indicators) rather than latent variables. This was to simplify my analyses and results reported in the dissertation. Here, I present the results from a structural model using latent variables. The model provided a reasonable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 819.46$, $df = 223$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .90$, $RMSEA = .10$, $SRMR = .08$). Results are shown in Figure 11. As can be seen from the regression coefficients, the results support my hypotheses and are not substantively different from those reported in the dissertation. In addition, the indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused (indirect effect = $-.085$; 95% CI = $-.144$, $-.045$) and intentions to

support the claimant (indirect effect = $-.051$; 95% CI = $-.100, -.022$) were both negative and significant, supporting my hypotheses. Thus, using latent variables as opposed to observed variables did not change my conclusions.

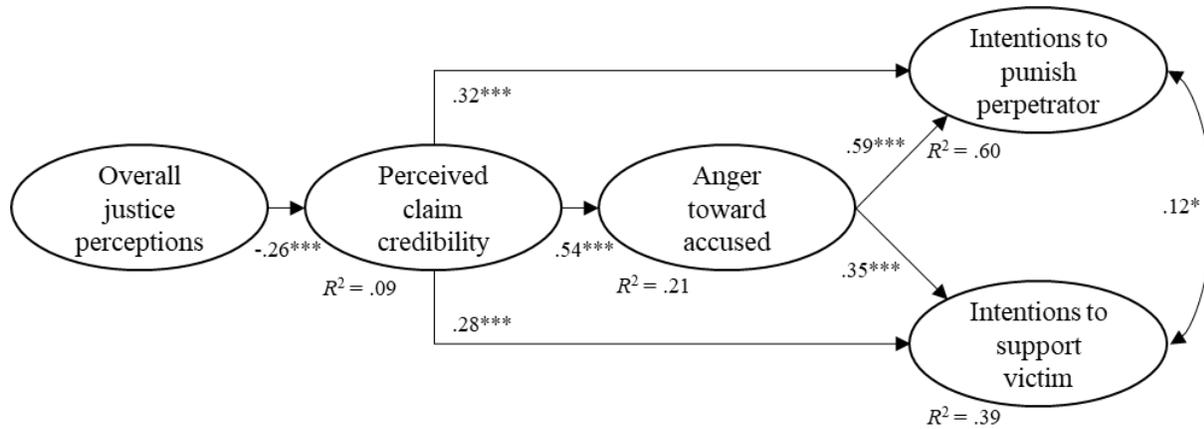


Figure 11. SEM results using latent variables (Study 3). $N = 286$. FIML estimation was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. $*p < .05$, $***p < .001$.

Proposed Model Results

As reported in the dissertation, the proposed structural model was a poor fit to the data in Study 3 ($\chi^2 = 65.03$, $df = 5$, $p < .001$, CFI = $.86$, RMSEA = $.21$, SRMR = $.10$). Here, I present the full results prior to modifying the structural model. As shown in Figure 12, results are consistent with my predictions and do not substantively differ from the results presented in the dissertation. The indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused (indirect effect = $-.095$; 95% CI = $-.159, -.048$) and intentions to support the claimant (indirect effect = $-.062$; 95% CI = $-.108, -.029$) via perceived claim credibility and anger were negative and significant, consistent with my predictions. Thus, although the modified structural model provided a better fit to the data, results did not substantively differ between the proposed model and the modified model.

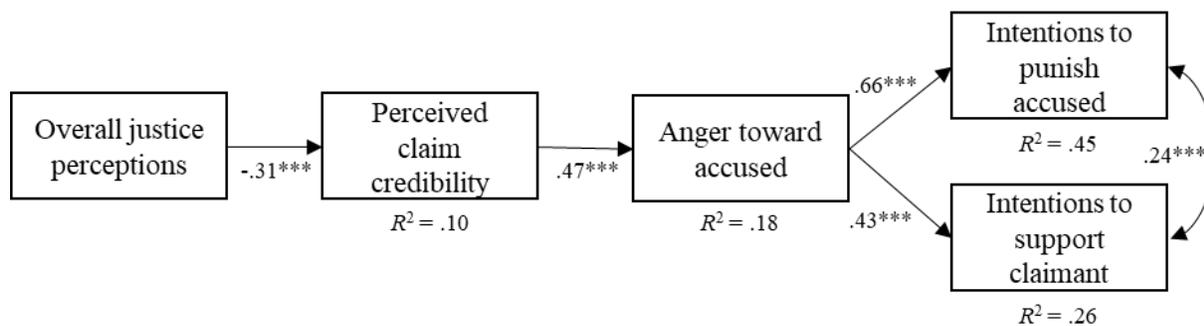


Figure 12. SEM results prior to modification (Study 3). $N = 286$. FIML estimation was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. $***p < .001$.

Organizational Identification

In the dissertation, I reported auxiliary analyses in which organizational identification was included as a predictor of perceived claim credibility. Table 12 shows means, standard

deviations, and intercorrelations among the study variables with the addition of organizational identification. Note that rows numbered 1 through 5 are identical to Table 2 of the dissertation.

Table 12
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 3)

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Correlations				
				1	2	3	4	5
1 Overall justice	286	5.21	1.24					
2 Claim credibility	285	4.12	1.23	-.31 ***				
3 Anger	284	4.07	1.37	-.23 ***	.42 ***			
4 Intentions to punish	282	3.59	1.35	-.37 ***	.48 ***	.67 ***		
5 Intentions to support	283	4.50	1.15	-.14 *	.44 ***	.51 ***	.50 ***	
6 OI	286	4.22	1.44	.39 ***	-.17 **	.05	-.13 *	0.02

Note. Pairwise deletion was used to compute correlations. OI = Organizational identification. Intentions to punish = intentions to punish the accused. Intentions to support = intentions to support the claimant. *SD* = standard deviation. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Study 4 *Hypothesis Testing with Latent Variables*

In the dissertation, I reported the results of SEM using observed variables (i.e., aggregate of indicators). Here, I report the results in which all measured variables were modeled as latent constructs. Ambiguity manipulation was effect-coded (low = -1, high = 1). I centered the items for overall justice perceptions and formed product terms between each item and the effect-coded ambiguity variable. The interaction term was defined as a latent construct of the product terms (Cortina et al., 2021; Marsh et al., 2004). Following Cortina et al.’s (2021) recommendation, I allowed the errors of the product terms to correlate with those of their components. In addition, given that two participants skipped an item, I used full information maximum likelihood (FIML) estimation following current recommendations regarding missing data treatment (e.g., Newman, 2014).

The model provided a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 1557.95$, $df = 392$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .93$, $RMSEA = .09$, $SRMR = .07$). Results are shown in Figure 13. The results were slightly different from those reported in the dissertation. As before, the overall justice \times ambiguity interaction was not statistically significant ($b = -.07$, $SE = .05$, $p = .153$). Simple slopes analyses showed that, consistent with the results reported in the dissertation, the effect of overall justice on perceived claim credibility was weak and non-significant in the low ambiguity condition ($b = -.002$, $SE = .06$, $p = .969$). Although this effect was only marginally significant in the high ambiguity condition ($b = -.14$, $SE = .07$, $p = .054$), consistent with my hypothesis, the effect was negative.

I also tested indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused and intention to support the claimant for each ambiguity condition using the same procedure described in the dissertation. Table 13 shows the conditional indirect effects. The results slightly differed from those reported in the dissertation. The indirect effects of overall justice on intentions were only marginally significant in the high ambiguity condition. However, consistent with the results reported in the dissertation, the indirect effects were weak and non-significant in the low ambiguity condition.

In summary, there were slight differences in the p -values between SEM results in which the aggregate of indicators were used for measured variables relative to when those variables

were modeled as latent constructs. However, the overall conclusions that can be drawn from Study 4 did not differ, given that the pattern of the hypothesized interaction between overall justice and ambiguity did not change and all other hypothesized relationships largely remained the same.

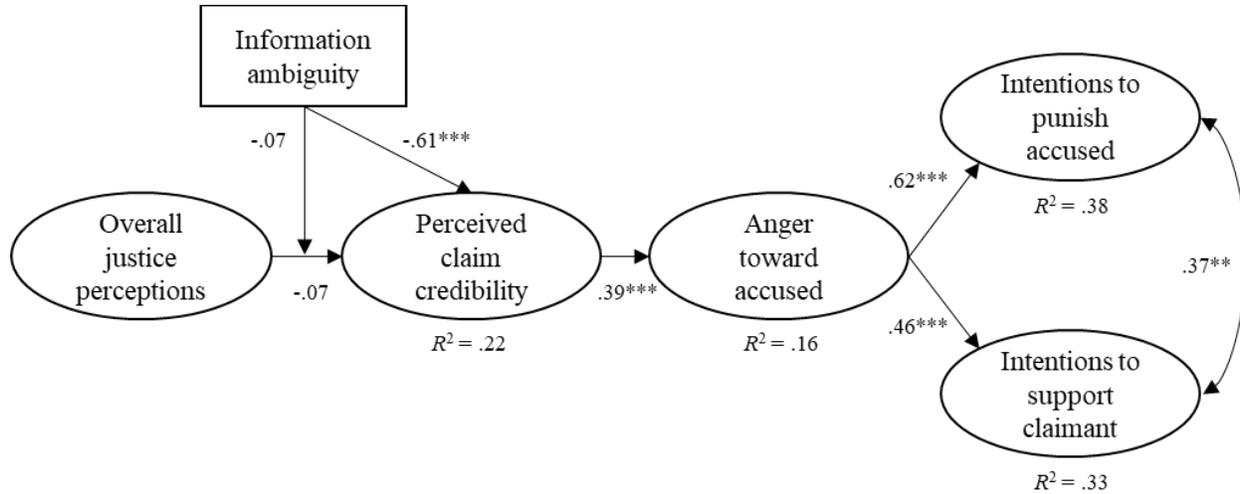


Figure 13. SEM results using latent variables (Study 4). $N = 415$. FIML estimation used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. *** $p < .001$.

Table 13
Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 4)

Outcome variables	Indirect effect	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper
Low ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.001	-.027	.030
Intentions to support claimant	.000	-.021	.021
High ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.033 †	-.080	.001
Intentions to support claimant	-.025 †	-.060	.000
Difference between conditions			
Intentions to punish accused	.033	-.011	.088
Intentions to support claimant	.024	-.008	.064

Note. Indirect effects of overall justice on the outcome variables via perceived claim credibility and anger. Lower and upper bounds reflect 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect constructed using bias-corrected bootstrap method (5000 resampling). † $p < .10$.

Organizational Identification

In Study 4, I reported results from auxiliary analyses in which I examined organizational identification. The full correlation matrix showing the relationship between organizational identification and all other study variables can be found in Table 14. Note that rows 1 through 6 are identical to Table 4 of the dissertation.

Table 14
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 4)

Variable	Mean SD		Correlations					
			1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Overall justice	.00	1.35						
2 Ambiguity	-.03	1.00	.04					
3 Claim credibility	5.19	1.43	-.07	-.45 ***				
4 Anger	4.85	1.40	-.11 *	-.23 ***	.37 ***			
5 Intentions to punish	4.12	1.54	-.06	-.30 ***	.41 ***	.60 ***		
6 Intentions to support	5.33	1.06	.03	-.24 ***	.46 ***	.55 ***	.60 ***	
7 OI	.00	1.42	.50 ***	-.01	-.02	.07	.16 **	.17 ***

Note. $N = 415$. OI = organizational identification. Overall justice and organizational identification were centered at the mean. The mean of overall justice prior to centering was 5.31. The mean of organizational identification prior to centering was 4.21. Ambiguity (manipulated) was effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Intentions to punish = intentions to punish the accused. Intentions to support = intentions to support the claimant. *SD* = standard deviation. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Study 5

Overall Justice Manipulation Validation Study

Study 5 included a manipulation of overall justice perceptions. The manipulation was validated with an independent sample of employees in a preregistered study (<https://osf.io/6sweu>). Here, I provide details of this validation study, further to the information I reported in the main text. The main objective of the validation study was to test whether the manipulation successfully altered individuals' overall justice perceptions. I expected that those assigned to the high overall justice condition would perceive their organization as significantly fairer than those assigned to the low overall justice condition. As noted in the main text, I found support for this prediction.

Participants. I recruited full-time employees from Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) using the same recruitment and screening method as Study 5. Eligible individuals were invited to participate in a 3-minute survey. I opened the study to 150 individuals, and 148 individuals participated in the study. Data from one participant who incorrectly answered an attention check question was removed. The final sample ($N = 147$) was 52.38% men, 46.26% women, and 79.59% identified as White, 9.52% as Black, and 6.12% as Asian. Participants were 36.61 years old on average ($SD = 9.96$), worked 43.07 hours per week on average ($SD = 8.78$), and have worked at their current organization for 6.48 years on average ($SD = 5.49$). Participants were employed in various industries, including education (12.93%), health care (12.24%), and professional, scientific, or technical services (12.24%).

Procedure. Participants were randomly assigned to either the low or high overall justice condition and completed the respective overall justice manipulation task (see Appendix C). Immediately following the manipulation task, they responded to Ambrose and Schminke's (2009) overall justice perceptions scale ($\alpha = .95$) using a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). Next, participants were asked to complete a demographics questionnaire, were debriefed, and thanked for their participation. Participants received \$0.30 (USD).

Results. The main objective of this validation study was to examine whether the overall justice manipulation influenced participants' perceptions of overall justice in the expected

manner. Specifically, I conducted an independent samples t-test to compare the two conditions on the overall justice perceptions measure and computed Cohen's d effect size. Supporting the validity of the manipulation, Student's t-test showed that participants in the high overall justice condition ($n = 78$, $Mean = 5.60$, $SD = 1.17$) perceived their organization as significantly fairer than participants in the low overall justice condition ($n = 69$, $Mean = 3.84$, $SD = 1.32$), $t(145) = 8.58$, $p < .001$, $d = 1.43$. Thus, the overall justice manipulation altered participants' overall justice perceptions in the expected way.

As a supplemental analysis, I examined whether the two conditions significantly differed from a "typical" level of overall justice perceptions. Hypothetically, it is possible for the two conditions to differ from each other, but at least one condition (e.g., high overall justice) to be indistinguishable from a typical level of overall justice perceptions in the absence of any manipulation. Thus, if the mean overall justice perceptions in each condition significantly differed from a typical level of overall justice perceptions, it would further strengthen my conclusion that the manipulation shifted individuals toward low and high overall justice perceptions.

To operationalize a typical level of overall justice perceptions, I aggregated the overall justice perceptions data across Studies 1 through 4 ($n = 1278$, $Mean = 5.26$, $SD = 1.34$). I conducted one-way ANOVA to compare overall justice perceptions across three groups: the aggregated data forming the "typical" group, low overall justice condition, and high overall justice condition. There was a significant effect of group on overall justice perceptions, $F(2, 1422) = 41.02$, $MSE = 1.77$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .05$. I then compared the low and high overall justice conditions against the typical group via multiple t-tests using the MSE from the omnibus ANOVA as an estimate of error variance. As expected, participants in the low overall justice condition perceived their organization as significantly less fair than participants across the four studies ($t(1422) = -8.66$, $p < .001$). Moreover, participants in the high overall justice condition perceived their organization as significantly fairer than participants across the four studies ($t(1422) = 2.18$, $p < .05$). Thus, as expected, relative to participants who did not receive any overall justice manipulation, the manipulation decreased overall justice perceptions for participants assigned to the low overall justice condition and increased overall justice perceptions for participants assigned to the high overall justice condition.

Information Ambiguity Manipulation Validation Study

In Study 5, I also manipulated information ambiguity. The ambiguity manipulation was validated with an independent sample of employees in another preregistered study (<https://osf.io/mgubz>). Here, I provide details about this study to supplement the information I reported in the main text. The study involved randomly assigning participants to low or high ambiguity condition. I aimed to accomplish two objectives through this validation study.

First, my main goal was to test whether the ambiguity manipulation affected participants' perceptions of information ambiguity in the expected manner. I expected that participants who were assigned to the low ambiguity condition would perceive less ambiguity in the information they had about the unfair incident relative to those who were assigned to the high ambiguity condition. As noted in the main text, this prediction was supported.

Second, I wanted to ensure that the manipulation indeed affected perceived ambiguity, rather than perceived claim credibility. Specifically, it is reasonable to expect that when the available information about the unfair incident is less ambiguous, the claim will appear more credible, relative to when the information is more ambiguous. Thus, it would not be surprising if

the ambiguity manipulation affected not only perceived ambiguity but also perceived claim credibility. Nevertheless, I expected the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility to be smaller than the effect on perceived ambiguity, given that perceived ambiguity is a more proximal outcome of the manipulation relative to perceived claim credibility. Moreover, and in keeping with this logic, I expected that the manipulation would affect perceived claim credibility indirectly through its effect on perceived ambiguity. If the claim appears more credible in the low ambiguity condition relative to the high ambiguity condition *because* the manipulation reduced ambiguity, then perceived ambiguity is expected to *mediate* the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility.

Participants. Full-time employees were recruited from MTurk using the same recruitment and screening method as Study 5. I invited eligible individuals to complete a 3-minute survey. I opened the study to 220 individuals, and 216 individuals participated in the study. Data from participants ($n = 3$) who failed an attention check question was removed. The final sample ($N = 213$) was 53.52% men, 44.60% women, and 70.89% identified as White, 11.27% as Asian, and 8.92% as Black. Participants were 38.82 years old on average ($SD = 10.18$), worked 41.56 hours per week on average ($SD = 6.68$), and have worked at their current organization for 6.98 years on average ($SD = 6.30$). Participants were employed in various industries, including health care (12.21%), finance (12.21%), and education (12.21%).

Procedure. Participants were randomly assigned to either the low or high ambiguity condition (see Appendix B). Participants responded to a measure of perceived ambiguity and a measure of perceived claim credibility. The two measures were counterbalanced. Finally, participants completed a demographics questionnaire and were thanked and debriefed. Participants received \$0.30 (USD).

Perceived Ambiguity. Participants were asked to complete a measure of perceived ambiguity ($\alpha = .94$), which I developed for this study. Participants were told, “please think carefully about everything that you’ve seen or heard so far. Please think about how you would feel at this moment if you were having this conversation with Pat.” They were asked to rate five items using a 7-point scale (1 = *Strongly disagree*, 7 = *Strongly agree*). The items are presented in Table 15.

Table 15

Scale Items for Perceived Ambiguity (Ambiguity Manipulation Validation Study)

Item
I don't really know the actual content of Larry's email.
What exactly happened between Pat and Larry is not clear to me at all.
I have almost no information about what Larry actually said to Pat.
There's a lot of missing information about what happened to Pat.
Aside from Pat's description about what happened, I don't have any other information.

Perceived Claim Credibility. Participants were asked to rate their perceptions of claim credibility using the same five-item scale ($\alpha = .98$) used in Study 5.

Results.

Confirmatory Factor Analyses. Before testing any effects of the manipulation, I tested the measurement model to ensure that the measures of perceived ambiguity and perceived claim credibility were distinguishable. I compared the proposed two-factor model in which ambiguity and perceived claim credibility items loaded on respective factors against a model in which all

the items loaded on a single factor. The proposed two-factor model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 110.59$, $df = 34$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .97$, $RMSEA = .10$, $SRMR = .02$) and the fit was better than the alternative one-factor model ($\chi^2 = 791.83$, $df = 35$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .72$, $RMSEA = .32$, $SRMR = .19$; model comparison: $\Delta\chi^2 = 681.24$, $\Delta df = 1$, $p < .001$). Thus, the results suggest that the measures of perceived claim credibility and ambiguity could be distinguished from each other.

Effect of Ambiguity Manipulation on Perceived Ambiguity. I proceeded to examine whether the ambiguity manipulation had the expected effect on perceived ambiguity. I conducted Welch's t-test because Levene's test for homogeneity of variance suggested that variances were unequal across the two ambiguity conditions ($F(1,211) = 14.30$, $p < .001$). Participants in the high ambiguity condition ($n = 97$, $Mean = 5.32$, $SD = 1.15$) reported greater ambiguity than participants in the low ambiguity condition ($n = 116$, $Mean = 2.86$, $SD = 1.46$), $t(210.37) = -13.76$, $p < .001$. Thus, the manipulation had the expected effect on participants' perceived ambiguity.

Effect of Ambiguity Manipulation on Perceived Claim Credibility. Next, I examined whether the manipulation affected perceptions of claim credibility. Levene's test suggested that variances were equal ($F(1, 211) = .83$, $p = .362$) and thus Student's t-test was conducted. Participants in the low ambiguity condition ($Mean = 5.62$, $SD = 1.39$) perceived the claim to be more credible than participants in the high ambiguity condition ($Mean = 4.41$, $SD = 1.27$), $t(211) = 6.64$, $p < .001$. Thus, not surprisingly, when the information about the incident was less ambiguous, the claim seemed more credible than when the information was more ambiguous. However, as expected, the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility ($d = .92$; 95% CI = .62, 1.21) was smaller than the effect on perceived ambiguity ($d = 1.86$, 95% CI = 1.5, 2.22). Thus, the ambiguity manipulation more strongly affected perceived ambiguity than perceived claim credibility.

Perceived Ambiguity Mediates the Effect of Ambiguity Manipulation on Perceived Claim Credibility. As noted above, if the claim appeared more credible to participants in the low ambiguity condition than participants in the high ambiguity condition *because* of reduction in ambiguity, then perceived ambiguity is expected to mediate the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility. I adopted the causal steps approach to mediation (Baron & Kenny, 1986) to illustrate the change between the total effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility and the direct (or residual) effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility after controlling for perceived ambiguity.

I dummy-coded the ambiguity manipulation (low ambiguity = 0, high ambiguity = 1) and conducted a series of regression analyses: (1) I regressed perceived claim credibility on the ambiguity manipulation, (2) regressed perceived ambiguity on the ambiguity manipulation, and (3) regressed perceived claim credibility on the ambiguity manipulation and perceived ambiguity. As shown in Table 16 and Figure 14, the ambiguity manipulation was positively related to perceived ambiguity, which in turn was negatively related to perceived claim credibility. Importantly, the effect of the ambiguity manipulation on perceived claim credibility was no longer significant when controlling for perceived ambiguity. In other words, perceived ambiguity fully mediated the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility.

In summary, the results of this validation study suggests that the ambiguity manipulation influenced participants' perceptions of ambiguity in the expected direction and that this effect was larger than the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility. Finally, the effect of the manipulation on perceived claim credibility was fully mediated by perceived ambiguity.

Thus, I found strong evidence that the manipulation was in fact influencing individuals' perceptions of information ambiguity.

Table 16

Multiple Regression Results (Ambiguity Manipulation Validation Study)

	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R</i> ²
DV = Claim credibility					
Intercept	5.64	.12	45.42	<.001	.17
Ambiguity manipulation	-1.22	.18	-6.64	<.001	
DV = Perceived ambiguity					
Intercept	2.86	.12	23.19	<.001	.46
Ambiguity manipulation	2.46	.18	13.48	<.001	
DV = Claim credibility					
Intercept	6.72	.22	30.92	<.001	.29
Ambiguity manipulation	-.29	.23	-1.25	.213	
Perceived ambiguity	-.38	.06	-5.87	<.001	

Note. *N* = 213. DV = Dependent Variable.

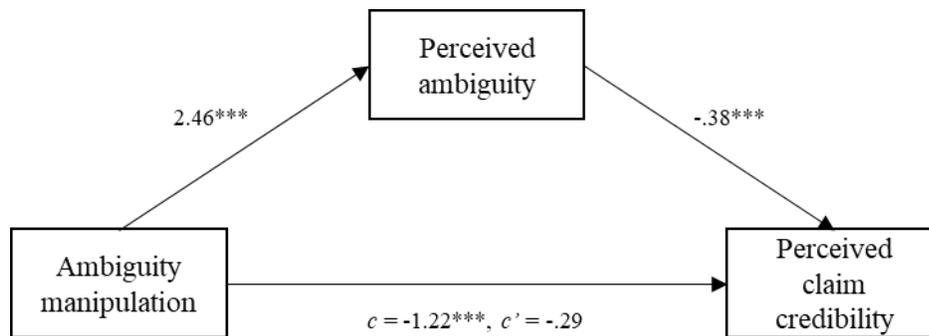


Figure 14. Perceived ambiguity fully mediates the effect of ambiguity manipulation on perceived claim credibility. *N* = 213. Ambiguity manipulation was dummy coded (low ambiguity = 0, high ambiguity = 1). Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. *c* = total effect of ambiguity manipulation on perceived claim credibility, *c'* = direct effect of ambiguity manipulation on perceived claim credibility. ****p* < .001.

Hypothesis Testing with Latent Variables

Like Study 4, I reported SEM results using observed variables in the dissertation. Here, I report the results in which all measured variables were modeled as latent constructs. Overall justice and ambiguity manipulations were effect-coded (low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1; low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1). Because I had missing data for one participant who skipped two focal measures, I used FIML estimation following best practice recommendations (e.g., Newman, 2014). The model provided a reasonable fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 734.03$, *df* = 161, *p* < .001, CFI = .93, RMSEA = .10, SRMR = .05). As shown in Figure 15, the results do not substantively differ from those reported in the dissertation.

Simple slopes analyses showed that the relationship between overall justice and perceived claim credibility was negative and significant in the high ambiguity condition (*b* = -.49, *SE* = .09, *p* < .001), but non-significant in the low ambiguity condition (*b* = -.07, *SE* = .09, *p* = .445). The indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused (indirect effect

= -.064; 95% CI = -.107, -.035) and intentions to support the claimant (indirect effect = -.044; 95% CI = -.080, -.023) via perceived claim credibility and anger were negative and significant. I also tested indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused and intentions to support the claimant for each ambiguity condition using the same procedure described in the dissertation. Table 17 shows the conditional indirect effects. The results did not substantively differ from those reported in the dissertation. Overall, the conclusions drawn from the results of Study 5 did not differ when the data were analyzed using latent variables.

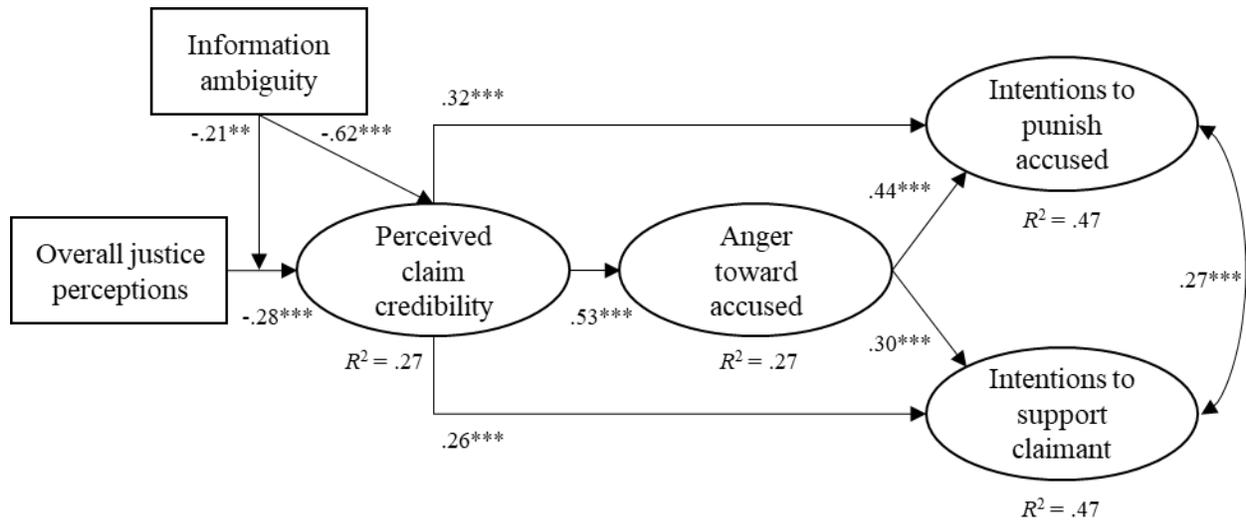


Figure 15. SEM results using latent variables (Study 5). $N = 286$. FIML estimation was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. $**p < .01$, $***p < .001$.

Table 17
Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 5)

Outcome variables	Indirect effect	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper
Low ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.015	-.060	.023
Intentions to support claimant	-.010	-.043	.016
High ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.113 ***	-.178	-.068
Intentions to support claimant	-.078 ***	-.132	-.044
Difference between conditions			
Intentions to punish accused	.098 ***	.044	.178
Intentions to support claimant	.067 ***	.029	.128

Note. Indirect effects of overall justice on the outcome variables via perceived claim credibility and anger. Lower and upper bounds reflect 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect constructed using bias-corrected bootstrap method (5000 resampling). $***p < .001$.

Proposed Model Results

As reported in the dissertation, I modified the model because the proposed structural model was a poor fit to the data in Study 5 ($\chi^2 = 96.26$, $df = 11$, $p < .001$, $CFI = .89$, $RMSEA =$

.14, SRMR = .08). Here, I present the results prior to modification. As shown in Figure 16, the results were consistent with my hypotheses. As expected, simple slopes analyses showed that overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility in the high ambiguity condition ($b = -.52, SE = .10, p < .001$), but this effect was non-significant in the low ambiguity condition ($b = -.06, SE = .09, p = .486$).

The indirect effects of overall justice on intentions to punish the accused (indirect effect = $-.093$; 95% CI = $-.148, -.052$) and intentions to support the claimant (indirect effect = $-.060$; 95% CI = $-.097, -.033$) via perceived claim credibility and anger were negative and significant. As shown in Table 18, these indirect effects were significant in the high ambiguity condition, but non-significant in the low ambiguity condition. In sum, the results are consistent with my predictions and do not substantively differ from the results presented in the dissertation.

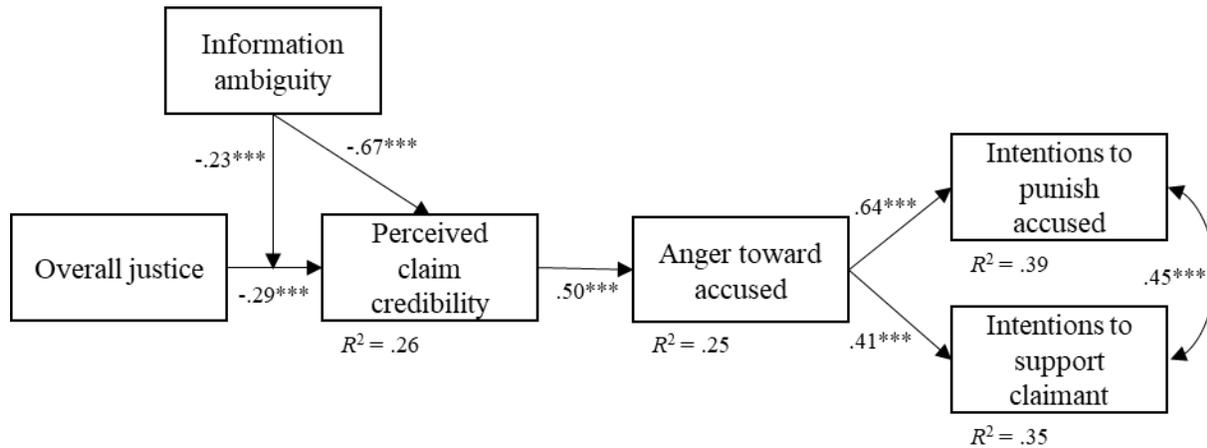


Figure 16. SEM results prior to modification (Study 5). $N = 394$. FIML was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. Ambiguity and overall justice were effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1; low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1). *** $p < .001$.

Table 18
Conditional Indirect Effects (Study 5)

Outcome variables	Indirect effect	95% CI	
		Lower	Upper
Low ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.020	-.082	.036
Intentions to support claimant	-.013	-.054	.023
High ambiguity condition			
Intentions to punish accused	-.167 ***	-.249	-.102
Intentions to support claimant	-.108 ***	-.162	-.066
Difference between conditions			
Intentions to punish accused	.146 ***	.066	.249
Intentions to support claimant	.094 ***	.043	.159

Note. Indirect effects of overall justice on the outcome variables via perceived claim credibility and anger. Lower and upper bounds reflect 95% confidence interval (CI) around the indirect effect constructed using bias-corrected bootstrap method (5000 resampling). *** $p < .001$.

Baseline Overall Justice

Study 5 included the same measure of overall justice perceptions used in Studies 1, 2, and 4 ($\alpha = .95$). Overall justice perceptions were measured in Part 1, prior to any of the experimental manipulations. I did not include this baseline overall justice measure in the main analyses because my focal variable of interest was the experimentally manipulated overall justice. Here, I report the results of my analyses including the baseline overall justice variable, focusing on testing (1) whether my results remain largely the same when baseline overall justice is included as a covariate, and (2) whether baseline overall justice shows the same pattern of results as the manipulated overall justice variable. I tested a structural model that was identical to the model reported in the dissertation, except that baseline overall justice and baseline overall justice \times ambiguity manipulation interaction term were included as additional predictors of perceived claim credibility. Baseline overall justice was centered at the mean to facilitate interpretation of the main effects of manipulated overall justice and baseline overall justice.

The structural model provided a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 = 21.96$, $df = 15$, $p = .109$, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .03, SRMR = .02). As shown in Figure 17 below, the focal results did not change substantively. Baseline overall justice was negatively related to perceived claim credibility, but this relationship was not moderated by ambiguity. The results suggest that individuals' pre-existing overall justice perceptions have a *persistent* negative effect on their perceptions that a co-worker's claim is credible, even after accounting for the effect of momentarily altered overall justice perceptions (overall justice manipulation) and regardless of whether individuals received information that clearly corroborates the claim (ambiguity manipulation). The persistent negative effect of baseline overall justice on perceived claim credibility might be due to factors associated with overall justice perceptions that do not overlap with cognitions targeted by the overall justice manipulation. That is, my overall justice manipulation aimed to shift participants' overall justice perceptions by making salient fair or unfair aspects of their organizations, yet it likely did not alter other psychological factors associated with overall justice (e.g., affective trust, commitment, social exchange relationship quality; Ambrose et al., 2015). One or more of these factors might negatively influence perceived claim credibility and its influence may remain resistant to information that corroborates the claim. Further research is needed to verify these speculations.

In summary, however, including baseline overall justice perceptions in my analyses did not change the conclusions I drew from Study 5.

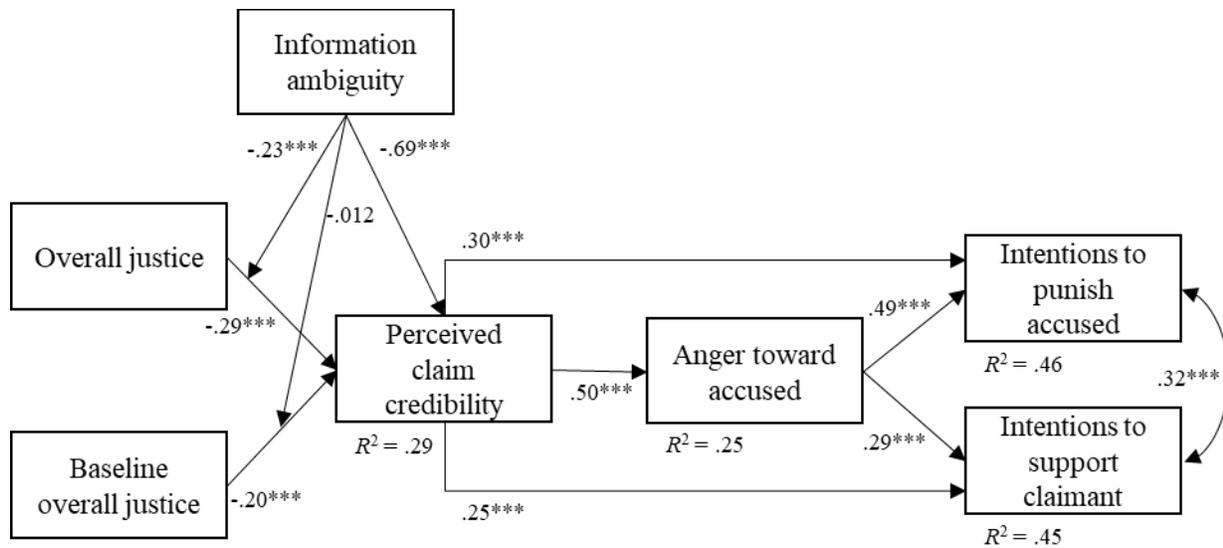


Figure 17. SEM results with baseline overall justice (Study 5). $N = 394$. FIML was used. Coefficients are unstandardized regression weights. Ambiguity and overall justice were manipulated variables and were effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1; low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1). Baseline overall justice was measured and was centered at the mean. *** $p < .001$.

Organizational Identification

In the main text of the dissertation, I reported results from auxiliary analyses in which organizational identification was included in the structural model. Table 19 shows the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the study variables, with the addition of organizational identification. Rows 1 through 6 are identical to Table 7 of the dissertation.

Table 19
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations (Study 5)

Variable	<i>N</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	Correlations					
				1	2	3	4	5	6
1 Overall justice	394	.02	1.00						
2 Ambiguity	394	-.04	1.00	.04					
3 Claim credibility	394	5.22	1.51	-.20 ***	-.45 ***				
4 Anger	394	4.92	1.51	-.10	-.26 ***	.50 ***			
5 Intentions to punish	393	4.31	1.55	-.11 *	-.37 ***	.54 ***	.62 ***		
6 Intentions to support	393	5.54	1.05	-.08	-.27 ***	.57 ***	.59 ***	.64 ***	
7 OI	394	.00	1.37	-.08	.00	-.04	.00	.01	.05

Note. Pairwise deletion was used to compute correlations. OI = organizational identification. Organizational identification was centered at the mean. The mean of organizational identification prior to centering was 4.29. Ambiguity and overall justice manipulations were effect-coded (low ambiguity = -1, high ambiguity = 1; low overall justice = -1, high overall justice = 1). Intentions to punish = intentions to punish the accused. Intentions to support = intentions to support the claimant. *SD* = standard deviation. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$.

Appendix B: Vignettes (Studies 1 through 3)

Study 1

You will read about a conversation with a co-worker, Pat. Imagine this occurring in your current organization. One day after lunch, Pat comes to you to discuss a promotion that just took place within your organization. Pat begins by saying:

“I was one of the employees up for the recent promotion and I am quite upset by the decision that was made. I don’t think it is fair. I’ve been waiting for this promotion for a while now, and thought I was going to get it this time. I am one of the most qualified and experienced employees here! Did you hear that the promotion went to someone with less experience? Who didn’t even meet all of the qualifications? I also heard that this person got the promotion because they are related to one of the senior managers. It’s just so unfair.”

Study 2

You will read about a conversation with a co-worker, Pat. Imagine this occurring in your current organization. Pat called to chat with you about a recent project management position with one of the senior managers in your organization. Pat says:

“I was one of the people up for that promotion, and I’m quite upset by the decision. I got an email from the manager telling me that someone else was selected to lead the project. I don’t think it is fair. I met with the manager for a Zoom chat but they told me that they could only meet for a few minutes, and they were pretty harsh and rude during the chat. They didn’t even tell me how the decision was made or give me any information about why I wasn’t selected.”

Study 3

You will now read a short story. The story is based on a real claim made by an alumnus of the University of Waterloo. We have paraphrased the claim and changed or removed a few details (e.g., the alumnus’ name). Please read it carefully. After you’ve read the story, we will ask for your opinions and reactions. Following the study, we’ll give you more information about this claim. An alumnus of the University of Waterloo (UW) claims:

“I’m hurt by how UW treated me. When I was a grad student at UW, I worked in a lab. As part of my research, I discovered a way to make the transistors in smartwatches more energy efficient. When I graduated, I used the technique to start a small business. But later, UW officials claimed they had the rights to the technology! They say it’s because I was working in a professor’s lab, which doesn’t make sense – the professor wasn’t really involved in my research anyway. Basically, the university tried to steal my intellectual property. This is so unfair.”

Appendix C: Information Ambiguity Manipulation (Studies 4 and 5)

Study 4

High Ambiguity Condition.

You will read a conversation with your co-worker, Pat. Imagine that this is occurring in your current organization. Pat claims:

“I was recently up for a promotion, but I didn’t get it. I emailed the manager, Larry, to find out why. I asked for an explanation, but Larry’s reply was harsh and rude. All he said was that I wasn’t a good fit for the position and he never even said why. He basically told me to stop asking questions. I’m upset and I think it’s unfair.”

Low Ambiguity Condition.

You will read a conversation with your co-worker, Pat. Imagine that this is occurring in your current organization. Pat claims:

“I was recently up for a promotion, but I didn’t get it. I emailed the manager, Larry, to find out why. I asked for an explanation, but Larry’s reply was harsh and rude. All he said was that I wasn’t a good fit for the position and he never even said why. He basically told me to stop asking questions. I’m upset and I think it’s unfair.”

Pat shows you the email from the manager:

Larry Smith

To: Pat

Hi Pat,

I picked someone else for the position because I didn’t think you're the best fit. Anyway, I really don’t think I need to explain to you how I make my decisions... Can’t you just drop this and move on?

Larry

Study 5

High Ambiguity Condition. *The vignette was identical as in Study 4.*

Low Ambiguity Condition.

You will read a conversation with your co-worker, Pat. Imagine that this is occurring in your current organization.

You’ve heard that Pat recently applied for a promotion. However, you saw an announcement indicating that someone else was selected. Pat didn’t get the promotion. Now, Pat is telling you about what happened. Pat claims:

“I was recently up for a promotion, but I didn’t get it. I emailed the manager, Larry, to find out why. I asked for an explanation, but Larry’s reply was harsh and rude. All he said was that I wasn’t a good fit for the position and he never even said why. He basically told me to stop asking questions. I’m upset and I think it’s unfair.”

Pat shows you the email from the manager, verifying what happened:

Larry Smith

To: Pat

Hi Pat,

I picked someone else for the position because I didn't think you're the best fit.
Anyway, I really don't think I need to explain to you how I make my decisions...
Can't you just drop this and move on?

Larry

You look at the email, and it is clear that the email was actually sent from Larry, the manager who was in charge of deciding who to promote. Larry's email confirms Pat's claim. Clearly, Larry was rude and refused to explain how he made his decisions.

Appendix D: Overall Justice Manipulation (Study 5)

Many organizations treat their employees [*unfairly/fairly, depending on condition*], in one or more ways. For example, organizations can be [*unfair/fair*] in:

- the way they distribute pay, benefits, and rewards
- the procedures they use to make decisions
- the way they communicate or implement decisions
- the manner in which they interact with their employees

Please think about the ways in which your current organization treats you or other employees [*unfairly/fairly*].

Below, list 2 or 3 ways in which your organization treats you or other employees at your organization [*unfairly/fairly*].