

PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND  
COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR:  
HOW PERSONALITY MODERATES THE RELATIONSHIP

A Thesis

Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Psychology  
San José State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Sarah N. Monnastes

December 2010

UMI Number: 1488136

All rights reserved

INFORMATION TO ALL USERS

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.



UMI 1488136

Copyright 2011 by ProQuest LLC.

All rights reserved. This edition of the work is protected against unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.



ProQuest LLC  
789 East Eisenhower Parkway  
P.O. Box 1346  
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

© 2010

Sarah N. Monnastes

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

The Designated Thesis Committee Approves the Thesis Titled

PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND  
COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR:  
HOW PERSONALITY MODERATES THE RELATIONSHIP

by

Sarah N. Monnastes

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY

December 2010

Dr. Howard Tokunaga      Department of Psychology

Dr. Megumi Hosoda      Department of Psychology

Ms. Rachel Pickworth      Lockheed Martin

## ABSTRACT

### PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT AND COUNTERPRODUCTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR: HOW PERSONALITY MODERATES THE RELATIONSHIP

by Sarah N. Monnastes

This study examines the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior, and whether one's personality moderates this relationship. Data were obtained from 235 employed respondents who consented to participate in the study. Correlations indicated a relationship between perceived organizational support and both forms of counterproductive work behavior (i.e., interpersonal and organizational deviance). However, hierarchical regression analysis showed that conscientiousness, agreeableness, and openness to experience did not moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and either form of counterproductive work behavior, except in a subset of the sample. Implications of the findings as they pertain to future research are discussed.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would first like to thank my mother for always wanting more for me than she had for herself. Everything she sacrificed for me to succeed helped me to keep pressing on when I thought I would never complete this project.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Howard Tokunaga. I don't know where I would be without his encouragement, accessibility, and commitment to completing this goal. His insight, responsiveness, and tremendous help was invaluable.

Additionally I would like to thank Dr. Megumi Hosoda whose thoughts and insights greatly improved the project. And to Rachel Pickworth for her valuable help and time. This project would not be what it is without the help of these two wonderful women.

I would also like to thank Ryan for his unwavering love and support through this project and always. This thesis simply wouldn't be possible without him. And to Addison and Xzavier who provide all the motivation I'll ever need.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
INTRODUCTION .....	1
Counterproductive Work Behavior – Definition and Dimensionality .....	2
Predictors of Counterproductive Work Behavior .....	6
Perceived Organizational Support – Definition .....	8
Outcomes of Perceived Organizational Support .....	11
Hypothesis 1a .....	19
Hypothesis 1b .....	19
Hypothesis 2a .....	20
Hypothesis 2b .....	20
Hypothesis 3a .....	21
Hypothesis 3b .....	21
Hypothesis 4a .....	21
Hypothesis 4b .....	22
Research Question 1 .....	23
Research Question 2 .....	23
METHOD .....	24
Participants .....	24
Procedures .....	29
Measures .....	30

Perceived organizational support.....	30
Personality.....	30
Counterproductive work behavior .....	31
Demographic information.....	32
RESULTS .....	33
Descriptive Statistics.....	33
Perceived Organizational Support and Counterproductive Work Behavior.....	35
Interactive Effect of Conscientiousness and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance .....	35
Interactive Effect of Agreeableness and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance .....	37
Interactive Effect of Emotional Stability and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance .....	39
Interactive Effect of Openness to Experience and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance.....	41
Interactive Effect of Extraversion and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance .....	43
Test of Hypotheses by Sample.....	46
DISCUSSION .....	57
Theoretical Implications .....	59
Practical Implications.....	61
Strengths .....	63
Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research.....	64
Conclusion .....	65
REFERENCES .....	66



## LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 1.	Interaction between perceived organizational support and conscientiousness for in-class sample.....	49
FIGURE 2.	Interaction between perceived organizational support and agreeableness for in-class sample .....	52

## LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 1.	Demographic Information.....	24
TABLE 2.	Industry Respondents Worked In.....	26
TABLE 3.	Demographic Information by Sample.....	27
TABLE 4.	Industry Respondents Worked In by Sample.....	28
TABLE 5.	Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables.....	34
TABLE 6.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Interpersonal Deviance .....	36
TABLE 7.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Organizational Deviance.....	37
TABLE 8.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Interpersonal Deviance .....	38
TABLE 9.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Organizational Deviance.....	39
TABLE 10.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Interpersonal Deviance .....	40
TABLE 11.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Organizational Deviance .....	41
TABLE 12.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Interpersonal Deviance .....	42
TABLE 13.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Organizational Deviance.....	43

TABLE 14.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Interpersonal Deviance .....	44
TABLE 15.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Organizational Deviance .....	45
TABLE 16.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample.....	47
TABLE 17.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample .....	48
TABLE 18.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample.....	50
TABLE 19.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample .....	51
TABLE 20.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample.....	53
TABLE 21.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample .....	54
TABLE 22.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample.....	54
TABLE 23.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample .....	55
TABLE 24.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample.....	55

TABLE 25.	Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample.....	56
-----------	--	----

## Introduction

For years, research in industrial/organizational psychology has focused on identifying relationships between individual characteristics (e.g., attitudes, beliefs, abilities, skills, past experiences, and personality traits) and desirable workplace behaviors (e.g., motivation, prosocial behavior, and productivity). While it is important to know the factors that contribute to a successful working relationship between an individual and an organization, it is also important to understand the factors that may contribute to undesirable behaviors, such as counterproductive work behavior, also referred to as workplace deviance.

Workplace deviance has become a persistent and expensive problem for many organizations. For example, Bennett and Robinson (2000) surveyed 226 professionals and found that 50% of the respondents had stolen from their employer at least once in the past year; 25% to 73% had engaged in behaviors such as gossiping, tardiness, theft, fraud, sabotage, vandalism, or voluntary absenteeism, and 26% of the respondents used an illegal drug or consumed alcohol while on the job. In other research, it was found that 40% to 60% of women in a sample of American company employees claimed to have experienced some form of sexual harassment while at work (Buchanan & Fitzgerald, 2008).

It is not surprising that the prevalence of workplace deviance poses a huge financial threat to organizations. It is estimated to cost organizations between \$6 and \$200 billion annually (Murphy, 1993). Specifically, losses due to employee theft have reached an estimated \$120 billion per year (Buss, 1993), workplace violence costs an

estimated \$4.2 billion per year (Bensimon, 1994), and missed work due to crime victimization occurring on the job has resulted in approximately \$55 million in lost wages annually, not including days covered by sick and vacation time (Bachman, 1994).

Despite the cost and prevalence of counterproductive work behavior, knowledge regarding workplace deviance is limited. There are a number of factors that can contribute to counterproductive work behavior (e.g., the presence of frustrators, stressors in the workplace, work group norms). Although progress has been made in understanding how the work situations (e.g., perceived organizational support) and individual characteristics (e.g., personality traits) contribute to the occurrence of workplace deviance, research has not fully examined how these two factors jointly relate to counterproductive work behavior.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to further advance the knowledge and understanding of counterproductive work behavior by looking at how an individual's personality traits and perceived organizational support interact to predict the likelihood of workplace deviance. Being able to identify the factors that relate to counterproductive work behavior can help employers better understand what could lead to workplace deviance and enable them to take action to mitigate deviance in the workplace.

### **Counterproductive Work Behavior – Definition and Dimensionality**

Counterproductive work behavior is most often defined as “voluntary behavior [of organizational members] that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both” (Robinson & Bennett, 1995, p. 556). In other words, counterproductive behaviors are behaviors performed by

an employee while at work that could cause harm or threat and pose unnecessary costs to an organization or its employees. Counterproductive work behavior can assume various forms and vary in severity. Behaviors can include minor acts such as spreading rumors, embarrassing co-workers, or coming to work late as well as more serious acts such as theft, violence, or sabotage (Dunlop & Lee, 2004). Counterproductive behavior includes both acts of commission such as acts of physical aggression and acts of omission such as deliberately not passing on telephone messages (Kelloway, Loughlin, Barling, & Nault, 2002).

An important distinction to note is that these behaviors must threaten the well-being of an organization to be considered deviant (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Therefore, violations of social norms, such as wearing inappropriate clothing to work, does not directly harm most organizations and is not considered to be a counterproductive work behavior (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). It is also important to understand that counterproductive work behaviors are not necessarily the same as ethical violations (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). While a wide variety of counterproductive behaviors are considered to be unethical by most individuals, not all unethical behaviors are considered to be counterproductive work behaviors. For example, if part of one's job responsibilities includes dumping toxic waste into a river, he/she is behaving in a way that many people would find unethical. However, because he/she is acting in accordance with one's organization's norms, the behavior is not considered to be counterproductive.

Research surrounding counterproductive work behavior has focused primarily on developing groupings for these behaviors (Gruys & Sackett, 2003). Hollinger and Clark

(1983) pioneered this type of research by developing a broad list of counterproductive behaviors, providing a conceptual framework for interrelating those behaviors, and collecting self-report data from a large number of employees in three industries: retail, manufacturing, and service (i.e., hospitals). From their investigation, they proposed two broad categories of counterproductive work behavior: “property deviance” and “production deviance.” Behaviors performed that cause harm to items owned by an organization is property deviance. This type of deviance includes such behaviors as theft, property damage, and the misuse of discount privileges (Hollinger & Clark, 1983). Production deviances, on the other hand, are behaviors that negatively affect one’s ability to do their job. This type of deviance includes behaviors such as not being on the job as scheduled, intentionally working slowly, or drinking on the job (Hollinger & Clark, 1983).

While Robinson and Bennett (1995) saw Hollinger and Clark’s (1983) work as a starting point for creating an integrative framework of counterproductive work behaviors, they sought to develop a more comprehensive classification of deviant behaviors. Specifically, Robinson and Bennett argued that the typologies presented by Hollinger and Clark were not comprehensive. Hollinger and Clark’s categories captured acts against the organization, but did not include deviant acts amongst coworkers. As such, Robinson and Bennett wanted to include interpersonal behaviors into their framework. Interpersonal behaviors are those behaviors that directly affect other employees. Examples of interpersonal behaviors include gossiping, physical aggression, assault, and sexual harassment, to name a few.



To develop a more comprehensive classification, Robinson and Bennett (1995) asked employees from various organizations (i.e., a university office, a technical staff office within an industrial company, a neighborhood, and an evening master's program) to generate a large number of critical incidents of "someone at work engaging in something considered to be deviant at the workplace, i.e., something that is considered to be wrong" (Robinson & Bennett, 1995, p. 558). From this list, 45 deviant workplace behaviors were identified. Robinson and Bennett then gave a group of 180 MBA students who were employed full-time a survey containing the list of those 45 deviant behaviors and a brief description of a target behavior. These individuals were then asked to rate each deviant behavior in terms of the similarities to or differences from the target behavior. These comparisons were subjected to multidimensional scaling and resulted in a two-dimensional solution. One dimension differentiated behaviors toward the organization from interpersonal behaviors toward other organizational members (similar to Hollinger and Clark's production and property deviance). The second dimension represented the severity of the act or behavior (ranging from minor to serious offenses). The interaction of these two dimensions resulted in four quadrants which Robinson and Bennett labeled: property deviance (organizational – serious), production deviance (organizational – minor), personal aggression (interpersonal – serious) and political deviance (interpersonal – minor).

More recently, Bennett and Robinson (2000) developed a measure of counterproductive work behavior and presented evidence of construct validity using a sample of 126 full-time employees and 100 first year MBA students who worked

primarily in service industries (45.6%) and retail establishments (19.5%). Their study supported their previous distinction between production and property deviance, yet they recommended dropping the second dimension, the severity of the behavior, they had proposed earlier. This recommendation was based on the fact that unlike the distinction between interpersonal versus organizational deviance (dimension one), the degree of severity (dimension two) was more a quantitative rather than a qualitative distinction (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). Interpersonal and organizational deviances fall into two distinct families representing two qualitatively different forms of deviance. Interpersonal and organizational deviance can contain both serious and minor offenses; therefore, the second dimension (severity) is not a dimension that is distinct from the other dimension proposed (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). The measure that resulted from this study was entitled the *Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale*.

### **Predictors of Counterproductive Work Behavior**

Several variables have been found to be related to counterproductive work behavior. For example, personality characteristics have been found to be related to an individual's propensity to engage in counterproductive work behavior (e.g., Giacalone & Knouse 1990; Perlow & Latham, 1993; Skarlicki, Folger, & Tesluk, 1999; Storms & Spector, 1987). Individuals high in impulsivity act with little forethought, lacking the self-discipline necessary to withhold deviant responses, and are likely to engage in deviant behavior (Henle, 2005). Individuals high in trait anger, who likely perceive a wide range of situations as anger provoking, also have more incidents of deviant behavior at work (Fox & Spector, 1999). These individuals report experiencing more frequent and

intense day-to-day anger across a wide variety of situations, stronger tendencies to respond to provocations with physical and verbal antagonism, and lower instances of constructive coping (Deffenbacher, 1992). Fox and Spector (1999) found trait anger to be particularly associated with deviant behaviors targeting individuals within the organization. Similarly, individuals high in narcissism experience anger more frequently and are likely to engage in more counterproductive work behaviors (Penney & Spector, 2002).

Other research has focused on identifying aspects of the job that relate to counterproductive work behavior. This includes environmental or situational factors of counterproductive work behavior such as low distributive, procedural, or interactional justice (Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Greenberg, 1990, 1993; Henle, 2005; Moorman, Niehoff, & Organ, 1993; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997); the presence of frustrators (Fox & Spector, 1999; Spector, 1997); and stressors in the workplace (Chen & Spector, 1992; Fox et al., 2001). When an employee feels that they have experienced injustice (low organizational justice), there is the presence of frustrators, or there is an increase of job stressors, this could increase an individual's tendency to engage in counterproductive work behaviors.

In addition, social characteristics of the work environment have also been explored. Supervisory and work group norms (Greenberg & Scott, 1996) as well as coworker support (Liao, Joshi, & Chuang, 2004) have all been found to relate to individual levels of counterproductive work behavior. According to Greenberg and Scott (1996), supervisors can condone employee theft by serving as a model of deviant

behavior and/or by permitting some theft as an informal source of reward or “perk.” For example, managers may allow employees to take extended breaks or lunches while on the clock as a reward for a job well done. Similarly, social group norms at work appear to influence the occurrence of deviant behavior (Greenberg & Scott, 1996). Some group norms dictate not only the acceptability of employee theft on both the individual and group level, but also the type and frequency of the deviance as well (Greenberg & Scott, 1996). Liao et al. (2004) predicted that when coworkers perceive high levels of coworker support, they would “cover up” for their peers in the event that they are engaging in deviant behaviors, and indeed found that greater coworker support was associated with higher levels of organizational and interpersonal deviance.

Given that perceptions of the group and supervisory norms as well as an employee’s perception of the level of coworker support have been found to be related to higher levels of counterproductive work behavior, it is logical to question if perceptions of the organization contribute to counterproductive work behavior as well. This issue, perceived organizational support, has not been investigated much in the literature. To date, only two studies, which will be discussed in greater detail later, have looked at the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior.

### **Perceived Organizational Support – Definition**

Perceived organizational support refers to an “employees’ general belief that their work organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being” (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 698). According to organizational support theory, the

development of perceived organizational support is due, in part, to an employee's tendency to assign the organization humanlike characteristics (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986). Because of this personification of the organization, employees view favorable or unfavorable treatment by the organization as an indication of the extent to which the organization likes them (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Therefore, if employees feel supported by the organization they will feel obligated to care about that organization's well-being and put forth effort to help the organization succeed and achieve its goals.

Eisenberger et al. (1986) coined the term perceived organizational support. As with any newly theorized construct, much research has been conducted to determine if perceived organizational support is its own distinct construct and not merely a dimension of another construct. While perceived organizational support is closely related to some constructs (e.g., job satisfaction, supervisor support), it has found to be related to, yet distinct from a number of constructs (e.g., procedural justice, organizational commitment). One such example is leader-member exchange.

Leader-member exchange theory suggests that an interpersonal relationship evolves between supervisors and subordinates (Graen & Cashman, 1975). The relationship is based on social exchange, where each party must offer something the other party sees as valuable and both parties see the exchange as equitable or fair (Graen & Scandura, 1987). The greater the perceived value of the exchange, the higher the quality of the leader-member exchange relationship (Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Higher

levels of leader-member exchange have been positively related to job attitudes and performance evaluations (Liden, Sparrowe, & Wayne, 1997).

Given that both perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange are based in a social exchange framework, and have some things in common, there is a question as to whether or not they are conceptually distinct (Wayne et al., 1997). A study conducted by Wayne et al. (1997) explored the distinctiveness of perceived organizational support from leader-member exchange. A confirmatory factor analysis supported the existence of two factors representing perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange. In addition, they found different patterns of antecedents and outcomes for each construct. As a result, they concluded that the results implied that employees distinguish the exchanges they have with the organization from those they have with their leaders. In sum, perceived organizational support is a construct distinct from the leader-member exchange construct.

In addition, some research has looked at variables that are related to, or predict, perceived organizational support. The level of perceived organizational support felt by an individual is related to such variables as pay, rank, job enrichment, organizational rewards, promotions, verbal praise, and one's influence over organizational policies (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Receipt of praise, approval, and other similar favorable treatments are likely to increase the level of perceived organizational support felt by an employee.

## Outcomes of Perceived Organizational Support

Numerous studies have investigated the outcomes of perceived organizational support. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) conducted a meta-analysis of more than 70 empirical studies that contained 166 assessments of associations between perceived organizational support and its outcomes. Results of the meta-analyses showed perceived organizational support to be positively related to organizational commitment ( $\rho = .67$ ), job satisfaction ( $\rho = .62$ ), positive mood at work ( $\rho = .49$ ), job involvement ( $\rho = .39$ ), in-role performance ( $\rho = .18$ ), extrarole performance towards the organization ( $\rho = .28$ ), and desire to remain with the organization ( $\rho = .66$ ).

While much research to date has primarily focused on examining the relationship between perceived organizational support and positive outcomes for the employee and organization, perceived organizational support is also related to negative behaviors or outcomes. Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) meta-analysis found perceived organizational support to be negatively related to strains ( $\rho = -.32$ ), withdrawal behavior ( $\rho = -.34$ ), and turnover intention ( $\rho = -.51$ ).

While there are not any studies included in Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) meta-analysis that looked specifically at counterproductive work behavior, it is likely that perceived organizational support is also negatively related to workplace deviance. According to organizational support theory, perceived organizational support "should produce a felt obligation to care about the organization's welfare and to help the organization reach its objectives" (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 699). One way an employee may reciprocate for the organizational support received by their employer is by

staying committed to the organization and being actively involved in their work. Conversely, when employees perceive a lack of support from the organization, they might become less motivated to refrain from behaviors that harm the organization (Liao et al., 2004), which may lead to deviant behaviors such as hostility or aggression (Spector, 1997).

As part of a larger study, Liao et al. (2004) investigated the effects of perceived organizational support on workplace deviance. This study was one of the first studies to look at each dimension of workplace deviance independently, rather than combining the two dimensions. Specifically, they investigated the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal and organizational deviance. Consistent with their expectations, they found perceived organizational support to negatively predict organizational deviance; however, they did not find the same relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance. Although they did not offer an explanation to their findings, they did report finding organizational commitment and coworker satisfaction to negatively predict interpersonal deviance.

Colbert, Mount, Harter, Will, and Barrick (2004) examined the joint relationship of perceptions of the work situation and personality traits on workplace deviance. Their study was conducted using four samples of employees. In two of the samples, they examined the relationship of perceptions of the developmental environment with one form of organizational deviance, withholding effort. Perceptions of the development environment was defined as “the extent to which the job itself and others in the organization provide challenge, support, encouragement, and feedback that are necessary



for employee development” (Colbert et al., 2004, p. 600). In the other two samples they examined the relationship of perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance.

Additionally, Colbert et al. (2004) investigated the direct and potential moderating effect of three of the Big Five personality traits: conscientiousness, emotional stability, and agreeableness, on these relationships. In samples 1 and 2, Colbert et al. hypothesized that conscientiousness would be negatively related to withholding effort. Furthermore, they hypothesized that conscientiousness would moderate the relationship between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort. People high in conscientiousness are purposeful, hardworking, achievement oriented, dependable and persistent (Barrick, Mount, & Strauss, 1993). They are also thought to be dutiful and have a tendency to abide by rules (Barrick & Mount, 1991). As such, those low in conscientiousness are hypothesized to withhold effort even when they hold an unfavorable perception of the developmental environment. Conversely, individuals high in conscientiousness, due to their tendency to be achievement oriented and dutiful, and have a strong tendency to abide by rules, are not likely to withhold effort regardless of whether or not they have a positive perception of the situation.

Colbert et al. (2004) also proposed in samples 1 and 2 that emotional stability would be negatively related to withholding effort. Furthermore, they hypothesized that emotional stability would moderate the relationship between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort. Specifically, the relationship between perceptions of the developmental environment and withholding effort was hypothesized to be stronger for individuals low in emotional stability. Individuals low in emotional

stability tend to be anxious, depressed, angry, emotional, worried and insecure (Barrick & Mount, 1991). They also tend to engage in avoidance-based coping when faced with a stressful situation (Cullen & Sackett, 2003).

In samples 3 and 4, Colbert et al. (2004) hypothesized that agreeableness would be negatively related to interpersonal workplace deviance. Furthermore, they hypothesized that agreeableness would act as a moderator on the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance. Agreeable people (people high in agreeableness) tend to be more courteous, cooperative, trusting, nurturing, forgiving, and tolerant (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Skarlicki et al., 1999). Because of these characteristics, it is believed that individuals high in agreeableness are less likely to participate in interpersonal deviance, even if they do not feel supported by the organization. On the other hand, individuals low in agreeableness (disagreeable people) are more likely to be argumentative, temperamental, antagonistic, vengeful, inconsiderate, emotional, and uncooperative (Barrick & Mount, 1991). Interpersonal conflict (i.e., deviance) is an accepted response in disagreeable people. Thus, it was hypothesized that the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance would be stronger when agreeableness is low than when it is high.

Colbert et al. (2004) found support for their hypotheses that perceptions of the work situation were significantly related to deviance. Specifically, in support of their first hypothesis, they found that perceptions of the developmental environment were negatively related to withholding effort, such that employees with positive perceptions of the work situation were less likely to withhold effort. In support of their second

hypothesis, they found that perceived organizational support was negatively related to interpersonal deviance, such that employees who perceived high levels of support from their organization were less likely to be deviant towards individuals within that organization.

Colbert et al. (2004) also found support for two of their three hypotheses regarding the relationship between personality traits and deviance. A significant negative correlation was found between conscientiousness and withholding effort as well as between agreeableness and interpersonal deviance. They did not however, find a significant correlation between emotional stability and withholding effort.

In addition, Colbert et al. (2004) found support for all three of their hypotheses regarding the joint effect of personality and perceptions of the work situation on deviant behavior. The relationship between perceptions of the developmental environment and deviance was strongest when an individual's level of conscientiousness was low. This means that individuals who are low on conscientiousness are not likely to withhold effort if they have more positive perceptions of the developmental environment. On the other hand, when an individual is high in conscientiousness, the correlation between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort is essentially zero. This suggests that these individuals are not likely to withhold effort, regardless of their perception of the developmental environment.

Similarly, they found the relationship between perceptions of the developmental environment and deviance was strongest when an individual's level of agreeableness was low. This suggests that individuals who are low on agreeableness are not likely to engage

in interpersonal deviance if they perceive higher levels of support from their organization. Conversely, they found that with highly agreeable individuals, the correlation between perceived organizational support and engaging in interpersonal deviance was essentially zero, such that agreeable people are not likely to engage in deviant acts toward others even if provoked by negative perceptions of the working environment.

Lastly, Colbert et al. (2004) found that the interaction between emotional stability and perceptions of the development environment was statistically significant. As predicted, the relationship between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort was strongest for individuals low in emotional stability, however, individuals low in emotional stability who held positive perceptions of the development environment exhibited the lowest level of withholding effort. This suggests that individuals low in emotional stability are more sensitive to situational perceptions than individuals high in emotional stability and therefore are more likely to reciprocate by working hard and withholding less effort. In sum, Colbert et al. found that “negative perceptions of the work situation may lead employees to exhibit deviant behavior; however, this relationship may be suppressed or facilitated depending on employees’ personality traits” (p. 606).

Colbert et al. (2004) provided a first attempt at understanding the joint effects of personality and perceptions of the work situation on workplace deviance. They found that personality moderated the relationship between situational perceptions and deviant

behavior. Specifically, negative perceptions of the work situation are more strongly related to deviance when conscientiousness, emotional stability, or agreeableness is low.

Their study is noteworthy for several reasons. First, they considered the joint effects of two perceptions of the work situation (perceptions of the developmental environment and perceived organizational support) and three personality traits (conscientiousness, emotional stability, and agreeableness) on two types of deviance (withholding effort and interpersonal deviance) in four samples of employees. Taking into account different aspects of perceived organizational support, deviance, and personality across multiple samples helped to more broadly explore the research and increase the generalizability of the findings. In addition, they looked at personality as a constraint on the perception – deviance relationship. By doing this, they were able to more clearly clarify how perceptions of the work situation and personality traits act together to influence deviant behavior at work.

Although Colbert et al. (2004) found support for their hypotheses and added to the understanding of the joint relationship of personality and perceptions of the work situation on workplace deviance, their study has some limitations. Due to constraints placed by the participating organizations in the study, only one form of deviance was examined in each sample. In the first two samples, they examined only one form of organizational deviance, withholding effort, and in the third and fourth sample they examined interpersonal deviance. The current study expands their research by examining the joint relationship of perceptions of the work situation (i.e., perceived organizational

support) and personality on both organizational and interpersonal deviance in the same sample.

In addition, Colbert et al. (2004) choose to look at only three of the five personality traits of the Big Five. In order to have a more complete understanding of the moderating role personality has on the relationship between perceptions of the work environment and deviance, it is important that all five personality traits are included. As such, the current study not only examines the three personality traits Colbert et al. examined, but also looks at what roles openness to experience and extraversion have in the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behaviors.

The purpose of the current study is to examine the joint effects of perceived organizational support and personality on counterproductive work behavior. The first interest is to examine the direct effect of perceived organizational support on both forms of counterproductive work behavior. As mentioned previously, counterproductive work behavior is a two dimensional construct. It is comprised of interpersonal deviance (deviant behaviors targeted toward individuals) and organizational deviance (deviant behaviors targeted toward the organization). This study looks at interpersonal and organizational deviance separately based on research conducted by Berry, Ones, and Sackett (2007). Berry et al. conducted a meta-analysis and found support for the usefulness of separating self-report workplace deviance scales into the interpersonal and organizational deviance dimensions, despite the fact that both dimensions correlate highly with one another.

Colbert et al. (2004) found perceived organizational support to be negatively related to interpersonal deviance. Similarly, Liao et al. (2004) found perceived organizational support to be negatively related to organizational deviance. Based on these findings, this study hypothesizes the following:

*Hypothesis 1a:* Perceived organizational support will be negatively related to interpersonal deviance.

*Hypothesis 1b:* Perceived organizational support will be negatively related to organizational deviance.

The second interest of this study is to examine the moderating effects of personality on the relationship between perceived organizational support and both interpersonal and organizational deviance. First, in terms of the personality trait conscientiousness, Colbert et al. (2004) found that when individuals are high in conscientiousness, the correlation between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort is essentially zero. This means that these individuals are unlikely to withhold effort even if they perceive little support for development efforts from the organization. Individuals who are conscientious are dutiful, orderly, self-disciplined, competent, and achievement striving (Costa & McCrae, 1992). In response to stressful life events, conscientious individuals engage in more active planning, less maladaptive coping, and more support-seeking behaviors (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). These findings suggest that conscientious individuals will seek out more constructive ways to deal with dissatisfaction, and as such will be less likely to participate in either interpersonal or organizational deviance.

*Hypothesis 2a:* Conscientiousness will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance will be stronger when conscientiousness is low than when it is high.

*Hypothesis 2b:* Conscientiousness will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance will be stronger when conscientiousness is low than when it is high.

Next, in regards to agreeableness, Colbert et al. (2004) found individuals high in agreeableness are less likely to engage in deviant acts toward others, even if they feel negatively towards the organization. Based on these findings, it is hypothesized that individuals high in agreeableness will refrain from deviant behavior toward others (interpersonal deviance) even if they perceive little support from the organization. Agreeable individuals tend to be good-natured, cooperative, forgiving, and soft-hearted (Barrick & Mount, 1991). In addition, the trait of agreeableness may produce an unfavorable attitude toward aggressive acts; this may in turn make it unlikely that an agreeable individual will engage in violent acts in the workplace (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). As such, this study hypothesizes that those individuals high in agreeableness will



be less likely to engage in counterproductive work behaviors toward the organization, even if they do not feel supported by the organization.

*Hypothesis 3a:* Agreeableness will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance will be stronger when agreeableness is low than when it is high.

*Hypothesis 3b:* Agreeableness will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance will be stronger when agreeableness is low than when it is high.

Regarding emotional stability, Colbert et al. (2004) found the relationship between perceptions of the development environment and withholding effort was stronger for individuals low in emotional stability than for those high in emotional stability. Individuals low in emotional stability are prone to experience feelings of sadness, anger, and contempt (Cullen & Sackett, 2003). They are also anxious, depressed, embarrassed, emotional, and insecure (Barrick & Mount, 1991). As such, individuals low in emotional stability will engage in an assortment of counterproductive work behaviors (Cullen & Sackett, 2003).

*Hypothesis 4a:* Emotional stability will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal

deviance, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance will be stronger when emotional stability is low than when it is high.

*Hypothesis 4b:* Emotional stability will moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance, such that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance will be stronger when emotional stability is low than when it is high.

In addition to the three personality traits just discussed, there are two other personality traits included in the Big Five: openness to experience and extraversion. Little research has been conducted to make a hypothesis regarding the potential moderating effect of openness to experience and extraversion on the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behaviors. As such, the following section will briefly define each construct and pose research questions.

Individuals high in openness to experience, or intellect as it is also referred to, are characterized as imaginative, cultured, curious, original, broad-minded and intelligent (Barrick & Mount, 1991). No information has been found to intelligently hypothesize what effect, if any, openness to experience will have on the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior. Therefore:

*Research Question 1:* Will openness to experience moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behaviors?

Individuals high in extraversion are often described as friendly, sociable, assertive, warm, talkative, and outgoing (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Costa & McCrae, 1992). While research on the effects of extraversion on the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior is limited, Cullen and Sackett (2003) theorize that individuals lower on extraversion are more likely to react to negative perception of the organization by engaging in counterproductive work behaviors. This is based on the assumption that people low in extraversion are often sluggish and drowsy, lacking the energy and enthusiasm required to make the effort to tackle work successfully. Unfortunately, Cullen and Sackett did not follow their hypothesis up with an empirical study; therefore, this study will simply investigate this relationship:

*Research Question 2:* Will extraversion moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behaviors?

## Method

### Participants

Initially, a total of 404 responses were received; 154 from in-class participants and 250 from the on-line survey. However, of the 154 in-class respondents, 65 indicated they were not employed at the time of data collection and were excluded from the respondent pool. Additionally, 14 of the on-line respondents did not finish the survey and were excluded as well. As a result, 325 respondents (98 men and 226 women) were retained and included in statistical analyses. Table 1 shows the demographic information of the participants in the present study.

Table 1

*Demographic Information*

	<i>n</i>	%
Gender		
Male	98	30.2
Female	226	69.2
Age		
18-25	135	41.5
26-35	96	29.5
36-49	49	15.1
50+	44	13.5
Employment status		
Part-time	108	33.3
Full-time	216	66.5
Retired	1	.3
Tenure		
Less than 6 months	41	12.6
6 months to 1 year	59	18.2
1-3 years	111	34.2
4-8 years	63	19.4
9+ years	51	15.7

*Note.* One respondent did not indicate gender or age

The majority of participants (41.5%) were between ages 18 and 25, 29.5% were between 26 and 35 years old, 15.1% were between 36 and 49 years old, and 13.5% were 50 years or older. The majority of participants (66.5%) indicated that they were working full-time, 33.2% were working part-time, and only one person (.3%) was retired at the time of data collection. Over half of the respondents had been working for their current employer for less than 3 years. Forty-one respondents (12.6%) have been employed less than six months, 18.2% were employed between six months and one year, 34.2% were employed between one and three years, 19.4% were employed between four and eight years, and 15.7% were employed more than nine years with their current employer. Table 2 shows the variety of industries the respondents worked in.

Demographic information for each sample can be found in Table 3. The on-line distribution of the survey, from here on out referred to as the “on-line sample,” resulted in 235 usable responses. Respondents from the on-line sample were predominantly female (71.2%), between the ages of 26 and 35 years old (38.6%), employed full-time (86.4%), and worked for their current employers more than 4 years (45.4%). The other method, an in-class distribution of the survey, from here on out referred to as the “in-class sample,” was distributed to four undergraduate psychology classes and resulted in 89 usable responses. Respondents in the student sample were predominantly female (65.2%), between the ages of 18 and 25 years old (91%), employed part-time (86.5%), and worked for their current employer less than 3 years (98.9%). Table 4 shows what industries the respondents worked in by sample.

Table 2  
*Industries Respondents Worked In*

	<i>n</i>	<i>%</i>
Accounting/Finance	17	5.2
Advertising/Public Relations	3	.9
Arts/Entertainment/Publishing	5	1.5
Banking/Mortgage	5	1.5
Clerical/Administrative	4	1.2
Construction/Facilities	5	1.5
Customer Service	7	2.2
Education/Training	41	12.6
Engineering/Architecture	10	3.1
Government/Military	21	6.5
Healthcare	25	7.7
Hospitality/Travel	4	1.2
Human Resources	7	2.2
Insurance	6	1.8
Internet/New Media	2	.6
Law Enforcement/Security	3	.9
Legal	11	3.4
Management Consulting	3	.9
Manufacturing/Operations	9	2.8
Marketing	5	1.5
Non-Profit/Volunteer	9	2.8
Pharmaceutical/Biotech	4	1.2
Real Estate	6	1.8
Restaurant/Food Service	20	6.2
Retail	16	4.9
Sales	23	7.1
Technology	16	4.9
Telecommunications	5	1.5
Transportation/Logistics	1	.3
Other	19	5.8

*Note.* Thirteen respondents did not indicate the industry they work in.

Table 3

*Demographic Information by Sample*

	<u>On-line (n=236)</u>		<u>In-class (n=89)</u>	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
<b>Gender</b>				
Male	67	28.4	31	34.8
Female	168	71.2	58	65.2
<b>Age</b>				
18-25	54	22.9	81	91.0
26-35	91	38.6	5	5.6
36-49	46	19.5	3	3.4
50+	44	18.6	0	0
<b>Employment status</b>				
Part-time	31	13.1	77	86.5
Full-time	204	86.4	12	13.5
Retired	1	.4	0	0
<b>Tenure</b>				
Less than 6 months	15	6.4	26	29.2
6 months to 1 year	35	14.8	24	27.0
1-3 years	79	33.5	32	36.0
4-8 years	57	24.2	6	6.7
9+ years	50	21.2	1	1.1

*Note.* One respondent from the on-line survey sample did not indicate gender or age

Table 4  
*Industries Respondents Worked In by Sample*

	<u>On-line (n=236)</u>		<u>Student (n=89)</u>	
	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%
Accounting/Finance	15	6.4	2	2.2
Advertising/Public Relations	2	.8	1	1.1
Arts/Entertainment/Publishing	4	1.7	1	1.1
Banking/Mortgage	4	1.7	1	1.1
Clerical/Administrative	2	.8	2	2.2
Construction/Facilities	5	2.1	0	0
Customer Service	2	.8	5	5.6
Education/Training	33	14.0	8	9.0
Engineering/Architecture	9	3.8	1	1.1
Government/Military	21	8.9	0	0
Healthcare	20	8.5	5	5.6
Hospitality/Travel	3	1.3	1	1.1
Human Resources	5	2.1	2	2.2
Insurance	5	2.1	1	1.1
Internet/New Media	1	.4	1	1.1
Law Enforcement/Security	1	.4	2	2.2
Legal	10	4.2	1	1.1
Management Consulting	2	.8	1	1.1
Manufacturing/Operations	7	3.0	2	2.2
Marketing	4	1.7	1	1.1
Non-Profit/Volunteer	7	3.0	2	2.2
Pharmaceutical/Biotech	3	1.3	1	1.1
Real Estate	6	2.5	0	0
Restaurant/Food Service	4	1.7	16	18.0
Retail	3	1.3	13	14.6
Sales	19	8.1	4	4.5
Technology	13	5.5	3	3.4
Telecommunications	5	2.1	0	0
Transportation/Logistics	1	.4	0	0
Other	19	8.1	0	0

*Note.* Thirteen respondents did not indicate the industry they work in.



## **Procedures**

Two methods were used to collect data: an in-class and on-line distribution of a survey. Surveys were distributed to four undergraduate psychology classes during class time. The university utilized for this study is in a large metropolitan area and considered by some to be a commuter school with a large number of the students attending employed at least part-time while going to school. Prior to the administration of the survey, students were given an informed consent letter highlighting the confidentiality and voluntary nature of the study, and were instructed to fill out the survey using their most recent employment experience. If they were not employed at the time of data collection, they were instructed to reference their most recent job when completing the survey. Students who completed the survey were given credit toward completion of a research requirement for the course.

In addition, people could sign up to take the survey online. Participants were given access to an on-line version of the survey through an on-line survey tool. Prior to beginning the survey, participants were asked to read an informed consent letter highlighting the nature of the study, the time commitment involved, and the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. They were instructed to fill out the survey using their most recent employment experience. If they were not employed at the time of data collection, they were instructed to reference their most recent job when completing the survey.

## Measures

**Perceived organizational support.** Perceived organizational support, “an employees’ general belief that their work organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being” (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002, p. 698), was measured with the 16 item short version of the Survey of Perceived Organizational Support by Eisenberger et al. (1986). This measurement was selected based on its high usage rate within the perceived organizational support research community. Most researchers choose the shorter version, as selected here, for practical reasons and according to Rhoades and Eisenberg (2002), “because the original scale is unidimensional and has high internal reliability, the use of shorter versions does not appear problematic” (p. 699). Sample items for this scale are: “The organization values my contribution to its well-being,” “The organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible,” and “Help is available from the organization when I have a problem.” Using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), participants were asked to indicate the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each statement. The average responses were calculated such that higher scores on the scale indicate more perceived organizational support from their employer. In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha was .93.

**Personality.** Personality was measured with all items from the Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991; John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). The scale contains 44 items that measure extraversion (8 items) (e.g., “I see myself as someone who generates a lot of enthusiasm”), agreeableness (9 items) (e.g., “I see myself as

someone who has a forgiving nature”), conscientiousness (9 items) (e.g., “I see myself as someone who does things efficiently”), emotional stability (8 items) (e.g., “I see myself as someone who gets nervous easily”), and openness to experience (10 items) (e.g., “I see myself as someone who has an active imagination”). Using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from *strongly disagree* (1) to *strongly agree* (5), participants were asked to indicate the degree of their agreement or disagreement with each statement. The average responses were calculated such that higher scores on the scale indicate a higher level of a given personality trait, with the exception of emotional stability. Lower scores on that scale indicate a higher level of emotional stability. In the present study, the Cronbach’s alpha was .79 for conscientiousness, .73 for agreeableness, .80 for emotional stability, .79 for openness to experience, and .86 for extraversion.

**Counterproductive work behavior.** Counterproductive work behavior, the “voluntary behavior [of organizational members] that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both” (Robinson & Bennett, 1995, p. 556), was measured with 19 items from the Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). The scale contains 7 items that measure interpersonal deviance (e.g., “Played a mean prank on someone at work,” “Made an ethnic, religious, or racial remark at work”) and 12 items that measure organizational deviance (e.g., “Falsified a receipt to get reimbursed for more money than you spent on business expenses,” “Discussed confidential company information with an unauthorized person”). Using a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from *never* (1) to *daily* (7), individuals were asked to indicate how often they had engaged in each behavior. The

average responses were calculated such that higher scores on the scale indicate more frequent engagement in counterproductive work behaviors. In the present study, the Cronbach's alpha was .81 for interpersonal deviance and .77 for organizational deviance.

**Demographic information.** Respondents were also asked information about their employment status (i.e., "What is your current employment status," "How long have you been working for your current employer," and "What industry are you currently employed in"), sex, and age.

## Results

### Descriptive Statistics

Means, standard deviations, reliability estimates, and correlations for the measured variables are presented in Table 5. Participants reported they felt support from their organizations ( $M = 3.62, SD = .69$ ). They also indicated that they engaged in organizational deviance ( $M = 2.02, SD = .74$ ) on average about once a year. The frequency of interpersonal deviance ( $M = 1.90, SD = .93$ ) was slightly less. Participants described themselves as conscientious ( $M = 3.82, SD = .52$ ), agreeable ( $M = 3.86, SD = .46$ ), extraverted ( $M = 3.53, SD = .69$ ), open to experiences ( $M = 3.62, SD = .53$ ), and emotionally stable ( $M = 2.66, SD = .64$ ).

Perceived organizational support was negatively correlated with both interpersonal deviance ( $r = -.13, p < .05$ ) and organizational deviance ( $r = -.29, p < .01$ ). The correlation was stronger with organizational deviance than with interpersonal deviance. It was also significantly correlated with three of the five personality traits; conscientiousness ( $r = .15, p < .01$ ), agreeableness ( $r = .23, p < .01$ ), and emotional stability ( $r = -.17, p = .01$ ). The five personality traits were all significantly correlated to one another, ranging from  $r = .11, p < .05$  to  $r = -.40, p < .01$ , with the exception of openness to experience and emotional stability; that relationship was not significant. Conscientiousness was significantly correlated with both interpersonal ( $r = -.24, p < .01$ ) and organizational deviance ( $r = -.44, p < .01$ ), as was agreeableness ( $r = -.29, p < .01, r = -.27, p < .01$ , respectively). Emotional stability, however, was not significantly related to interpersonal deviance; yet, it was significantly related to organizational deviance

Table 5  
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations of Study Variables

Variables	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Perceived org. support	3.62	.69	<b>.93</b>	.15**	.23**	-.17**	.02	.10	-.13*	-.29**
2. Conscientiousness	3.82	.52		<b>.79</b>	.34**	-.30**	.11*	.17**	-.24**	-.44**
3. Agreeableness	3.86	.46			<b>.73</b>	-.40**	.15**	.13*	-.29**	-.27**
4. Emotional stability	2.66	.64				<b>.80</b>	-.11	-.19**	.03	.18**
5. Openness to experience	3.62	.53					<b>.79</b>	.24**	-.03	.02
6. Extraversion	3.53	.69						<b>.86</b>	.11*	-.06
7. Interpersonal deviance	1.90	.93							<b>.81</b>	.43**
8. Organizational deviance	2.02	.74								<b>.77</b>

Note. N = 325. Values in bold on the diagonal are estimates of scale reliability.

\* p<.05 \*\*p<.01

( $r = .18, p < .01$ ). Openness to experience was not related to either form of deviance, while extraversion was weakly related to interpersonal deviance ( $r = .11, p < .05$ ), but not to organizational deviance. Lastly, interpersonal and organizational deviance were significantly related to one another ( $r = .43, p < .01$ ).

### **Perceived Organizational Support and Counterproductive Work Behavior**

To test Hypothesis 1a and 1b, a correlation analysis was run, which is presented in Table 5. In support of Hypothesis 1a, perceived organizational support was negatively related to interpersonal deviance, such that employees who perceived high levels of organizational support were less likely to engage in interpersonal deviance ( $r = -.13, p < .05$ ). Similarly, in support of Hypothesis 1b, perceived organizational support was negatively related to organizational deviance, such that employees who perceived high levels of organizational support were less likely to engage in organizational deviance ( $r = -.29, p < .01$ ). It should be noted that there was a stronger relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance than between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance. This implies that employees are more likely to refrain from acts of deviance toward the organization than from acts of deviance toward other employees, if they feel supported by the organization.

### **Interactive Effect of Conscientiousness and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance**

Hypothesis 2a, which predicted that conscientiousness would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance, such that the relationship is stronger when conscientiousness is low than when it is high, was

tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Results can be found in Table 6. At step 1, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 5.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . At step 2, conscientiousness was entered and significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for,  $R^2 = .07$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .05$ ,  $F(1, 322) = 17.12$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and conscientiousness was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .07$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .07$ . As a result, Hypothesis 2a was not supported.

Table 6

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Interpersonal Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.02*	5.52*	.02*
Step 2			
Conscientiousness	.05***	17.12***	.07***
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Conscientiousness	.00	.07	.07

Note.  $N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

Hypothesis 2b, which predicted that conscientiousness would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance, such that the relationship is stronger when conscientiousness is low than when it is high, was tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Results can be found in Table 7. At step 1, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of



the variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 30.18$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 2, conscientiousness was entered and significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for,  $R^2 = .24$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .16$ ,  $F(1, 322) = 66.56$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and conscientiousness was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .25$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = 1.73$ . As a result, Hypothesis 2b was not supported.

Table 7

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Organizational Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.09***	30.18***	.09***
Step 2			
Conscientiousness	.16***	66.56***	.24***
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Conscientiousness	.00	1.74	.25

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### **Interactive Effect of Agreeableness and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance**

Hypothesis 3a, which predicted that agreeableness would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance, such that the relationship is stronger when agreeableness is low than when it is high, was tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Results can be found in Table 8. At step 1, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of

the variance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 5.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . At step 2, agreeableness was entered and significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(1, 322) = 24.81$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and agreeableness was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .11$ . As a result, Hypothesis 3a was not supported.

Table 8

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Interpersonal Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.02*	5.52*	.02*
Step 2			
Agreeableness	.07***	24.81***	.09***
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Agreeableness	.00	.11	.09

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Hypothesis 3b, which predicted that agreeableness would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance, such that the relationship is stronger when agreeableness is low than when it is high, was tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Results can be found in Table 9. At step 1, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 30.18$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 2, agreeableness was entered and significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for,  $R^2 = .13$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .05$ ,

$F(1, 322) = 16.67, p < .001$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and agreeableness was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .13, \Delta R^2 = .00, F(1, 321) = .36$ . As a result, Hypothesis 3b was not supported.

Table 9

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Organizational Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.09***	30.18***	.09***
Step 2			
Agreeableness	.05***	16.67***	.13***
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Agreeableness	.00	.84	.13

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### **Interactive Effect of Emotional Stability and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance**

Hypothesis 4a, which predicted that emotional stability would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance, such that the relationship is stronger when emotional stability is low than when it is high, was tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Results can be found in Table 10. At step 1, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .02, F(1, 323) = 5.52, p < .05$ . At step 2, emotional stability was entered, but it did not significantly increase the amount of variance accounted for,

$R^2 = .17$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 322) = .01$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and emotional stability was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .48$ . As a result, Hypothesis 4a was not supported.

Table 10

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Interpersonal Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.02*	5.52*	.02*
Step 2			
Emotional stability	.00	.01	.02
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Emotional Stability	.00	.48	.02

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Hypothesis 4b, which predicted that emotional stability would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance, such that the relationship is stronger when emotional stability is low than when it is high, was tested using hierarchical regression analysis. Results can be found in Table 11. At step 1, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 30.18$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 2, emotional stability was entered and significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for,  $R^2 = .10$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1, 322) = 6.14$ ,  $p < .05$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and emotional stability was entered. The interaction did not

account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .10$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .53$ . As a result, Hypothesis 4b was not supported.

Table 11

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Organizational Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.09***	30.18***	.09***
Step 2			
Emotional stability	.02*	6.14*	.10*
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Emotional Stability	.00	.53	.10

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### **Interactive Effect of Openness to Experience and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance**

To explore Research Question 1, which asked if openness to experience moderates the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior, two separate hierarchical regression analyses were performed. The first examined the relationship between openness to experience and perceived organizational support as it relates to interpersonal deviance. The second examined the relationship between openness to experience and perceived organizational support as it relates to organizational deviance. Two separate hierarchical regression equations were conducted in order to more fully explore the potential relationship between openness to experience, perceived organizational support, and deviance. Results

for the interaction as it relates to interpersonal deviance can be found in Table 12. At step 1 of the first regression analysis, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1,323) = 5.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . At step 2, openness to experience was entered, but did not significantly increase the amount of variance accounted for in interpersonal deviance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 322) = .24$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and openness to experience was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .48$ .

Table 12

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Interpersonal Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.02*	5.52*	.02*
Step 2			
Openness to experience	.00	.24	.02
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Openness to Experience	.00	.02	.02

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Results for the interaction of openness to experience and perceived organizational support as it relates to organizational deviance can be found in Table 13. At step 1 of the analysis, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 30.18$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 2, openness to

experience was entered but did not significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for in organizational deviance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 322) = .31$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and openness to experience was entered. Adding the interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .27$ . These findings show that openness to experience does not moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and either interpersonal or organizational deviance.

Table 13

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Organizational Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.09***	30.18***	.09***
Step 2			
Openness to experience	.00	.31	.09
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Openness to Experience	.00	.27	.09

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

### **Interactive Effect of Extraversion and Perceived Organizational Support on Deviance**

To explore Research Question 2, which asked if extraversion would moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior, the same hierarchical regression analyses were performed as those for Research

Question 1. Results for the interaction as it relates to interpersonal deviance can be found in Table 14. At step 1 of the first regression analysis, perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1,323) = 5.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . At step 2, extraversion was entered and accounted for a significant increase in variance for interpersonal deviance,  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .02$ ,  $F(1, 322) = 5.01$ ,  $p < .05$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and extraversion was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .03$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .36$ .

Table 14

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Interpersonal Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.02*	5.52*	.02*
Step 2			
Extraversion	.02*	5.01*	.03*
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Extraversion	.00	.36	.03

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

Results for the interaction of extraversion and perceived organizational support as it relates to organizational deviance can be found in Table 15. At step 1 of this analysis perceived organizational support was entered and accounted for a significant portion of the variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $F(1, 323) = 30.18$ ,  $p < .001$ . At step 2, extraversion was entered but it did not significantly increased the amount of variance accounted for in



organizational deviance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 322) = .38$ . At step 3, the interaction of perceived organizational support and openness to experience was entered. The interaction did not account for a significant increase in variance,  $R^2 = .09$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .00$ ,  $F(1, 321) = .04$ . These findings demonstrate that extraversion does not moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and either interpersonal or organizational deviance.

Table 15

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Organizational Deviance*

Variable	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1			
Perceived organizational support	.09***	30.17***	.09***
Step 2			
Extraversion	.00	.38	.09
Step 3			
Perceived Organizational Support x Extraversion	.00	.04	.09

$N = 324$ .

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

In summary, as hypothesized, perceived organizational support was found to be significantly related to both interpersonal and organizational deviance. In addition, both conscientiousness and agreeableness were significantly correlated with both interpersonal and organizational deviance. However, emotional stability was only significantly related to organizational deviance, extraversion was only significantly related to interpersonal deviance, and openness to experience was not significantly related to either. Lastly, contrary to predictions, none of the personality constructs moderated the relationship

between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior. These findings suggest that while personality does not seem to moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive workplace behavior, the direct effect of personality on deviance is important to take into account. Which personality trait predicts deviant behavior depends on the type of personality trait as well as the type of deviant behavior being investigated.

### **Test of Hypotheses by Sample**

Given that none of the research hypotheses were supported, a closer look at the samples was taken. As mentioned previously, two methods were used to collect data: an on-line and in-class distribution of the survey. The on-line sample resulted in 235 usable responses while the in-class sample resulted in 89 usable responses. Notably, there was a difference in the demographic make-up of each sample. Specifically, the on-line sample was older, more likely to be employed in full-time positions and on average had a longer tenure with their current employer than the in-class sample. Table 3 presented in the Results section has a complete comparison of these variables. As a result of the difference between the two samples, all analyses were re-run separately for each sample.

A closer look at the new hierarchical regression equations for the on-line sample, to that of the in-class sample, as well as both sample combined, it was found that the on-line sample's results did not differ from those of both samples combined. Surprisingly though, the in-class sample had some interesting results. As the discussion continues, results will be presented side-by-side for both the on-line and in-class samples in tables;

however, since the on-line sample's results did not differ from those of both samples combined, emphasis will be made solely on the in-class sample's results.

Table 16 summarizes the hierarchical regression analysis for the interaction of perceived organizational support and conscientiousness on interpersonal deviance for each sample. Running this analysis separately by sample did not yield any additional significant results than running the analysis with both samples combined.

Table 16

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample (n = 235)			In-Class Sample (n = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.01	3.40	.01	.02	1.87	.02
Step 2						
Conscientiousness	.07***	17.00***	.08***	.04	3.86	.06
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Conscientiousness	.00	.40	.08	.04	3.87	.10

\* p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Table 17 summaries the hierarchical regression analysis for the interaction of perceived organizational support and conscientiousness on organizational deviance for each sample. At steps 1 and 2 of the analysis, similar results to those of both samples combined were found for the on-line and in-class samples separately. However, in the in-

class sample, when the interaction of conscientiousness and perceived organizational support was entered at step 3, a statistically significant increase in variance resulted [ $R^2 = .28$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .07$ ,  $F(1, 85) = 8.70$ ,  $p < .01$ ]. The significant interaction of perceived organizational support and conscientiousness implies the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance varied as a function of the level of conscientiousness for the in-class sample.

Table 17

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Conscientiousness on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample ( $n = 235$ )			In-Class Sample ( $n = 88$ )		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.07***	18.81***	.07***	.13**	12.40**	.13**
Step 2						
Conscientiousness	.20***	62.17***	.27***	.08**	8.46**	.20**
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Conscientiousness	.00	.01	.27	.07**	8.70**	.28**

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

To identify the nature of the interaction, the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance was compared separately for those low and high in conscientiousness. Scores on conscientiousness were split into two

groups; those low in conscientiousness (individuals who scored below the median) and those high in conscientiousness (individuals who scored above the median). Linear regression analysis were conducted for each group. Results can be seen in Figure 1.

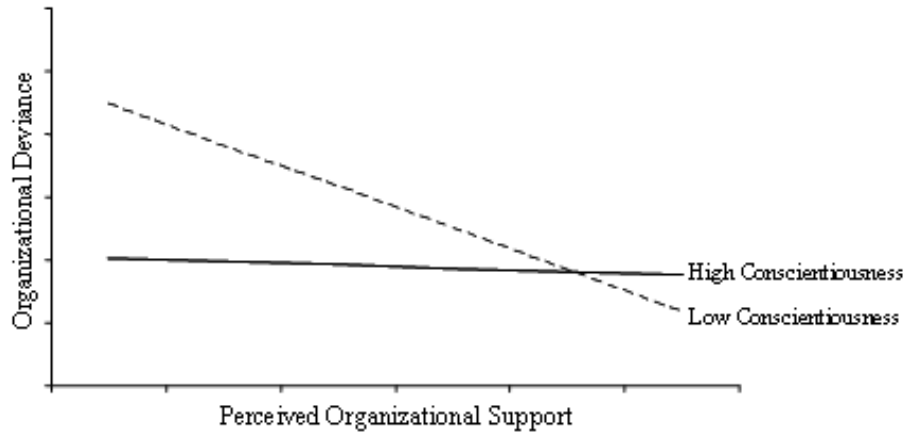


Figure 1. Interaction between perceived organizational support and conscientiousness for in-class sample.

The results indicate that the level of support received by an individual high in conscientiousness does not matter; they are not taking organizational support into account when they are deciding to be deviant. On the other hand, individuals low in conscientiousness decrease the amount of deviant behavior they engage in as they perceive more support from the organization. Hypothesis 2b, which predicted the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance is stronger when conscientiousness is low than when it is high, was supported in the in-class sample.

Table 18 summarizes the hierarchical regression analysis for the interaction of perceived organizational support and agreeableness on interpersonal deviance for each

sample. Running this analysis separately by sample did not yield any additional significant results than running the analysis with the both samples combined.

Table 18

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample ( <i>n</i> = 235)			In-Class Sample ( <i>n</i> = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.01	3.40	.01	.02	1.88	.02
Step 2						
Agreeableness	.10***	24.24***	.11***	.03	2.71	.05
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Agreeableness	.00	.00	.11	.00	.00	.05

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

Table 19 summaries the hierarchical regression analysis for the interaction of perceived organizational support and agreeableness on organizational deviance for each sample. At step 1 of the analysis, similar results to those of both sample combined were found for the on-line and in-class samples separately. At step 2, however, adding agreeableness into the hierarchical regression analysis did not add a significant increase in variance for the in-class group [ $R^2 = .14$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .01$ ,  $F(1, 86) = 1.41$ ] as it did for the on-line sample and both samples combined. At step 3, when the interaction of agreeableness and perceived organizational support was entered for the in-class sample, a

statistically significant increase in variance resulted [ $R^2 = .24$ ,  $\Delta R^2 = .11$ ,  $F(1, 85) = 11.85$ ,  $p < .01$ ]. The significant interaction of perceived organizational support and agreeableness implies the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance varies as a function of agreeableness in the in-class sample.

Table 19

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Agreeableness on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample ( $n = 235$ )			In-Class Sample ( $n = 88$ )		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.07***	18.81***	.07***	.13**	12.40**	.13**
Step 2						
Agreeableness	.06***	16.12***	.13***	.01	1.41	.14
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Agreeableness	.00	.26	.14	.11**	11.85**	.24**

\*  $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

To identify the nature of the interaction, the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance was compared separately for those low and high in agreeableness. Scores on agreeableness were split into two groups; those low in agreeableness (individuals who scored below the median) and those high in agreeableness (individuals who scored above the median). Linear regression analysis were conducted for each group. Results can be seen in Figure 2.

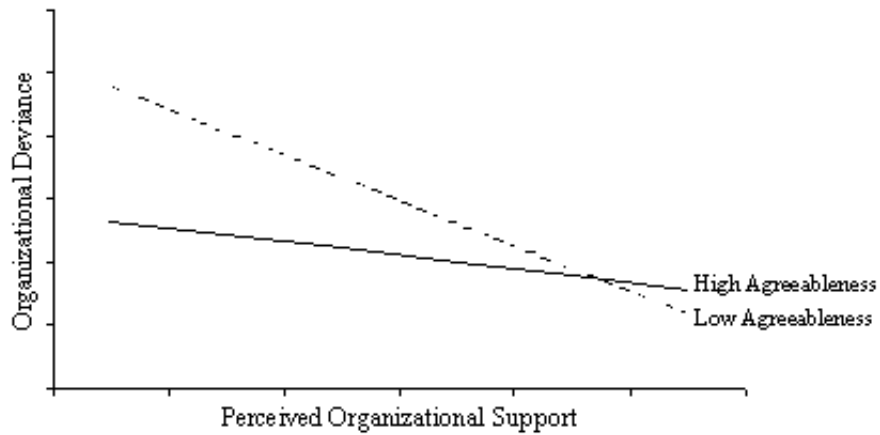


Figure 2. Interaction between perceived organizational support and agreeableness for in-class sample.

The results indicate that the level of support received by an individual low in agreeableness has a stronger impact on the likelihood they engage in deviant behavior than the level of support received by an individual high in agreeableness. When an employee is high in agreeableness the amount of support they receive from the organization has little bearing on their decision to be deviant to the organization. On the other hand, individuals low in agreeableness decrease the amount of organizational deviant behavior they engage in as they perceive more support from the organization. Hypothesis 3b, which predicted that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance is stronger when agreeableness is low than when it is high, was supported in the in-class sample.

Similar analyses were ran by sample for the interactions of perceived organizational support and emotional stability on interpersonal (Tables 20) and organizational deviance (Table 21); perceived organizational support and openness to



experience on interpersonal (Tables 22) and organizational deviance (Table 23); and perceived organizational support and extraversion on interpersonal (Tables 24) and organizational deviance (Table 25). Running these analyses by sample did not yield any additional significant findings.

Table 20

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample ( <i>n</i> = 235)			In-Class Sample ( <i>n</i> = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.01	3.40	.01	.02	1.87	.02
Step 2						
Emotional Stability	.00	.48	.02	.00	.20	.02
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Emotional Stability	.00	.23	.02	.00	.00	.02

\*  $p < .05$  \*\* $p < .01$  \*\*\* $p < .001$

Table 21

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Emotional Stability on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample (n = 235)			In-Class Sample (n = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.07***	18.81***	.07***	.13**	12.40**	.13**
Step 2						
Emotional stability	.02*	5.68*	.10*	.01	1.33	.14
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Emotional Stability	.00	.34	.10	.00	.00	.14

\* p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Table 22

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Interpersonal Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample (n = 235)			In-Class Sample (n = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.01	3.40	.01	.02	1.87	.02
Step 2						
Openness to experience	.00	.30	.02	.00	.03	.02
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Openness to Experience	.00	.11	.02	.00	.11	.02

\* p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Table 23

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Openness to Experience on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample (n = 235)			In-Class Sample (n = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.07***	18.81***	.07***	.13**	12.40**	.13**
Step 2						
Openness to experience	.00	.22	.08	.00	.12	.13
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Openness to Experience	.00	.10	.08	.01	.53	.13

\* p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Table 24

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Interpersonal Deviance for Each by Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample (n = 235)			In-Class Sample (n = 88)		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.01	3.40	.01	.02	1.87	.02
Step 2						
Extraversion	.03**	8.29**	.05**	.01	1.03	.03
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Extraversion	.00	.12	.05	.00	.00	.03

\* p<.05 \*\*p<.01 \*\*\*p<.001

Table 25

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Interaction of Perceived Organizational Support and Extraversion on Organizational Deviance for Each Sample*

Variable	On-Line Sample ( $n = 235$ )			In-Class Sample ( $n = 88$ )		
	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$\Delta F$	Overall $R^2$
Step 1						
Perceived organizational support	.07***	18.81***	.07***	.13**	12.40**	.13**
Step 2						
Extraversion	.00	.23	.08	.00	.37	.13
Step 3						
Perceived Organizational Support x Extraversion	.00	.11	.08	.00	.43	.13

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$

## Discussion

The major purpose of the present study was to investigate the joint relationship of perceived organizational support and personality traits on counterproductive work behavior. Although progress has been made in understanding how perceptions of the work environment and personality traits relate to workplace deviance, research has not fully examined the joint effect of personality traits and perceived organizational support on counterproductive work behavior. Specifically, the present study set out to expand on research conducted by Colbert et al. (2004) by examining the joint relationship of perceived organizational support and all of the Big Five personality traits on both interpersonal and organizational deviance.

The first hypothesis was supported in the current study. Consistent with existing research, perceived organizational support was found to be negatively correlated with interpersonal (Colbert et al., 2004) and organizational deviance (Liao et al., 2004). While both relationships were statistically significant, it is interesting to note that the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance was stronger than that of perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance. This suggests that when employees perceive that they are supported by their organization, they are less likely to engage in organizational deviance rather than interpersonal deviance. This is likely due to the fact that the support received is from the organization; as a result, employees want to reciprocate that support by not engaging in behavior that would negatively affect the organization.

Contrary to predictions, Hypotheses 2a – 4b were not supported; the present study did not find conscientiousness, agreeableness, or emotional stability to moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal or organizational deviance. Conscientiousness and agreeableness were, however, significantly correlated with both forms of deviance, and emotional stability was significantly correlated with organizational deviance. These results suggest that while these personality traits do not act as moderators of the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior, they are important variables in predicting the likelihood that individuals will engage in counterproductive behaviors.

Similarly, significant results were not found for Research Questions 1 and 2. Neither openness to experience or extraversion, when entered into the hierarchical regression analysis, accounted for any additional variance in the perceived organizational support – deviance relationship. Similarly, openness to experience and extraversion were not significantly correlated with deviance, except for the weak correlation between extraversion and interpersonal deviance. The findings suggest not only that these two personality constructs are unimportant in predicting deviance but also support the decision of Colbert et al. (2004) to exclude these variables from their study.

Interestingly, when the additional analysis of examining the interactions by sample was conducted for the main hypotheses, two significant findings resulted. In the in-class sample, conscientiousness and agreeableness were found to moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance but not the relationship between perceived organizational support and interpersonal deviance.

Significant findings were not found for the on-line sample. For those high in conscientiousness or agreeableness, in the in-class sample, perceived organizational support has no bearing on whether or not they will engage in deviant behaviors toward the organization. However, perceived organizational support did have an effect on those low in conscientiousness or agreeableness. The study found that those low in conscientiousness or agreeableness were less likely to engage in deviant behaviors toward the organization the more they felt supported by the organization. Therefore, if an employer has employees who are low in conscientiousness or agreeableness, the employer could reduce the amount of organizational deviance committed by these employees by taking steps to show them that the organization supports or values them.

An important distinction to note is that similar results were not found for the on-line sample. Because both samples received the same survey, it is believed that this could have resulted from the differences between the two groups. Demographically, the two samples differed on a number of variables; the in-class sample was younger, had less tenure with their current employers, and was more likely to work part-time than the on-line sample.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The current study was designed to expand on the research conducted by Colbert et al. (2004), yet their results were not replicated. Specifically, support for the hypotheses that conscientiousness, agreeableness, or emotional stability moderate the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior was not found in this study. While Colbert et al. (2004) did not provide a great deal of

demographic information, in particular the mean age of two of their samples, there are two distinguishing differences between the samples that Colbert et al. used and the samples used in this study.

First, Colbert et al. utilized employees from the same organization. The first two samples were of employees in a convenience store chain, the third sample was sales and customer service workers in a private sector company, and the fourth sample consisted of clerical workers from a private sector organization. All four samples were collected in the Midwest and the South. The current study used employees from various organizations. Due to the fact that participation in the current study was voluntary and that the survey was not distributed within an organization, it is likely that those who normally engage in deviant behavior chose not to participate in the current study. Using a random sample of an existing organization, on the other hand, may have provided a more accurate representation of the level of deviance within an organization and therefore provided a better platform for the current study to investigate how personality plays a role in that relationship.

Second, Colbert et al. (2004) surveyed employees that were primarily from service industries or employed in customer service positions. The current study included individuals employed in service industries and a number of other industries as well as education, healthcare, and professional positions. Due to the differences in industries sampled, questions are raised as to whether or not the findings of Colbert et al. are industry specific.



As mentioned above, the current study did not reveal support for a moderating effect of personality traits in the sample as a whole. However, when the results of the in-class sample were broken out, statistically significant results were found for the moderating effect of conscientiousness and agreeableness on the relationships between perceived organizational support and organizational deviance. In the current study, the in-class sample, although not from the same organization, mirrored more closely the sample from the Colbert et al. (2004) study in that the respondents were more likely to be employed in a service industry. In addition, the in-class sample was younger, had less tenure, and was more likely to work part-time. Age and employment type were not clearly described in the Colbert et al. study, and average tenure was 3 years and 3 months. While there is not enough information to make a definitive claim, one could argue that, since the results from the Colbert et al. study were not replicated in a more diverse sample, their results may be specific to a younger workforce with fewer years of experience in specific industries.

### **Practical Implications**

Perceived organizational support was found to be more strongly related to organizational deviance than to interpersonal deviance. This suggests that increasing the amount of support an organization exhibits to its employees is likely to be related to organizational deviance, but predict interpersonal deviance less so. If organizations are having problems with their employees engaging in organizational deviance, they should take steps to improve their relationships with the employees so that the employees feel more supported and valued by them. Employers could implement recognition programs

or work-life balance initiatives to help show employees that they are valued by the organization. On the other hand, if organizations are having problems with interpersonal deviance within a work unit, they can take measures to show employees that they support them; however, it may be more beneficial to look at other factors that more closely relate to interpersonal deviance/conflict in order to produce sustained results.

In addition, conscientiousness and agreeableness were the personality constructs most strongly related to both forms of deviance. In all but one instance, these two personality constructs were more strongly correlated to the deviance constructs than perceived organizational support. This suggests that if an employer is having problems with deviance, or would like to prevent deviance in the workplace, selecting employees based on their personality traits (e.g., conscientiousness, agreeableness) might have a greater impact on reducing deviance than taking measures to increase perceived organizational support felt by their employees.

As a result, employers should take measures to make sure they hire employees who are conscientious and agreeable. People high in conscientiousness are purposeful, hardworking, achievement oriented, dependable, and persistent (Barrick et al., 1993) and people high in agreeableness are courteous, cooperative, trusting, nurturing, forgiving, and tolerant (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Skarlicki et al., 1999). Employers could learn a lot about potential employee's personality characteristics by asking them behavior questions during the interview process and administering personality questionnaires prior to job offers.

Based on the results of the in-class sample, it is possible that age, type of industry, and/or employment status might play a role in the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work behavior. As a result, this research suggests that if an employer is hiring younger employees who are low on either conscientiousness or agreeableness, they should take steps to ensure those employees feel supported by the organization in order to prevent them from engaging in deviant behavior. Similarly, employers in service industries would want to take similar actions in order to reduce deviance within their organizations. That being said, these interpretations are speculative and need to be replicated by additional empirical studies before putting into action in the real world.

### **Strengths**

One strength of this study was that counterproductive work behavior was separated into its two dimensions: interpersonal and organizational deviance, and examined simultaneously in the same sample. While interpersonal and organizational deviance have been proven to be two dimensions of the same construct, and as such, highly correlated with one another, Berry et al. (2007), found that the two dimensions have quite different correlations with some personality traits. Consistent with Berry et al., this study also demonstrated that the personality traits measured were differentially related to each dimension of deviance, therefore, strengthening Berry et al.'s position that the two dimensions should be investigated independently of one another. This study also supported that claim by finding the moderating effects of conscientiousness and agreeableness on the relationship between perceived organizational support and

organizational deviance in the in-class sample, but not the same moderating effect on interpersonal deviance.

Another strength of this study was that data was collected from two separate samples with varying demographic make-ups. Having two groups of participants to compare and contrast shed light on some potential limitations of the existing research and raises questions about the generalizability of existing research.

### **Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research**

While having a diverse sample theoretically was a good idea, one consequence was that the findings were not consistent with those of past research, particularly the moderating role of personality traits. Instead, it raised more questions regarding the generalizability of Colbert et al.'s (2004) findings. Further research should survey a random sample of a service organization, as well as additional types of organizations, to explore if the moderating effect of personality on the relationship between perceived organizational support and counterproductive work place behavior is industry specific, or could be generalized across a wide range of industries.

Additional research should also investigate what role age, tenure or type of employment has on the relationship between perceived organizational support and deviant behavior. Being able to further identify demographic factors that may play a role in this relationship can help employers better understand what factors are related to workplace deviance and enable them to take action and preventative measures to help reduce deviance in the workplace.

## **Conclusion**

The factors that contribute to an employee's likelihood they will engage in deviant behavior is complicated and multifaceted. Clearly, perceived organizational support and personality play a role in deviance, but whether that relationship is direct or moderating is still to be seen. One thing that is clear is that this is a very expensive problem for organizations and more research should be conducted to help answer these questions.

## References

- Bachman, R. (1994, July). Violence and theft in the workplace. *U.S. Department of Justice Crime Data Brief*. Retrieved from <http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=692>
- Barrick, M. R., & Mount, M. K. (1991). The Big Five personality dimensions and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology, 44*(1), 1-26. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.1991.tb00688.x
- Barrick, M. R., Mount, M. K., & Strauss, J. P. (1993). Conscientiousness and performance of sales representatives: Test of the mediating effects of goal setting. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 78*(5), 715-722. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.78.5.715
- Bennett, R. J., & Robinson, S. L. (2000). Development of a measure of workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*(3), 349-360. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.85.3.349
- Bensimon, H. F. (1994). Crisis and disaster management: Violence in the workplace. *Training and Development, 28*, 27-32.
- Berry, C. M., Ones, D. S., & Sackett, P. R. (2007). Interpersonal deviance, organizational deviance, and their common correlates: A review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*(2), 410-424. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.92.2.410
- Buchanan, N. T., & Fitzgerald, L. F. (2008). Effects of racial and sexual harassment on work and the psychological well-being of African American women. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 13*(2), 137-151. doi:10.1037/1076-8998.13.2.137
- Buss, D. (1993, Spring). Ways to curtail employee theft. *Nation's Business*. Retrieved from [http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi\\_m1154/is\\_n4\\_v81/ai\\_13619254](http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m1154/is_n4_v81/ai_13619254)
- Chen, P. Y., & Spector, P. E. (1992). Relationships of work stressors with aggression, withdrawal, theft, and substance abuse: An exploratory study. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology, 65*, 177-184. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=8&hid=109&sid=1c73c85d-01f8-48ca-9b8b-0687f995de1f%40sessionmgr111>
- Colbert, A. E., Mount, M. K., Harter, J. K., Will, L. A., & Barrick, M. R. (2004). Interactive effects of personality and perceptions of the work situation on workplace deviance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*, 599-609. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.89.4.599

- Costa, P. T., & McCrae, R. R. (1992). *NEO PI-R. Professional manual*. Odessa, FL: Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc.
- Cullen, M. J., & Sackett, P. R. (2003). Personality and counterproductive workplace behavior. In M. R. Barrick & A. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Personality and work* (pp. 150-182). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Deffenbacher, J. L. (1992). Trait anger: Theory, findings, and implications. In C. D. Spielberger & J. N. Butcher (Eds.) *Advances in personality assessment*, (Vol. 9, pp. 177-201). Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Dunlop, P. D., & Lee, K. (2004). Workplace deviance, organizational citizenship behavior, and business unit performance: The bad apples do spoil the whole barrel. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 25, 67-80. doi:10.1002/job.243
- Eisenberger, R., Huntington, R., Hutchinson, S., & Sowa, D. (1986). Perceived organizational support. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 500-507. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.71.3.500
- Fox, S., & Spector, P. E. (1999). A model of work frustration-aggression. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 20, 915-931. doi:10.1002/(SICI)1099-1379(199911)20:6<915::AID-JOB918>3.0.CO;2-6
- Fox, S., Spector, P. E., & Miles, D. (2001). Counterproductive work behavior (CWB) in response to job stressors and organizational justice: Some mediator and moderator tests for autonomy and emotions. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 59, 291-309. doi:10.1006/jvbe.2001.1803
- Giacalone, R.A., & Knouse, S.B. (1990). Justifying wrongful employee behavior: The role of personality in organizational sabotage. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 9, 55-61. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/search?vid=40&hid=110&sid=fc147e8b-cd00-42ec-b42ebcc6df1caea2%40sessionmgr112>
- Graen, G., & Cashman, J. 1975. A role-making model of leadership in formal organizations: A developmental approach. In J. G. Hunt & L. L. Larson (Eds.) *Leadership frontiers* (pp. 143-166). Kent, OH: Kent State University Press.
- Graen, G. B., & Scandura, T. A. 1987. Toward a psychology of dyadic organizing. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior* (Vol. 9, pp. 175-208). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

- Greenberg, J. (1990). Employee theft as a reaction to underpayment inequity: The hidden cost of pay cuts. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 75*, 561-568. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.75.5.561
- Greenberg, J. (1993). Stealing in the name of justice: Informational and interpersonal moderators of theft reactions to underpayment inequity. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 54*, 81-103. doi:10.1006/obhd.1993.1004
- Greenberg, J., & Scott, K. S. (1996). Why do workers bite the hands that feed them? Employee theft as a social exchange process. *Research in Organizational Behavior, 18*, 111-156.
- Gruys, M. L., & Sackett, P. R. (2003). Investigating the dimensionality of counterproductive work behavior. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 11*, 30-42. doi:10.1111/1468-2389.00224
- Henle, C. A. (2005). Predicting workplace deviance from the interaction between organizational justice and personality. *Journal of Managerial Issues, 17*, 247-263.
- Hollinger, R.C., & Clark, J. P. (1983). *Theft by employees*. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath & Company/Lexington Books.
- John, O. P., Donahue, E. M., & Kentle, R. L. (1991). The Big Five Inventory--Versions 4a and 54. Berkeley, CA: University of California, Berkeley, Institute of Personality and Social Research.
- John, O. P., Naumann, L. P., & Soto, C. J. (2008). Paradigm shift to the integrative Big Five trait taxonomy: History, measurement, and conceptual issues. In O. P. John, R. W. Robins, & L. A. Pervin (Eds.), *Handbook of personality: Theory and research* (pp. 114-158). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Kelloway, K. E., Loughlin, C., Barling, J., & Nault, A. (2002). Self-reported counterproductive behaviors and organizational citizenship behavior: Separate but related constructs. *International Journal of Selection and Assessment, 10*, 143-151. doi:10.1111/1468-2389.00201
- Liao, H., Joshi, A., & Chuang, A. (2004). Sticking out like a sore thumb: Employee dissimilarity and deviance at work. *Personnel Psychology, 57*, 969-1000. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6570.2004.00012.x
- Liden, R. C., Sparrowe, R. T., & Wayne, S. J. (1997). Leader-member exchange theory: The past and potential for the future. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management, 15*, 47-119.



- Moorman, R. H., Niehoff, B. P., & Organ, D. W. (1993). Treating employees fairly and organizational citizenship behavior: Sorting the effect of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and procedural justice. *Employee Responsibilities and Rights Journal*, 6, 209-225. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=3&hid=110&sid=c58516c2-cf9d-475d-b965-4a3846b93596%40sessionmgr104>
- Murphy, K. R. (1993). *Honesty is the workplace*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Penney, L. M., & Spector, P. E. (2002). Narcissism and Counterproductive Work Behavior: Do Bigger Egos Mean Bigger Problems? *International Journal of Selection & Assessment*, 10, 126-134. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=51&hid=110&sid=fc147e8b-cd00-42ec-b42e-bcc6df1caea2%40sessionmgr112>
- Perlow, R., & Latham, L. L. (1993). Relationship of client abuse with locus of control and gender: A longitudinal study in mental retardation facilities. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 78, 831-834. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.78.5.831
- Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: A review of the literature. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87, 698-714. doi:10.1037/0021-9010.87.4.698
- Robinson, S. L., & Bennett, R. J. (1995). A typology of deviant workplace behaviors: A multidimensional scaling study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 555-572.
- Skarlicki, D. P., & Folger, R. (1997). Retaliation in the workplace: The roles of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82, 434-443. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=4&hid=110&sid=c58516c2-cf9d-475d-b965-4a3846b93596%40sessionmgr104>
- Skarlicki, D. P., Folger, R., & Tesluks, P. (1999). Personality as a moderator in the relationship between fairness and retaliation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42, 100-108. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=5&hid=110&sid=c58516c2-cf9d-475d-b965-4a3846b93596%40sessionmgr104>
- Spector, P. E. (1997). The role of frustration in antisocial behavior at work. In R. A. Giacalone & J. Greenberg (Eds.), *Antisocial behavior in organizations* (pp. 1-17). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Storms, P. L., & Spector, P. E. (1987). Relationships of organizational frustration with reported behavioral reactions: The moderating effect of locus of control. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 60, 227-234.

Wayne, S. J., Shore, L. M., & Liden, R. C. (1997). Perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange: A social exchange perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40, 82-111. Retrieved from <http://web.ebscohost.com.libaccess.sjlibrary.org/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=62&hid=110&sid=fc147e8b-cd00-42ec-b42e-bcc6df1caea2%40sessionmgr112>