

ABSTRACT

Title of Dissertation: TOO BUSY TO BE FAIR? THE EFFECT OF MANAGERS' PERCEIVED WORKLOAD ON THEIR CORE TECHNICAL PERFORMANCE AND JUSTICE RULE ADHERENCE

Elad N. Sherf, Doctor of Philosophy, 2016

Dissertation directed by: Dr. Vijaya Venkataramani, Associate Professor of Management and Organization

Despite the organizational benefits of treating employees fairly, both anecdotal and empirical evidence suggest that managers do not behave fairly towards their employees in a consistent manner. As treating employees fairly takes up personal resources such as time, effort, and attention, I argue that when managers face high workloads (i.e., high amounts of work and time pressure), they are unable to devote such personal resources to effectively meet both core technical task requirements and treat employees fairly. I propose that in general, managers tend to view their core technical task performance as more important than being fair in their dealings with employees; as a result, when faced with high workloads, they tend to prioritize the former at the expense of the latter. I also propose that managerial fairness will suffer more as a result of heightened workloads than will core technical task performance, unless managers perceive their organization to explicitly reward fair treatment of employees. I find support for my hypotheses across three studies: two experimental studies (with online participants and students

respectively) and one field study of managers from a variety of organizations. I discuss the implications of studying fairness in the wider context of managers' complex role in organizations to the fairness and managerial work demands literatures.

TOO BUSY TO BE FAIR? THE EFFECT OF MANAGERS' PERCEIVED
WORKLOAD ON THEIR CORE TECHNICAL PERFORMANCE AND JUSTICE
RULE ADHERENCE

by

Elad N. Sherf

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Advisory Committee:

Dr. Vijaya Venkataramani, Chair

Dr. Rellie Derfler-Rozin

Dr. Subrahmaniam Tangirala

Dr. M. Susan Taylor

Dr. Michele J. Gelfand (*Dean's Representative*)

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Dedication

Dedicated to my Grandfather, Israel Gil, who always loved to read anything I wrote, but unfortunately, did not have a chance to read my more substantial work. In a way, everything I write is partly for him.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

“Everyone knows that being fair costs little and pays off handsomely. Then why do so few executives manage to behave fairly, even though most want to?”
(Brockner, 2006)

Managers play a key role in shaping employees’ perceptions of fair treatment (Fassina, Jones, & Uggerslev, 2008; Rupp, Shao, Jones, & Liao, 2014). Ensuring that employees are treated fairly seems like a worthwhile investment of managers’ time, attention, and effort. After all, employees who feel fairly treated are more committed, perform better, engage in more citizenship behaviors (e.g., helping), behave less counterproductively (e.g., stealing on the job), and are less likely to leave their jobs (Colquitt et al., 2013). Why then, as Brockner (2006) asks in the quote above, would a rational manager not treat his or her employees fairly?

Employees are more likely to feel fairly treated when managers’ actions adhere to the rules of justice: equitable allocation of outcomes, provision of influence over decisions and lack of decision bias, candid communication of justifications for decisions, and respectful treatment in everyday interactions (Adams, 1965; Bies & Moag, 1986; Leventhal, 1980). Yet, observing these rules (e.g., asking for input, explaining decisions, diligently reviewing all pertinent information before making employee related decisions, and phrasing communications respectfully) requires investing personal resources such as time, attention, and effort (Brockner, Wiesenfeld, & Diekmann, 2009; Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014), resources that are in limited supply in work settings (Bergeron, 2007; Quinn, Spreitzer, & Lam, 2012). Therefore, in this dissertation, I propose that treating employees fairly can carry significant *opportunity costs* for managers. Personal resources

invested in fair treatment cannot be invested in meeting core technical task responsibilities (e.g., meeting with clients, studying market reports, ensuring smooth operations) which similarly require time, attention, and effort (Beal, Weiss, Barros, & MacDermid, 2005). To the extent that managers are reluctant to harm their core technical performance, they might rationally choose not to adhere to rules of justice in dealing with employees.

The opportunity costs of treating employees fairly are especially salient when managers face high workloads (i.e., high amounts of work and time pressure; Ilies, Huth, Ryan, & Dimotakis, 2015), that is, when they perceive their limited personal resources as insufficient to meet all their job requirements. For example, will a manager spend his/her limited time and energy listening to an employee's concerns about a promotion decision *or* completing an urgent report for the boss? Will s/he spend an afternoon reading employee performance reports to ensure that an upcoming performance evaluation is accurate and meaningful to employees *or* reviewing market data for a product launch decision due soon? Current theories about why and when managers' behaviors adhere to rules of justice do not provide answers to these questions as they do not account for the possible effects of managers' broader work responsibilities on their fair treatment of employees (cf., Brockner, Wiesenfeld, Siegel, Bobocel, & Liu, 2015; Scott, Colquitt, & Paddock, 2009). Given that managers often face high workloads (Campbell, Bates, Marin, & Meddings, 2007; Lovelace, Manz, & Alves, 2007), they are often forced to prioritize between completing their core technical task responsibilities effectively on the one hand and engaging in behaviors that contribute to perceptions of fair treatment on the other. The extent to which they prioritize core technical task responsibilities over

behaviors that foster perceptions of fair treatment can explain why fairness, despite its benefits, is not as common as expected.

Resource allocation theory suggests that when people face multiple tasks and believe that they cannot complete all of them successfully, they prioritize between these tasks based on their *outcome expectancies* – i.e., they allocate more personal resources to the tasks that they expect will enable them to achieve valued and desirable outcomes (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005; Hockey, 1997; Schmidt & Dolis, 2009). I argue that managers are likely to believe that investing personal resources in fulfilling core technical responsibilities will more probably result in desired outcomes (e.g., bonuses, promotions, recognition), as compared to investing these resources in justice rule adherence. This is because of two related reasons. First, there is a *general preference* to overvalue the completion of core technical responsibilities over employee treatment. That is, although managers often view fairness as important (Greenberg, 1990a; Meindl, 1989), in achievement oriented settings such as the workplace, the promotion and attainment of specific and measurable organizational goals is seen by people as *more* valuable and important (cf., Abele & Wojciszke, 2007). Second, this general preference is usually strengthened by the way organizations evaluate and reward managerial performance. That is, rewards in organizations are frequently tied more strongly to managers' technical performance as opposed to how they treat their employees (Brockner et al., 2009). As a result, I propose that justice rule adherence (as compared to core technical performance) will be deprioritized and therefore, be more negatively affected by managers' workload. However, when organizations explicitly reward managers on fair treatment of employees via practices such as 360° feedback or balanced scorecards (Kaplan & Norton, 1996),

managers' prioritization decisions are likely to be more balanced and less biased towards core technical performance. Therefore, in such cases, fair treatment is less likely to be as negatively affected by workload. My arguments are visually summarized in Figure 1.

This paper thus makes three theoretical contributions. First, it contributes to the growing literature on fairness as a dependent variable (i.e., why and when do managers treat employees (un)fairly; Brockner et al., 2015; Scott et al., 2009). This literature has mostly focused on justice rule adherence in isolation, exploring whether it is predicted by managerial and employee characteristics (e.g., Mayer, Nishii, Schneider, & Goldstein, 2007; Scott, Garza, Conlon, & Kim, 2014; Zapata, Olsen, & Martins, 2013), but without considering how such adherence is affected by other responsibilities that compete for managers' personal resources. As a result, our knowledge of the antecedents of fairness is artificially restricted to situations where managers' personal resources are adequate to meet all their work responsibilities, which is often not the case. My theorizing highlights how managers' workload can play an important role in shaping employees' perceptions of fairness by affecting managers' decision to prioritize their other responsibilities over adherence to rules of justice.

Second, this paper contributes to research on the role of organizational factors in shaping fairness perceptions (Schminke, Ambrose, & Cropanzano, 2000; Schminke, Cropanzano, & Rupp, 2002). This literature has devoted little attention to managerial evaluations and rewards despite their likely effects on managerial behavior (cf., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). This paper highlights how managerial rewards affect fairness by changing managers' prioritization decisions. This focus on organizational factors such as managerial rewards is important because, unlike prior research on managerial

characteristics or individual differences that are more stable, it points to more feasible levers that organizations can utilize to improve perceived fairness, that do not require changes in managerial selection.

Third, this paper contributes to the literature on work demands (e.g., workload; Bakker, Demerouti, & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). This literature has mostly explored the implications of managerial demands on performance without taking into account the multifaceted nature of performance (cf., Courtright, Colbert, & Choi, 2014; Hambrick, Finkelstein, & Mooney, 2005). Managers are frequently expected to fulfill multiple roles (Mintzberg, 1973; Yukl, 2012) and thus understanding the tradeoffs they make in the face of demanding environments is core to improving organizational effectiveness (Conway, 1999). This paper thus advances knowledge on the differential effects that work demands have on multiple aspects of managers' performance and sheds light on how and why managers prioritize certain responsibilities over others.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Background and Hypotheses Development

Managers' Core Technical Tasks and Justice Tasks

Effective performance in organizations is multifaceted (Northcraft, Schmidt, & Ashford, 2011; Whiting, Podsakoff, & Pierce, 2008). Managers are expected to engage in multiple behaviors such as solving problems, making decisions, and allocating resources (cf., Janssen, 2001; Mintzberg, 1973). In line with theories of leadership (House, 1996; Katz & Khan, 1978; Seifert, Yukl, & McDonald, 2003; Yukl, 2008) and taxonomies of managerial performance (Borman & Brush, 1993; Conway, 1999; Oh & Berry, 2009), I focus on two broad categories of managerial tasks: (a) core technical tasks and (b) relational tasks.

First, managers are expected to engage in *core technical* tasks. Core technical tasks “bear a direct relation to the organization's technical core, either by executing its technical processes or by maintaining and servicing its technical requirements” (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994, p. 476). For example, managers are frequently expected to ensure that their work units reach their goals and produce desired and expected organizational outcomes, report to their superiors, make technical decisions (e.g., which product to develop, what market to expand into), interact with clients or external stakeholders, and implement new initiatives (Conway, 1999; Yukl, 2008, 2012). Second, managers are expected to engage in *relational* tasks, that is, to “manage” or “lead” employees. The primary purpose of such relational tasks is “to increase the quality

of human resources and relations” (Yukl, 2012, p. 68) and to maintain the satisfaction and motivation of employees (Conway, 1999). Relational tasks include making personnel decisions about employees, evaluating and assessing them, allocating resources among them, providing recognition for achievements and contributions, consulting with them about decisions that will affect them, and providing them with information (Borman & Brush, 1993; Yukl, 2008). It is important to note here that although, core technical tasks and relational tasks are conceptually distinct are, they are not mutually exclusive and might co-occur in some situations. For example, when allocating responsibilities to employees and monitoring their performance, a manager is likely to make decisions about the content of these responsibilities (i.e., which responsibilities to assign) and at the same time decide whether to allocate them in ways that promote or harm relational aspects (i.e., how to assign chosen responsibilities). For the sake of simplicity and in line with the leadership literature and taxonomies of managerial performance, I refer to these two broad categories as distinct, because despite their possible co-occurrence, the quality of managers’ performance on each type of tasks is independent.

As noted by Colquitt and Greenberg (2003), despite the lack of integration between the fairness and leadership literatures, managerial behaviors discussed in both literatures overlap significantly. That is, effective relational performance mostly involves acting in way that adhere to the four categories of justice rules¹ (Colquitt et al., 2013; Greenberg, 1990b): equitable allocation of outcomes in accordance with employees’

¹ For example, transformational leadership theory (Judge & Piccolo, 2004) emphasizes aspects such as individualized consideration which includes respectful treatment of employee (i.e., interpersonal justice), inspirational motivation which includes, among other things, providing employee with justification and logic for actions (i.e., informational justice), and intellectual stimulation which includes solicitation of employees’ ideas (i.e., voice as part of procedural justice). In addition, contingent rewards (part of transactional leadership) involves clarification of expectations and establishment of rewards for meeting them (i.e., distributive justice).

inputs (“distributive”; Adams, 1965); provision of opportunities to influence the decision making process and appeal decisions, making decisions based on accurate information, and in a consistent, bias free, and ethical manner (“procedural”; Leventhal, 1980); provision of adequate explanations for decisions in an candid and honest manner (“informational”; Bies & Moag, 1986); and treatment of employees in dignified, sincere, and respectful manner in everyday interactions (“interpersonal”; Bies & Moag, 1986). As my focus in on why and when managers behave unfairly towards their employees, and as I compare such behaviors with those relating to core technical tasks, I use the term *justice* tasks to refer to relational aspects of managers’ performance².

To clarify, the terms fairness and justice are frequently used interchangeably. However, scholars now distinguish the two: *fairness* is a judgment made by a recipient (e.g., the employee) about the appropriateness of an actor’s (e.g., the manager) actions based on a comparison of these actions to a relevant *justice* rule (Colquitt & Zipay, 2015; Cropanzano, Fortin, & Kirk, 2015). Thus, the term fairness describes how recipients describe the treatment accorded to them (i.e., I was treated fairly); on the other hand, the terms justice, “justice rule adherence” (e.g., Scott et al., 2009) or “justice enactment” (e.g., Blader, Wiesenfeld, Rothman, & Wheeler-Smith, 2010), describe the extent to which actors’ actions align with different rules of justice (e.g., was I given an opportunity to voice my concerns before the decision?). The assumption underlying this distinction is that when managers’ actions adhere to relevant justice rules, employees are more likely to perceive their treatment as fair (Cropanzano et al., 2015). Hence, if a manager allocates an outcome equitably, she is adhering to the distributive justice rule, and her employees

² I use the term *task(s)* to describe behaviors and activities in each category. I use the term *performance* to describe the manner such behaviors are evaluated by others (e.g., employees, supervisors).

are more likely to perceive such a distribution as fair. This paper centers on managerial behaviors, as opposed to employees' judgments of the appropriateness of these actions; hence, I mostly use the term justice rather than fairness to describe managers' actions and performance.

Personal Resources, Perceived Workload, and Prioritization

Engaging in core technical and justice tasks requires personal resources. A resource is a stock of assets that can be drawn by a person to function effectively ("Resource," 2015). Personal resources are intangible assets (i.e., time, attention, and effort) that managers draw on to complete their tasks. Managers spend personal resources on physical activities (e.g., writing a report), while thinking and communicating or interacting with others, and when regulating emotional states, for instance, attempting to deal with negative emotions (Quinn et al., 2012). Personal resources are limited and scarce. There are only a limited number of hours a day (Bergeron, 2007; Mueller & Kamdar, 2011); attention is bounded by managers' ability to process information (Ocasio, 1997; Walsh, 1995); and willpower requires drawing from a finite pool of self-control (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007). Hence, once personal resources are used for a task, they are not available for other tasks (Bergeron, 2007; Quinn et al., 2012) and the more an individual allocates resources towards one task the less are left for other tasks (Kruglanski et al., 2002).

Core technical tasks frequently involve processing of large amounts of information thus necessitating cognitive effort (Kanfer & Ackerman, 1989), require physical presence of managers away from their employees (e.g., a meeting with a client, completing a report, reporting to top management) using up time, attention, and effort,

and also require self-control in the face of natural inclinations to do otherwise, especially for tasks that are not inherently interesting (Beal et al., 2005; Muraven, Gagné, & Rosman, 2008) such as focusing on the content of a report instead of tweaking the formatting or taking a break to surf the web. Similarly, justice tasks frequently demand processing a lot of information to ensure equitable allocations of resources to employees (Danziger, Levav, & Avnaim-Pesso, 2011), involve spending time and effort listening to employees and providing justifications for decisions (Brockner et al., 2009), take effort to suppress tendencies to act in a biased manner (e.g., allocating outcomes based on liking as opposed to merit; Gino, Schweitzer, Mead, & Ariely, 2011; Johnson et al., 2014) or to reciprocate employees rude behaviors (Barnes, Lucianetti, Bhave, & Christian, 2014), and involve preparation as well as cognitive and emotional effort when communicating “bad news” sensitively (Margolis & Molinsky, 2008; Richter, König, Koppermann, & Schilling, 2016).

Because personal resources are limited and scarce, the more tasks are expected from managers, the less likely it is that they will be able to meet the requirements of these multiple tasks effectively. When the amount of work managers face passes a certain threshold, managers are likely to experience high perceived workload, the subjective judgment that one’s work requires one to do more than one can handle given one’s available personal resources (Ilies et al., 2015; Spector & Jex, 1998). High perceived workload likely results from a combination of the quantity of the tasks one faces and the personal resources (including time) available for their completion. Perceived workload is related to, but distinct from, actual workload (e.g., hours worked or the number of required tasks). Thus, two people can have similar “objective” amounts of work, but

based on their personal resources and idiosyncratic perceptions, perceive different levels of workload. I focus on perceived level of workload, because this perception is usually more strongly associated with people's reactions to such workload (Hambrick et al., 2005). Perceived workload is associated with a host of negative physical and affective reactions ranging from feelings of strain, frustration, decreased work satisfaction, and fatigue to reduced health and increased work-family conflict (Ilies, Dimotakis, & De Pater, 2010; Ilies et al., 2015; Spector & Jex, 1998). Experienced workload is one of the strongest predictors of burnout and emotional exhaustion (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2001; Lee & Ashforth, 1996). Given the aversive experiences that accompany high levels of perceived workload, people frequently attempt to reduce workload through different coping strategies (Barnes & Van Dyne, 2009; Hambrick et al., 2005).

Resource allocation theory (Bergeron, 2007; Emsley, 2003; Hockey, 1997) suggests that people reduce workload by prioritizing tasks (Northcraft et al., 2011; Schmidt & Dolis, 2009). Therefore, managers should respond to workload by prioritizing one task or category of tasks over another task or category of tasks, through a shift in the investment of personal resources to the prioritized task (Unsworth, Yeo, & Beck, 2014). Prioritization in this context means that managers choose between activities (completely or partly) or change the order, sequence, or timing in which actions are carried out. For example, if a manager has two tasks due the next day (e.g., a report for management and employee's performance evaluation) she can spend more time on one rather than the other, complete one task (but not the other) in a more comprehensive or rigorous manner, or she can choose to do one task before the other or do it when he or she is more effective (e.g., early in the morning). Because personal resources are scarce, this means that the

completion of de-prioritized activities will be carried out with less personal resources available to facilitate attention and persistence and thus is more likely to result in decreased performance (Beal et al., 2005). As a result, workload can be negatively associated with one performance category (e.g., justice) and have no (or lower) association with a different category (e.g., core technical). Indeed, because people react to workload by investing less personal resources in certain tasks, higher levels of perceived workload are frequently negatively associated with performance on those tasks (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Barnes & Van Dyne, 2009). Consistent with this, when employees prioritize one task type over another, their performance on the second task suffers, especially if they have poor time management skills, and thus less personal resources available (Barnes et al., 2008; Rapp, Bachrach, & Rapp, 2013).

According to resource allocation theory, prioritization is based on outcome expectancies associated with each task (DeShon & Gillespie, 2005; Unsworth et al., 2014) or “the extent to which one sees a causal relationship between one’s behavior and the positive or negative outcomes that one expects” (Latham, 2001, p. 708). For instance, when faced with two opposing tasks, people invest their personal resources in the incentivized task (i.e., has a reward associated with it; Schmidt & DeShon, 2007; Wright, George, Farnsworth, & McMahan, 1993) or the task on which they receive more feedback about (DeShon, Kozlowski, Schmidt, Milner, & Wiechmann, 2004; Northcraft et al., 2011). This is because rewards and feedback increase the belief that performance on this task will lead to desired outcomes, thus increasing commitment to the relevant task or goal (Kruglanski et al., 2002). Consistent with this, when people are more committed to a certain goal, they are more likely to engage in goal-shielding, the

inhibition of other competing goals, and this especially true when the two goals are likely to be seen as competing, rather than complementary (Shah, Friedman, & Kruglanski, 2002), usually found under situations of resource scarcity such as high workload. Thus, workload affects people's decisions on which task(s) to prioritize based on their outcome expectancies of each task.

Prioritization of Core Technical Tasks over Justice Tasks

I argue that perceived workload will be positively associated with prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks, and hence to stronger negative effects of workload on justice (as compared to core technical) performance. This likely occurs because, on average, managers hold weaker outcome expectancies for justice, as compared to core technical performance, which leads them to prioritize core technical tasks when faced with higher workloads³. This is due to two related reasons. First, people generally tend to value core technical tasks over more relational aspects with which justice is usually associated, especially in achievement settings such as the workplace. For example, social psychology research has demonstrated that when faced with a choice, people tend to choose activities that relate to competence or agency (i.e., core technical skills) over those that relate to communion or morality (cf., Abele & Wojciszke, 2007; see also: Vermunt, 2014). Similarly, when choosing leaders for challenging contexts (e.g., organizational downsizing), people tend to prefer individuals who are perceived as being able to “get work done” even when such individuals have a reputation for acting unfairly (vs. fairly; Rothman, Wheeler-Smith, Wiesenfeld, & Galinsky, 2015).

³ Note that my argument is not that justice performance outcome expectancies are weak in the absolute sense, only that they are *relatively* lower than those associated with core technical tasks.

Second, outcome expectancies regarding justice rule adherence are diffuse, less observable, and usually accrue over time (Brockner, 2010) and therefore it is likely more difficult for managers to identify how acting justly leads to desirable outcomes. For instance, unless organizations deliberately instruct managers on the benefits of justice rules adherence, managers struggle to identify the link between them and desirable personal outcomes (Cole & Latham, 1997). In contrast, technical expertise and the clear performance measures associated with core technical tasks make it very easy for managers to imagine the causal link between these behaviors and desired outcomes. Relatedly, organizations also emphasize task-related results and competencies and strongly represent them in the decision processes for valued outcomes such as bonuses and promotions while at the same time justice tasks, which are harder to measure, are not similarly emphasized (Brockner et al., 2009; Frost & Robinson, 1999; Gallup, 2015; Kerr, 1975). Likewise, feedback from upper management is more frequent and immediate when it comes to core technical tasks as feedback about justice requires bottom-up feedback from subordinates which is rarer (Ashford, Blatt, & VandeWalle, 2003).

To summarize, when managers face high workloads and are forced to prioritize between their tasks, they are more likely to prioritize core technical tasks, because, relative to justice tasks, they likely hold stronger outcome expectancies about these tasks. As fewer resources get allocated towards justice tasks, performance on such tasks should be more negatively affected.

Hypothesis 1: Managers' perceived workload is more negatively associated with their justice than with their core technical performance and this effect is mediated by their prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks.

As seen in Figure 1, although I argue that the relatively lower outcome expectancies for justice performance will translate into prioritization of core technical tasks in the face of workload, I also propose that this effect can be attenuated to the extent that organizations introduce strong and clear rewards for justice performance. For example, in some organizations managers' compensation and promotion potential is partly determined through 360° feedback practices, where employees evaluate managers not only on task-related competencies, but also on interpersonal skills (i.e., interpersonal justice), effectiveness in decision making and allocation of resources to employees (i.e., distributive and procedural justice), and the ability to keep employees motivated and engaged (Folger, Folger, Schoel, Russell, & Poteet, 1998; Smither & Walker, 2004). Similarly, some organizations explicitly reward (through tangible and intangible rewards such as manager of the month or promotions) managers known for their interpersonal and motivational skills (Brockner, 2006). To the extent that such practices are consistently used by the organization (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004), managers are more regularly provided feedback regarding their justice performance, have more visible and clear role models for relational and justice tasks, and have a better understanding of the link between such tasks and desired outcomes and thus should hold relatively stronger performance outcome expectancies (Brockner et al., 2009; Brockner, 2010). This should result in more balanced outcome expectancies, in turn affecting managers' prioritization decisions.

Indirect support for my arguments comes from a study suggesting that when managers are directly incentivized for task performance, voluntary turnover of non-managerial employees increases; however, this effect is attenuated when the organization *also* trains and incentivizes managers to treat employees well (Pohler & Schmidt, 2015).

To the extent that turnover is caused by perceptions of unfair treatment (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, 2001), this supports the argument that incentives can increase justice performance outcome expectancies and translate into better justice performance. A few qualitative studies also indirectly support my arguments. For instance, Kaplan and Norton (1996) describe how, when employee morale and employee suggestions began to be explicitly measured and rewarded by an organizational balanced scorecard, not only did managers' behaviors focused on ensuring morale and soliciting suggestions increase, but managers were also able to more clearly identify how these two issues assisted in obtaining other desired outcomes such as customer satisfaction. Similarly, Jazayeri and Scapens (2008) describe the adoption of a value scorecard in BAE systems, a UK aerospace company. When BAE added people management to its managers' scorecard and set explicit measurement criteria for personal development and an employee opinion survey, managers started spending more time interacting with employees. Taken together, I hypothesize:

Hypothesis 2: The effect of managers' workload on prioritization of core technical tasks (over justice tasks) is moderated by organizational rewards for justice performance such that when such rewards are low, justice performance is prioritized less than when rewards are high.

Hypothesis 3: The effect of managers' workload on performance via prioritization is moderated by organizational rewards for justice performance such that when such rewards are low, justice performance is more negatively affected than when rewards are high.

Chapter 3: Overview of Studies

To balance internal and external validity concerns (Pedhazur & Pedhazur Schmelkin, 1991), I conducted three studies to test my theoretical model. Study 1 was an initial experimental study conducted on Amazon Mechanical Turk and was aimed to explore whether people's performance on core technical and justice tasks would be differently affected when their levels of perceived workload was randomly manipulated. After establishing this general tendency in Study 1, I further extended these findings in Study 2 where I conducted a managerial simulation with business undergraduate students by manipulating both the levels of perceived workload and justice rewards. In Study 2, I also provide evidence for my mediator—that is, that the interactive effects of workload and justice rewards affects the two performance types via prioritization of the core technical task. After establishing internal validity using experimental methods, in Study 3, I provide evidence for external validity by collecting data from a diverse sample of managers and their direct employees. Study 3 provides further evidence as to the role that workload, justice rewards, and prioritization play in affecting justice performance in organizations.

Chapter 4: Study 1

Method

Sample. I recruited English speaking working adults located in the U.S from Amazon Mechanical Turk. These participants were paid \$2.5 for completing the study and offered an additional \$1 bonus for high performance levels. Based on recommendations by Huang and colleagues (Huang, Bowling, Liu, & Li, 2014; Huang, Liu, & Bowling, 2014), I employed a number of methods to screen out participants who displayed low effort in responding, including attention checks and examination of open-ended responses for nonsensical answers. Following this procedure, I excluded 37 participants from the initial sample of 270 participants who started the study, which resulted in a final sample of 233 participants (52% male, $M_{\text{age}} = 35.55$ [SD = 11.34], $M_{\text{years of work experience}} = 14.94$ [SD = 10.85], 70% currently working full or part time, 32% currently assuming a managerial position, 70% with a college degree education or higher).

Procedure. When testing for psychological processes such as perceptions or judgments, role playing simulations are appropriate even if they do not use the actual population studied (i.e., actual managers; Greenberg & Eskew, 1993). In line with Greenberg and Eskew's recommendations, I developed a realistic, low specificity response situation within a generalized setting so that participants can easily imagine filling such a role. In particular, I invited participants to complete a managerial inbox simulation online. Inbox simulations and exercises have been frequently used in the past to study managerial behaviors and reactions (e.g., Anseel, Lievens, & Schollaert, 2009;

Folger & Skarlicki, 1998). Participants started the simulation by reading background information about the company and their role in it. I told them that they worked for a moderate-sized, publicly traded company specializing in providing solutions to other companies' technological and integration problems. I described their role as a senior client liaison manager who negotiated contract terms with clients and managed a team of 6 technology experts who helped with routine tasks. Participants then read the following:

You have been working hard over the last few days to finish a number of urgent tasks and "putting out fires." Despite your efforts, urgent things just kept piling up, and you did not finish all tasks you had to complete. Today, you are leaving to attend a week-long mandatory leadership training (for a week you will not be able to use email or complete any substantial work). But you still have a number of urgent tasks that your boss requested you complete before you leave for training.

Next, I told participants that they have 10/15 minutes (depending on the manipulated workload condition, as explained below) to complete two important tasks. Participants read a short description of each task (in random order). One task was labeled: "Answering a client complaint" and was accompanied by the following text:

According to ENS' internal policy, any client complaint needs to be addressed within three days. You already did all the "leg-work" and collected all relevant information, you now need to synthesize the information and communicate it to the client. To meet the internal deadline, you must send the message to the client today.

I used this task to operationalize a core technical task as it clearly requires no interaction and/or decision making in relation to subordinates. In addition, it involves an external client as well as a direct monetary issue, aspects that frequently characterize core technical tasks and differentiate them from justice tasks that do not always have clearly perceived direct monetary implications and involve internal employees. The second task was labeled: "communicating a personnel decision to an employee" and was accompanied by the following text:

Two of your employees were up for a promotion. Because of budget constraints, you are able to promote only one of them. You already made the decision, but due to HR rules, you need to communicate it today to the employee who did not receive the promotion.

I used this task to operationalize a justice task for three reasons. First, communicating bad news to subordinates is a common task that managers face at work (Bies, 2013; Richter et al., 2016). Second, this task usually involves all rules of justice as it requires providing clear information about the procedural and distributive aspects of the decision and communicating the news in a interpersonal sensitive and respectful manner (Richter et al., 2016). Finally, similar tasks have been used by past research to study justice performance (e.g., Grant, Molinsky, Margolis, Kamin, & Schiano, 2009; Patient & Skarlicki, 2010). In order to exclude alternative explanations that one task was prioritized because it was more urgent, the instructions clearly specified that both tasks were due before the manager in the scenario had to leave for training.

Following this, the workload manipulation was introduced. I manipulated perceived workload in two related ways: (a) through the time that participants had to complete both tasks (15 vs. 10 minutes) and (b) by describing the time requirements for the simulation differently. More specifically, I told all participants that their performance on the simulation would determine whether they were eligible for the extra bonus payment (\$1) and that, doing well on both tasks would help their overall performance. In the low workload condition (N = 122), participants had 15 minutes to complete the two tasks and they read the following:

Fifteen (15) minutes is a reasonable amount of time to complete these two tasks. If you are unable to complete both tasks well within the allotted time, you will need to use your judgment as a manager to maximize your performance on what you believe to be the most crucial task.

In the high workload condition (N = 111), participants had 10 minutes to complete the two tasks and read a different message:

Ten (10) minutes is NOT a lot of time to complete these two tasks. Although doing well on both tasks will help your overall performance, given the time

limitation, you will need to use your judgment as a manager to maximize your performance on what you believe to be the most crucial task.

In addition, participants in both conditions read the following:

This means you need to decide which task is more important, how much time and effort you want to expend on each task, and which task you should devote your attention to first.

After some manipulation check questions about their perceptions of the two tasks, participants started the simulation. While completing the simulation, participants worked on a screen that contained a detailed text of the two tasks and information they had to use to complete each task (displayed in random order). For example, for the core technical task they could see information about the transactions that occurred with the client and the reasons the client was overbilled. In the justice task they saw performance information about both candidates that could be used to justify their decision. Each task description also included the relevant criteria for successful performance. I took great care to ensure that the tasks were *equivalent* in terms of the complexity of the information that participants were required to process, the length, and the perceived difficulty. As described above, I also highlighted that both tasks were requested by the participants' "boss" to make sure the source of the task does not affect their prioritization decisions (i.e., tasks that come from your boss may seem more important). Pilot testing with a separate MTurk sample indicated that the tasks were comparable in terms of perceived difficulty and time needed to complete them successfully (about 7.5 minutes). The full text of the two tasks appears in Appendix A1. For both tasks, the information needed to successfully complete the assignment was embedded as a picture in order to prevent participants from simply copying and pasting it as their answer. Each task had its own dedicated textbox where participants could write their messages and countdown timers

appeared on the screen to make participants aware of the time constraints they were facing.

Manipulation checks. I used two measures (employing a scale ranging from 1 = “*Strongly Disagree*” to 7 = “*Strongly Agree*”) to ensure that the workload manipulation worked as intended. First, as I manipulated workload through the time available for the task and as time pressure plays a significant role in perceptions of workload (Ilies et al., 2015), I used an adapted 3-item version of a measure of felt time pressure by Kinicki and Vecchio (1994). An example item included: “There was just not enough time during the simulation to complete all my tasks” ($\alpha = .77$). I also included a 3-item measure of effort on the simulation from the internal motivation inventory (e.g., Ryan, Koestner, & Deci, 1991) to rule out the possibility that workload affected the effort that participants put into the simulation. Sample item was: “I put a lot of effort into the simulation” ($\alpha = .89$). Effort was weakly correlated with felt-time pressure ($r = .22, p = .001$). I subjected these two variables to a MANOVA analysis with workload condition as the independent variable (0 = low; 1 = high). Results indicated a significant main effect for the workload condition on felt time pressure, but not on effort: time pressure: $M_{\text{low}} = 4.36, M_{\text{high}} = 5.52$; ($F[1, 231] = 26.14, p < .000, \eta_p^2 = .10$); effort: $M_{\text{low}} = 6.58, M_{\text{high}} = 6.51$; ($F[1, 231] = .75, p = .387, \eta_p^2 = .00$). These results support the efficacy of my manipulation.

As prioritizing of different tasks and their performance is likely affected by perceived self-efficacy for each task (Schmidt & Dolis, 2009), I also wanted to ensure that there were no differences in participants perceived self-efficacies for the two tasks. After reading about the tasks but before they started the simulation, participants answered a few questions on their self-efficacy for each task using a 2-item scale for each task

adapted from Chen et al. (2000; $\alpha = .94, .93$ for core technical and justice respectively) with a scale ranging from 1 = “*Strongly Disagree*” to 5 = “*Strongly Agree*.” A sample item was: “I feel confident in my ability to complete this task well.” Paired sample t-tests indicated that participants’ perceived self-efficacy did *not* differ between the two tasks ($M_{\text{difference}} = .08$ [SD = .74], t [232] = 1.59, $p = .113$).

Core technical and justice performance. The messages that participants wrote for each of the tasks (i.e., to the client and to the employee who was not promoted) were coded in order to assess performance. I developed a specific coding scheme for each task based on the instructions, the justice and customer service literatures, and an iterative examination of participants’ actual responses. Specifically, the core technical task (i.e., client complaint) was evaluated on aspects such as clarity and accuracy of explanation, the extent to which the participant apologized for the mistake, and whether the message highlighted the relationship of the company with the client. These criteria correspond to general service performance criteria of reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Liao, Toya, Lepak, & Hong, 2009; Parasuraman, Berry, & Zeithaml, 1991). The justice task (i.e., the promotion decision) was evaluated on aspects such as clarity of the explanation about the decision (distributive and informational justice), information provided about the process used to make the decision (procedural justice), sensitivity of communication and motivation provided to the employee (interpersonal justice). Note that although similar tasks in the past have been used mainly to assess aspects of interpersonal and informational justice (e.g., Patient & Skarlicki, 2010), I deliberately adapted the instructions and criteria to include procedural and distributive elements based on the information provided to participants. I separated the messages that participants

wrote for each task, randomized their order, and then two independent coders who were blind to the conditions coded the messages. Coders rated each response on a scale from 0-5; see Appendix A2 for examples of responses and respective coding). Coders achieved good agreement in their rating of the performance on the core technical task ($ICC[2] = .92$; $rwg_{mean} = .87$) and justice task ($ICC[2] = .88$; $rwg_{mean} = .86$). Any large discrepancies between coders (i.e., more than 1 point difference in ratings between the coders) were resolved, and coders' scores were averaged to arrive at one performance score for each participant on each task. Scores were standardized prior to analysis to ease comparison and interpretation.

Results

The zero-order correlation between the two performance types was not significant ($r = -.01$, $p = .897$). Workload condition was negatively associated with core technical performance ($r = -.15$, $p = .022$) and more negatively associated with justice performance ($r = -.33$, $p < .000$) as indicated by a test of the difference of correlations ($t[233] = 2.03$, $p = .004$; Howell, 2007).

As performance type was a within person variable (i.e., each participant completed both tasks and thus performance is nested within individuals), I submitted performance on the two tasks to a 2 (workload condition: low vs. high) X 2 (performance type: core technical [client complaint] vs. justice [promotion decision]) ANOVA with repeated measures on the second factor. A significant interaction of the workload condition (between-person factor) and the performance type (within person factor) indicates that the workload's relationship with each performance type is significantly different. Supporting Hypothesis 1, a significant workload condition X performance type

interaction emerged ($F[1, 231] = 4.56, p = .054, \eta^2 = .02$). As seen in Table 1, pairwise comparisons suggested that the means for both core technical and justice performance were lower in the high as compared to the low workload condition (core technical: $F[1, 231] = 5.28, p = .022, \eta^2 = .02$; justice: $F[1, 231] = 28.01, p < .000, \eta^2 = .11$). The significant interaction means that the relative drop in justice performance (from .31 to -.34) was more severe than that of the core technical performance (from .14 to -.16).

Supplementary Analysis

Although Study 1 did not manipulate the moderator, justice rewards, I conducted some supplementary analyses as an initial test of the role of justice rewards in affecting managers' prioritization decisions. Because participants' overall success on the simulation was directly tied to a monetary reward, I measured the extent to which participants believed that performing well on each task could lead to such success. Given that this variable was measured, rather than manipulated, this also allowed me to observe whether people naturally tend to perceive justice tasks as being associated with less rewards. As my theory focuses on the relative importance of justice rewards, I used one continuum to measure beliefs about core technical and justice rewards. In particular, after participants read the short description of the two tasks and directly after I reminded them about the reward, but before they started the simulation, I asked them the following question: "Given the information above, which of the tasks is more important for your success on the simulation?" Participants indicated their answer using a slider (varying from 1 = "Answering a client compliant is more important," to 9 = "Communicating a personnel decision to an employee is more important," with the middle of the scale, 5 = indicating "Both tasks are equally important"). Higher scores suggested a belief that

performing well on the justice task would be more likely to make one eligible for the monetary reward. The mean score was 3.92 (SD = 1.80; significantly lower than the middle of the scale [“5”], $t(232) = -9.12, p < .000$) which suggests participants viewed the core technical task as more related to their success and a possible reward than the justice task.

To test whether such perceptions of justice rewards qualified the effects of workload condition on performance of the two tasks, I included this variable as a moderator in the analysis reported above. As expected, a workload condition X performance type X justice rewards interaction emerged ($F [1, 229] = 3.99, p = .047, \eta^2 = .02$) suggesting that the differences in performance across workload conditions differed as a function of justice rewards. I plotted this interaction (Figure 2) and conducted simple slopes analysis (Aiken & West, 1991). In terms of core technical performance, in the low workload condition, there were no differences in performance when perceived justice rewards were low (-1SD) or high (+1 SD; $B = .07, p = .468$); however, in the high workload condition, performance was higher when perceived justice rewards were low as compared to high ($B = -.20, p = .020$). In terms of justice performance, in the low workload condition, there were no differences in performance when perceived justice rewards were low (-1SD) or high (+1 SD; ($B = .09, p = .357$)). However, in the high workload condition, performance was lower when perceived justice rewards were low as compared to high ($B = .18, p = .027$). These results give initial support for my argument that justice rewards play a moderating role between perceived workload and core technical and justice performance.

Study 1: Discussion

Study 1 provided initial support to my theoretical model in a controlled experimental setting. When participants, simulating the role of managers, experienced high workloads, both their task and justice performance suffered, but justice performance suffered more than core technical performance. This supports my argument that workload is not uniformly related to managerial performance and that, in order to better understand the effects of workload on managers' performance, there is a need to explore competing managerial requirements. Furthermore, supplementary analyses provided initial correlational evidence regarding the role that perceived organizational rewards play in driving prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks under high workload conditions. My analysis suggested that prioritization differences, as reflected in participants' performance on the two tasks, were driven by their belief about which task is more likely to lead to a reward.

There are a number of limitations related to the generalizability of the inferences I can draw from Study 1. First, in Study 1's simulation, the core technical and the justice tasks were artificially separated. In reality, managers frequently engage in job responsibilities that involve a mix of both types of tasks. Second, although the measurement of justice rewards and the supplementary analysis provided some insight into the moderating role that such rewards play in affecting the different types of performance through prioritization, a stronger test of my theoretical model would involve a direct manipulation of such rewards in conjunction with workload. Third, in Study 1, the mediating mechanism, prioritization was assumed (i.e., reflected in performance) rather than directly measured. I designed Study 2 to address these issues.

Chapter 5: Study 2

Sample and Procedure

Sample. I recruited 249 undergraduate students enrolled in an introductory strategic management class in an East Coast public University in the U.S. to complete a one-hour simulation in return for course credit ($M_{\text{age}} = 22.1$ [$SD = 1.84$], 50% female, 55% Caucasian, 8% African-American, 10% Hispanic-Latino, 26% Asian). Participants were told that higher performance on the simulation would increase their chance to win a \$100 monetary reward. I excluded from the initial sample 10 participants who provided nonsensical answers to the simulation and thus the final sample included 239 participants.

Procedure. Study 2 procedure was similar to that of Study 1, with the following changes. First, due to the higher complexity of the tasks involved in Study 2, workload was manipulated so there were 30 minutes to complete the two tasks in the low workload condition ($N = 121$) and 20 minutes in the high workload condition ($N = 118$). The new allotted times were based on pilots conducted with people drawn from a similar sample. Second, to make the tasks more interrelated, I slightly adapted the two tasks. The core technical task now involved completing a business proposal directed at the participants' direct boss. I told participants that they had been working on convincing their boss to create a new client acquisition role and that they must complete the proposal by the end of the allotted time so that their boss can take it up to higher management for final approval. They were asked to make a business case (e.g., review costs and benefits and compare the role that similar roles with competitors) and to recommend one of two

possible employees to be promoted to the new role. This is where the core technical task overlapped with the justice task, which required participants, as in Study 1, to write a message to the employee who was not chosen to be promoted to new role. I explained that due to the company's HR rules that because the name of the employee recommended for the new position needs to be included in the proposal, the message to the employee who was not chosen had to be done in writing on the same day as the proposal. In this way, the decision making process and relevant information presented to participants could be used to complete both tasks and thus their performance reflects a more direct prioritization of the two tasks within one job requirement (the full text of the two tasks is presented in Appendix B1).

The third difference was the direct manipulation of the justice rewards. In particular, after reading background information about the simulation and their role, participants in the low justice rewards condition (N = 120) read the following:

About the culture in ENS. ENS values productivity and excellent levels of performance that can help maintain its position in the market. Managers in ENS are evaluated and rewarded on the extent to which they get things done, ensure productivity, and help maintain ENS' competitiveness in the market. Below, is a snapshot of the managerial performance appraisal form used at ENS. As the weights indicate, productivity and performance are weighted quite heavily in how managers' success is determined...

I then presented participants with a "balanced scorecard," a table which included three performance criteria with corresponding weights and example behaviors: (a) productivity and performance was weighted 70%, (b) managing employees and treating them fairly was weighted 20%, and (c) being a good organizational citizen was weighted 10%. In contrast, participants' in the high justice rewards condition (N = 119) read the following:

About the culture in ENS. ENS values its employees and maintains that if they are well treated it can help maintain its position in the market. In addition to productivity considerations, Managers in ENS are evaluated and rewarded on the extent to which they treat their employees respectfully, provide employees with explanations for personnel decisions, and give them feedback about how they can improve. Below, is a snapshot of the managerial performance appraisal form used at ENS. As the weights indicate, in addition to productivity and performance, the extent to which managers treat employees fairly is weighted quite heavily in how managers' success is determined...

I presented participants in the high justice reward condition the same balanced scorecard table but with the weights changed so “productivity and performance” and “managing employees and treating them fairly” were both equally weighted at 45%. As in Study 1, each task had its own dedicated textbox where participants could write their messages and countdown timers appeared on the screen to make participants aware of the time constraints they were facing. When they started the simulation they were also given a physical envelope, which contained a hardcopy of relevant information needed to successfully complete both tasks (e.g., analysis of competitors, employees’ personnel file, relevant costs of the new role, etc.).

Manipulation checks. To test whether the workload manipulation worked as intended, I employed the same measures of perceived time pressure ($\alpha = .80$) and effort ($\alpha = .90$) used in Study 1. Effort was weakly correlated with felt-time pressure ($r = .25$, $p = .001$). I subjected these two variables to a MANOVA analysis with workload condition as the independent variable (0 = low; 1 = high). Results indicated a significant main effect for the workload condition on felt time pressure, but not on effort: time pressure: $M_{\text{low}} = 3.57$, $M_{\text{high}} = 4.81$; ($F[1, 237] = 38.69$, $p < .000$, $\eta_p^2 = .14$); effort: $M_{\text{low}} = 5.45$, $M_{\text{high}} = 5.60$ ($F[1, 237] = .75$, $p = .365$, $\eta_p^2 = .00$). These results support the efficacy of the workload manipulation.

To test the efficacy of the rewards manipulation, I asked participants whether they agreed (using a scale ranging from 1 = “*Strongly Disagree*” to 5 = “*Strongly Agree*.”) with five statements. Three statements focused on core technical rewards (i.e., “Managers at ENS are mainly rewarded for being productive and getting things done,” “Focusing my time and effort on productivity and performance is likely to make me very successful as a manager at ENS”, and “My success as a manager in ENS depends more on my productivity level than on how I manage my employees”; $\alpha = .76$) and two focused on justice rewards (i.e., “Managers at ENS are evaluated and rewarded based on the extent to which employees feel respected and well treated” and “Treating employee fairly (for example, explaining decisions) is a major part of my success as a manager in ENS”; $\alpha = .78$). These two variables were strongly negatively correlated ($r = -.56, p < .000$). I subjected these two variables to a MANOVA analysis with justice rewards condition as the independent variable (0 = low; 1 = high). Results indicated that the reward manipulation worked as intended. The manipulation check for core technical rewards was higher in the in the low ($M = 4.59$) as compared to the high justice rewards condition ($M = 3.04; F[1, 237] = .305.66, p < .000; \eta_p^2 = .56$). In a similar vein, the manipulation check for justice rewards was lower in the in the low ($M = 3.00$) as compared to the high justice reward condition ($M = 4.49; F[1, 237] = .183.17, p < .000; \eta_p^2 = .44$).

In addition, to ensure that the relative importance of the two tasks was manipulated, I used an additional manipulation check. After they read about the simulation and directly after I reminded them that higher performance will increase their chances to win a \$100 monetary reward, but before they started the simulation, I asked participants the following question: “Given all the information you read about ENS and

the two tasks, in your opinion, which of the two tasks is more important for your success as a manager in ENS?” Participants indicated their answer using a slider (varying from 1 = “*Completing an official proposal for the new client acquisition role,*” to 9 = “*Explaining your decision to your employee,*” with the middle of the scale, 5 = indicating “*Both tasks are equally important*”). Further supporting the efficacy of the justice rewards manipulation, an ANOVA analysis indicated that participants’ in the low justice rewards condition viewed the core technical task as more directly related to their success ($M = 3.15$) while participants’ in the high justice rewards condition were closer to viewing both tasks as equally important ($M = 4.74$) and these perceptions were significantly different ($F[1, 237] = 67.99, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .22$).

Measures

Core technical and justice performance. As in Study 1, the messages that participants wrote for each of the tasks were coded to assess performance. Similar criteria to those used in Study 1, adapted to the specific tasks in this study, were used to assess performance (task descriptions included the relevant criteria for successful performance, see Appendix B1). I separated the messages that participants wrote for each task, randomized their order, and then two independent coders who were blind to the conditions coded each message. Coders rated responses using a scale from 0-5; see Appendix B2 for examples highly rated responses). Coders achieved good agreement on the core technical task ($ICC[2] = .92; rwg_{mean} = .92$) and justice task ($ICC[2] = .86; rwg_{mean} = .77$). Any large discrepancies between coders (i.e., more than 1 point difference in ratings between the coders) were resolved, and coders’ scores were averaged to arrive at one performance score for each participant on each task. Scores were standardized

prior to analysis to ease comparison and interpretation.

Prioritization of the core technical task over the justice task. In line with previous studies that operationalized prioritization as time and effort spent on different tasks (e.g., Northcraft et al., 2011), after participants completed the simulation, they rated their prioritization decisions using three items: “I spent more time on the proposal task because it was more important than the promotion decision task,” “I had to devote less time to the promotion decision task because I did not have enough time to do both tasks well,” and “I had to devote less effort to the promotion decision task because I did not have enough time to do both tasks well” ($\alpha = .79$).

Results

Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics and correlations for the variables included in my analysis. To test my hypotheses, I conducted multilevel regression analyses using random coefficient modeling (RCM) in R. Note that core technical and justice performance are within person variables nested within managers. Thus, performance was treated as a level 1 variable and all other variables as level 2 (the individual manager level). Table 3 presents the results of my regression analysis. As seen in Table 3 (Model 1), perceived workload was marginally positively related to prioritization ($B = .12, p = .056$). To test whether prioritization differently related to each performance type, I interacted prioritization (between-person variable) with performance type (within person variable). A significant interaction implies that the relationships between each performance type and prioritization are significantly different than one another. This interaction was significant ($B = -.36, p < .001$; Table 3, Model 3) and is plotted in Figure 3. A simple slopes analysis suggested that prioritization (of the core

technical task) was not related to core technical performance ($B = .07, p = .320$) but was negatively related to justice performance ($B = -.30, p < .001$). Together, these findings provided partial support for Hypothesis 1.

Hypothesis 2 suggested that justice rewards would moderate the effect of perceived workload on prioritization. Supporting Hypothesis 2, the interaction between workload condition and rewards condition was significant ($B = -.28, p = .022$; Table 3, Model 2) and is plotted in Figure 4. A simple slopes analysis suggested that workload condition was positively related to prioritization of the core technical task in the low justice rewards condition ($B = .26, p = .003$), but unrelated to prioritization in high justice rewards condition ($B = -.02, p = .783$).

I tested Hypothesis 3, which represents my entire theoretical model, in two stages. I first submitted performance on the two tasks to a 2 (workload condition: low vs. high) X 2 (justice rewards: low vs. high) X 2 (performance type: core technical vs. justice) ANOVA with repeated measures on the last factor. A significant three-way interaction (i.e., workload condition, justice rewards condition, and performance type) indicates that the relationship of workload condition with each of the performance types differs significantly for the two justice reward conditions. As expected, a significant workload condition X rewards condition X performance type interaction emerged ($F[1, 235] = 3.98, p = .047, \eta_p^2 = .02$). Note that the same exact result is reflected in the three-way interaction in the multilevel regression analysis (Table 3, Model 4). As seen in Table 4, although performance on the core technical task was lower in the high (as compared to low) workload condition, it did not vary as a result of the justice rewards condition. In contrast, the justice performance was lower in the high (as compared with the low)

workload condition, but in the low justice rewards, high workload resulted in even lower performance as compared with high workload in the high justice rewards condition.

Next, to test the entire conceptual model I calculated and compared the indirect effects of workload condition on the two types of performance via prioritization at different justice rewards conditions using a Monte Carlo-based simulation (Selig & Preacher, 2008). As seen in Table 5, the indirect effect of workload on justice performance via prioritization was negative only when justice rewards were low (95% CI: -.14, -.02) and was significantly different from the indirect effect of workload on justice performance via prioritization when justice rewards were high (95% CI: .05, .20). I also compared this indirect effect to the effect of workload on core technical performance via prioritization when justice rewards were low and these indirect effects were also significantly different (95% CI: .02, .14). These results support Hypothesis 3.

Study 2: Discussion

Study 2 provided additional support for my theoretical model with a different sample using an altered simulation (which included tasks that were interrelated rather than artificially separated). Study 2 also provided casual evidence regarding the moderating effects justice rewards play in affecting prioritization and performance. Finally, Study 2 provided evidence that explicit prioritization decisions are related to reductions in justice performance in the face of high workload and low rewards for justice performance.

Although, together, Studies 1 and 2 provide support for my theoretical model, the samples and the relatively simplified simulation of managerial roles used in both studies limits inference about the behaviors of actual managers situated in more complex

environments. In particular, in both studies, the simulation required participants to choose between the two tasks (i.e., either-or prioritization) while in real organizational settings managers face multiple tasks and have more leeway to postpone tasks and ensure that all tasks are met over longer periods of time despite high workloads. Moreover, the justice tasks in both studies involved a writing task that is likely to emphasize some aspects of justice (i.e., interpersonal, informational) more than others. In addition, it is possible that the specific operationalizations of the tasks were responsible for observed effects. For example, because in both Studies 1 and 2, the core task was more quantifiable (i.e., in terms of having monetary implications) in nature, this could have led to their prioritization under high workloads. Although such monetary implications usually represent and distinguish core technical from justice tasks, the effects of the quantifiable nature of the core task cannot be ruled out as an alternative explanation and represents a limitation of this methodology. To address these issues I designed Study 3 to test my hypothesis using a sample of actual managers from a variety of organizations.

Chapter 6: Study 3

I was not aware of any pre-existing scales intended to measure whether managers prioritize their core technical tasks over their justice tasks and the extent to which different performance aspects are rewarded by organizations. Therefore, I first conducted a pilot study to establish the validity of the scales that I intended to use in Study 3.

A Pilot Study to Develop Scales for Prioritization and Rewards

Procedure. I recruited participants for the pilot study using a snowball sampling technique (Grant & Mayer, 2009; Mitchell, Vogel, & Folger, 2015; Zapata et al., 2013). As part of a class assignment for credit, undergraduate students participating in organizational behavior classes at a large Eastern university were asked to recruit a manager to complete a survey. Students had to recruit the manager from their own personal network and ensure that this person worked full time (more than 30 hours a week) and had at least 3 direct reports. Students provided me with full contact details of 197 potential participants including email, company name, and phone number. I contacted these 197 managers directly through email with a link to the online survey. After two weeks, 164 managers completed the survey. I excluded 27 managers who reported not having at least one direct report and/or had missing data on the focal variables. The final sample for the pilot study thus included 137 managers ($M_{\text{age}} = 41.32$ [SD = 12.59]; 38% were female, with an average of 10.70 [SD = 9.16] years of tenure in a managerial position). All items used in the pilot study appear in Table 6.

Core technical and justice rewards. I evaluated the extent to which managers believed that engaging in behaviors relating to core technical and justice tasks resulted in valued rewards from their organization. To make sure that I captured an array of valued rewards, in the survey, I defined rewards to include both tangible aspects (e.g., bonuses, promotions) and intangible aspects (e.g., recognition, praise). I used 4 items to represent behaviors relating to core technical tasks. In particular, I adapted items based on Welbourne, Johnson, and Amir's (1998) job dimension role-based performance scale. In addition, I used 5 items to represent behaviors relating to justice tasks. I adapted four statements from Scott et al.'s (2014) measure of managerial discretion, which includes one item to refer to each category of rules of justice. I chose to adapt this measure as it was validated with a managerial population and established the validity of measuring each of the justice rules with one item. I added one item that referred to overall fair treatment of employees (e.g., "Treating our employees fairly"). Managers viewed the nine statements and rated the extent to which they agreed, using a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = "*Strongly disagree*" to 5 = "*Strongly agree*"), that each of the statements accurately described whether their organization strongly rewards this behavior from managers such as themselves.

Prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks. I developed four items to capture the extent to which managers prioritized their core technical tasks over justice tasks. As opposed to Study 2 where the two tasks were related but clearly labeled, for real managers core technical and justice tasks are frequently intertwined. Additionally, asking whether different aspects of core technical tasks are prioritized over each of the four types of justice rules would have created multiple items and would have resulted in

artificial items that would lack face validity. Finally, I also wanted to make sure the items are distinct from those related to rewards, which as discussed above, referred to specific justice dimensions. Hence, I chose to use the broader relational category to construct items for prioritization of core technical over justice tasks rather than directly referring to specific justice dimensions. In particular, I asked managers to rate, using a 7-point scale (ranging from 1 = “*Strongly disagree*” to 7 = “*Strongly agree*”), the extent to which they often find themselves prioritizing core technical tasks over more relational aspects of their role (e.g., treating employees fairly or keeping them motivated) using 4 items.

Exploratory factor analysis. As seen in Table 6, exploratory factor analysis using principal axis factoring method with varimax rotation supported the factor structure of the three measures and explained 63.5% of the variance. All items loaded on their respective factors besides the adapted distributive justice item, which cross loaded on the rewards for core technical performance factor. These results provided initial support for the validity of these measures. Prioritization ($\alpha = .84$) was significantly negatively related to the justice rewards measure ($\alpha = .90$; $r = -.31$, $p < .001$) but not to the core technical rewards measure ($\alpha = .86$; $r = -.16$, $p = .066$) and the two reward measures were strongly correlated ($r = .66$, $p < .001$). Once the validity of my scales was established, I conducted Study 3 to test my specific hypotheses.

Data Collection for Hypothesis Testing

Procedure. As my hypotheses focused on how differences in perceived workload and rewards that managers experience affect their performance, I needed a sample in which these two variables exhibited high variance. As this would have been less likely if I recruited my sample from one organization or a small number of organizations, I set out

to recruit managers from a wide variety of organizations and occupations. To do so, I utilized the snowball sampling technique which has been frequently used in the past to capture such diverse samples (Grant & Mayer, 2009; Mitchell et al., 2015; Zapata et al., 2013). As part of a class assignment for credit, I asked undergraduate students participating in organizational behavior classes at a large Eastern university to recruit one employee-manager dyad each for my study. This was done one semester after the pilot study the samples were completely independent of each other. Students had to recruit employees and managers from their own personal network and ensure that (a) they worked full time (more than 30 hours a week), (b) the employee directly reported to the manager, and (c) the manager had at least 3 direct reports including the recruited employee. I set the last criteria to ensure students understood that they were required to recruit people who were not only managers in terms of their title or position, but who actually had managerial responsibilities which required them to interact with employees and make decisions about them.

Students provided me with the contact details of potential participants including email, company name, and phone number. I contacted participants directly via email with a link to an online survey. Overall, I contacted 497 manager-employee dyads. After two weeks, 457 employees and 462 managers completed the survey. I was able to match the response of 435 managers and employees. For my final sample, I excluded managers who reported not directly supervising any employees or who did not indicate how many employees they supervised. To make sure that the employees reporting on managers' performance were familiar with the manager and were able to observe his or her behavior regularly, I also excluded from the survey employees who gave a rating of 2 or less to

either a question assessing how frequently they interacted with the manager (on the following scale: 1 – “Never,” 2 – “Rarely,” 3 – “Sometimes,” 4 – “Often,” 5 – “All the time”) or how personally familiar they were with the managers’ work behavior as asked about in the survey (on the following scale 1 – “Very unfamiliar,” 2 – “Unfamiliar,” 3 – “Somewhat familiar,” 4 – “Familiar,” 5 – “Very familiar”). Finally, I excluded individuals whose surveys had substantial missing data on the focal study variables.

Sample. The final sample, after listwise deletion, consisted of 389 manager-employee dyads who worked full-time for a variety of industries including insurance, education, construction, accounting, financial services, government, hospitality, IT, and defense. Of the 389 managers, 61% were male. Further, 62% were Caucasian, 21% Asian, and 12% were African-American. 82% managers had at least a college education. The average age of managers was 44.56 years ($SD = 12.12$), their average tenure in their current organization was 10.65 years ($SD = 9.05$), and average tenure in the current position was 6.35 years ($SD = 6.47$). Managers occupied a wide variety of organizational levels (14% first level supervisors, 24% middle management, 23% upper middle management, 18% executive, and 21% top management) and reported that on average they had 11.33 ($SD = 16.29$) employees reporting directly to them. Of the 389 employees, 55% were female. Further, 57% were Caucasian, 22% Asian, and 12% African-American. 67% of employees had at least a college education. The average age of employees was 36.47 ($SD = 13.87$) and their average tenure in their current organization was 4.87 ($SD = 5.87$) years. Employees were located lower in the organizational hierarchy as compared to managers (47% staff, 23% first level supervisors, 17% middle management, 11% upper middle management, and 3%

executive).

Measures

Perceived workload. In line with my conceptualization of perceived workload and the manipulation of this variable in Studies 1 and 2, I chose to measure workload as individual managers' perception that their work exceeds their capacity (or personal resources), especially in terms of time pressure. Managers reported their perceived workload using a 5-item measure adapted from previous research (e.g., Janssen, 2001; Van Yperen & Hagedoorn, 2003). In particular, I asked managers to think about their job, role, or situation at work over the last three months and respond to the following questions: "Do you have too much work to do?" "Do you have to work extra hard to finish your tasks in time?" "Do you work under time pressure?" "Do you have to rush through work?" "Do you have too little work?" (reverse coded) using a 5-point scale (1 = "Never," 5 = "Always"; $\alpha = .73$).

Prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks. I measured the extent to which managers prioritized core technical tasks over justice tasks by using the scale developed in the pilot study ($\alpha = .82$). Note that higher scores on this variable mean that managers tended to prioritize core technical tasks more than justice (or relational) tasks.

Core technical and justice rewards. I measured whether managers believed that their organization rewards core technical and justice performance, using the measures developed in the pilot study ($\alpha_{\text{justice}} = .90$; $\alpha_{\text{core technical}} = .86$).

Justice performance. I adapted Colquitt's (2001) organizational justice scale of the four facets of justice rules. Given the focus of my theorizing on *managers'* adherence to rules of justice, in line with recommendations regarding the foci of justice research

(Rupp et al., 2014), and because the original items used to measure distributive and procedural rules are worded in broad terms and are usually used to operationalize justice rule adherence of the organization rather than the manager, I instructed employees to specifically think about their own manager (as opposed to the organization as a whole) when assessing their manager's adherence to these two rules in addition to the informational and interpersonal ones (the survey software embedded the manager's name into the questions). Because my theoretical arguments did not focus on one dimension, and because these dimensions are frequently highly correlated in field settings, I treated justice performance as an overall higher-order construct of the four dimensions ($\alpha = .80$). This approach has been used by other researchers in the justice literature (Colquitt & Shaw, 2005; Zhang, Lepine, Buckman, & Wei, 2014).

For all justice rules, I asked employees to think about the manager's treatment of all his or her employees over the last three months. For distributive justice, I instructed employees to focus on the outcomes received from the manager (such as rewards, evaluations, promotions, desired and undesired assignments, recognition, etc.) and used 4 items (e.g., "Do those outcomes reflect what employees have contributed to work?"). For procedural justice, I instructed employees to focus on the processes used to make decisions about these same outcomes and used 7 items (e.g., "Are those procedures free of bias?"). For the 5-item informational justice measure (e.g., "candidly communicate with employees?") and the 4-item interpersonal justice measure (e.g., "treat employees with respect?"), I asked employees to think about the manager's behavior in general. Employees used a 5-point scale to rate the justice performance measures (1 = "*To a very small extent*," 5 = "*To a very large extent*").

Managers' core technical performance. Although employees might not be ideal evaluators of managers' core technical performance, prior research (Ashford & Tsui, 1991; Atwater, Ostroff, Yammarino, & Fleenor, 1998) indicates that they still can be accurate sources of manager performance and leadership research has frequently used both upper-management and employee rated performance to evaluate leaders' performance and effectiveness (Avolio, Sosik, Jung, & Berson, 2003). Further, given my dyadic sampling method (due to complexities involved in collecting triadic data, where manager performance would be rated by their supervisors), the need to avoid self-report biases (as independent variables were assessed from managers) and to maintain consistency with my justice measurement (based on employees' perceptions), I chose to use employees' perceptions for core technical performance. In particular, employees rated their manager's core technical performance using the 4-item job dimension of Welbourne et al.'s (1998) role-based performance scale. I asked employees to rate, to the best of their knowledge, the extent to which the manager is able to meet the core technical aspects of his or her role (for example, sales, productivity, other relevant performance indicators, meeting top management demands, etc.), in terms of four criteria (quantity of work output, quality of work output, accuracy of work, efficiency of work) using a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = "*Needs much improvement*" to 5 = "*Excellent*"; $\alpha = .88$).

Control variables. Due to the varied nature of the sample, I controlled for certain factors that can relate to the focal variables in my theoretical model and that might provide alternative explanations for any findings. First, I controlled for managers' span of control. This is because managers who directly supervise more employees might

experience higher workloads and also find it harder to ensure that all their employees feel fairly treated. I asked managers how many employees directly reported to them and used this number as indication of their span of control. Second, I controlled for managers' tenure in their position. This is because individuals who have spent time in a particular job position might have learnt to adapt to high workloads and to better manage their different responsibilities. Finally, because prioritization of justice might result from internal motivation due to importance ascribed to fairness (Greenberg, 1988; Scott et al., 2009, 2014), I also controlled for managers' concern with fairness using 4 items adapted from Pillutla, Law, and Lee (1997). A sample item was: "It is personally important for me that my direct reports see me as a fair leader" ($\alpha = .70$).

Confirmatory factor analysis. To examine whether all the measures were empirically distinct, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis on the 7 measures (workload, core technical performance, justice performance, prioritization, core technical rewards, justice rewards, and fairness concerns) and their respective items. Consistent with prior research (e.g., Zhang et al., 2014), because the measure of justice performance included 20 items, I used the respective dimensions as parcels (cf., Landis, Beal, & Tesluk, 2000). Results indicated that the hypothesized, 7-factor measurement model, fit the data reasonably well, χ^2 (N = 389; df = 435) = 922.530, $p < .000$, CFI = .916, RMSEA = .060, SRMR = .056. Chi-square difference tests showed that alternative nested models achieved significantly poorer fit. For example, constraining employee rated core technical performance and justice performance to load on one factor produced a significantly worse fit, $\Delta\chi^2$ (N = 389; $\Delta df = 1$) = 146.38, $p < .001$, CFI = .893, RMSEA = .068, SRMR = .061). Similarly, constraining core technical rewards and justice rewards

to load on one factor produced a significantly worse fit, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($N = 389$; $\Delta df = 1$) = 522.77, $p < .001$, CFI = .834, RMSEA = .084, SRMR = .057). Finally, constraining workload and prioritization to load on one factor produced a significantly worse fit, $\Delta\chi^2$ ($N = 389$; $\Delta df = 1$) = 325.69, $p < .001$, CFI = .865, RMSEA = .076, SRMR = .074). These analyses provided support for the expected factor structure of the variables.

Results

Descriptive statistics and correlations among the variables are displayed in Table 7. Zero-order correlations suggest that managers' workload was not significantly associated with either core technical or fairness performance. However, there was a positive association between managers' workload and their prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks ($r = .15$, $p = .002$). Furthermore, prioritization was negatively (but not significantly) associated with managers' core technical performance ($r = -.02$, $p = .718$) and more negatively associated with their justice performance ($r = -.15$, $p = .003$) as indicated by a test of the difference of correlations ($t[389] = -2.92$, $p < .001$). Finally, note that the mean for core technical rewards ($M = 3.31$ [$SD = 1.07$]) was, on average, higher than the mean justice rewards ($M = 3.24$ [$SD = 1.02$]; $M_{\text{difference}} = .08$ [$SD = .76$], $p = .032$). This gives some support to my assertion that, on average, organizations reward core technical performance more than justice performance.

To test my hypotheses, I conducted multilevel regression analyses using random coefficient modeling (RCM) in R. To clarify again, core technical and justice performance are within person variables nested within individual managers. Thus, performance was treated as level 1 variable and all other variables as level 2 (the individual manager level). For performance, $ICC(1) = .57$ ($p < .001$; $ICC[2] = .72$)

suggesting that significant variance in performance was attributed to level 2 (individual level) variance. Table 8 presents the results of my regression analysis.

First, perceived workload was positively related to prioritization of core technical tasks ($B = .25, p = .001$; Table 8, Model 1). Next, because prioritization is a between-person factor and performance is a within-person factor, a significant interaction between prioritization and performance type means that prioritization is differently related to each performance type. Indeed, the interaction between prioritization and performance type was significant ($B = -.08, p = .007$; Table 8, Model 4) and is plotted in Figure 5. A simple slopes analysis suggested that prioritization was not related to core technical performance ($B = -.01, p = .717$) but was negatively related to justice performance ($B = -.10, p = .003$). I calculated the hypothesized indirect effect of workload on the two types of performance via prioritization. This analysis indicated that the unconditional indirect effect of workload on core technical performance via prioritization was not significant (95% CI: $-.024, .016$), however, the same indirect effect on justice performance was significant (95% CI: $-.049, -.006$). These indirect effects were different from one another (95% CI: $.007, .071$). Note that, as seen in Table 8 (Model 3), the interaction of performance type and workload was not significant ($B = .03, p = .54$), suggesting that workload did not have direct effects on core technical and justice performance. These results provide partial support for Hypothesis 1.

As seen in Table 8 (Model 2), the interaction between workload and justice rewards was significant ($B = -.17, p = .002$), supporting Hypothesis 2, which suggested that the effect of workload on prioritization is moderated by justice rewards (Figure 6). A simple slopes analysis suggested that workload was not related to prioritization of core

technical tasks when justice rewards were high (+1SD, $B = .06$, $p = .559$) but was positively related to prioritization of core technical tasks when justice rewards were low (-1SD, $B = .41$, $p < .001$).

To test Hypothesis 3 regarding the moderation of the indirect effect, I compared the indirect effect of workload on justice performance and core technical performance under high and low levels of justice rewards. As seen in Table 9, supporting Hypothesis 3, the indirect effect of workload on justice performance via prioritization was negative only when justice rewards were low (-1SD, 95% CI: -.070, -.009) and different from the indirect effect when justice rewards were high (+1SD, 95% CI: .024, .116). In addition, this indirect effect was different from the indirect effect of workload on core technical performance via prioritization when justice rewards were low (-1SD, 95% CI: .024, .116).

Robustness analyses. In line with recommendations by Carlson and Wu (2012) to present empirical findings from field data with and without control variables, I re-ran the regressions described above excluding all control variables. All significant coefficients described above remained significant in this analysis. Additionally, I also explored if prioritization was affected by the interaction with core technical rewards. I added the interaction between this variable and perceived workload to my analysis in three different ways: (a) as a standalone interaction, (b) together with the interaction of justice rewards and perceived workload, and (c) as a three-way interaction with perceived workload and justice rewards. In all these analysis, this interaction was not significant and when justice rewards' interaction with workload was included in the analysis, this interaction remained significant.

Study 3: Discussion

Study 3 provided further support for my hypotheses, this time with a managerial population in a real (as opposed to simulated) setting. Supporting Hypotheses 1, results indicated that managers who perceived higher workloads prioritized their core technical tasks over justice tasks (or more relational responsibilities) and this prioritization was negatively associated with their justice performance as rated by their employees. Furthermore, supporting Hypotheses 2 and 3, Study 3 pointed to the role of justice rewards in attenuating the differences in the effect of perceived workload on core technical and justice performance via prioritization of core technical tasks. Managers who perceived strong rewards for justice performance in their organization prioritized core technical tasks less in the face of high workloads. Note, in line with distinctions between justice and fairness (Colquitt & Zapata-Phelan, 2015; Cropanzano et al., 2015) and consistent with Studies 1 and 2, in Study 3 I assessed employees' perception of managers' justice rule adherence, rather than whether they felt fairly treated. Yet, given the strong evidence that such adherence underlies perceptions of overall fair treatment (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Nicklin, McNall, Cerasoli, Strahan, & Cavanaugh, 2014), it seems likely to conclude that the perceptions of managers' behaviors likely translate into judgments of fair treatment. Nonetheless, it would be productive for future research to disentangle any possible biases that may lead to differences between justice rule adherence, as reported by managers and perceptions of fair treatment, as reported by employees.

Chapter 7: General Discussion

The aim of this dissertation was to explore why, despite the many benefits associated with fairness, both anecdotal and empirical evidence suggest that managers do not consistently treat employees fairly (Brockner, 2006, 2010). I proposed that in order to understand this puzzle, it is important to examine fairness within the wider context of managerial job responsibilities. Specifically, I focused my theorizing on two categories of tasks that compete for managers' limited and scarce personal resources: justice tasks, representing managers' relational responsibilities, and core technical tasks. I proposed that when facing high workloads, that is, when the personal resources available to managers are not sufficient to meet all their tasks, managers are required to prioritize between these two tasks. Because of common expectations and reward systems in organizational settings as well as people's general preference to overvalue the completion of core technical responsibilities over employee treatment, managers frequently view justice tasks as less important to their success as compared to core technical tasks, and thus end up deprioritizing the former. As a result, I proposed that workload would be more negatively associated with justice tasks than with core technical tasks. I found support for my hypotheses across two experimental studies and one field study surveying a wide array of managers across multiple industries. Results of my studies suggest that managers' perceived workload was negatively related to their justice performance, more so than to their core technical performance. Furthermore, all studies provided evidence that when organizations directly reward justice (or at least to the extent that managers believe that justice performance will be rewarded), this effect is attenuated. As a result,

my paper makes a number of theoretical contributions to the fairness and work demands literatures and clarifies a number of fruitful avenues for future research.

Theoretical Contributions and Directions for Future Research

Justice rule adherence in the context of managerial jobs. My theory and findings highlight how the study of justice as a dependent variable (Brockner et al., 2015; Scott et al., 2009) has examined justice in isolation, without considering whether managers' tendencies to act in ways that adhere to rules of justice are shaped by other competing tasks. This is important as it suggests that our knowledge of the antecedents of justice enactment is restricted to situations where managers' personal resources are sufficient to meet all their work responsibilities. Thus, this paper shifts the focus of existing research on justice as a dependent variable to consider other competing managerial tasks. This is important as research has already started to establish that justice rule adherence is a task that demands substantial personal resources from managers (Danziger et al., 2011; Johnson et al., 2014; Margolis & Molinsky, 2008).

As a result of this focus shift, this paper answers calls in the literature to examine how the context in which managers operate affect their justice rules adherence. For example, Colquitt and Greenberg (2003, p. 187) point out: "... we do not know the specific contexts that trigger fair or unfair treatment. Perhaps injustice is more common in complex, stressful, or novel contexts." Echoing this point, Brockner and colleagues (Brockner et al., 2009, 2015) also highlight how our understanding of the antecedents of justice is limited because research currently does not take into account the fact that behaving fairly carries a price for managers, a price that they are not always willing to pay. Consistent with these calls, and in contrast to the focus of most current

investigations on managerial characteristics (e.g., motivation or personality traits Heslin & VandeWalle, 2009; Mayer et al., 2007; Patient & Skarlicki, 2010; Scott et al., 2014) or on employee traits or the way these traits are perceived managers (e.g., assertiveness, charisma, trustworthiness, need to belong ; Cornelis, Van Hiel, De Cremer, & Mayer, 2013; Hoogervorst, De Cremer, & van Dijke, 2013; Korsgaard, Roberson, & Rymph, 1998; Scott, Colquitt, & Zapata-Phelan, 2007; Zapata et al., 2013; Zhao, Chen, & Brockner, 2015), this paper focuses on contextual factors as predictors of justice, suggesting that higher perceived workload, frequently caused by more stressful and complex contexts (cf., Hambrick et al., 2005) likely makes the opportunity costs associated with justice tasks higher than what managers are willing to pay. Using resource allocation theory, this paper explains how and why high workloads can negatively affect justice adherence via managers' prioritization decisions.

Future research can more directly combine prior findings about the characteristics of the manager and the employee with the personal resources based view of managerial justice as suggested in this paper, to explore whether some characteristics are more or less important in situations of scarce or abundant personal resources (cf., Colquitt & Greenberg, 2003). Relatedly, research can examine additional individual predictors of justice adherence that are specifically important in dealing with high workloads because they help increase and maintain personal resources such self-management (Lovelace et al., 2007) or time-management (Macan, 1994).

In addition, this paper also examines how the organizational context (i.e., rewards) acts as an antecedent of fairness perceptions via its effects on managers' prioritization decisions. Although prior research has examined the direct effect of

organizational factors (e.g., work structure) on employees' fairness perceptions (Schminke et al., 2000, 2002), little to no scholarly attention has been devoted to explaining how salient organizational factors such as the way managers are evaluated and rewarded can affect managers' fair treatment of employees despite recognition that they can create strong situations guiding managers' behaviors and choices (cf., Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). This has important implications because unlike managers' personal characteristics or their relationships with their employees that are known to affect fair treatment, managerial workloads and rewards are likely more under the direct control of organizations and therefore can be used by organizations to directly manage fairness perceptions.

In this respect, it is important to note that although my theory suggests that justice tasks compete with core technical tasks for scarce resources, my results point to a more complex picture of the relationships between these two tasks, workload, justice rewards, and performance. Although I found in Study 1 that an increase in justice rewards led to a simultaneous increase in justice performance and a decrease in core technical task performance, in Studies 2 and 3, higher justice rewards led to increased justice performance, without harming core technical performance. In other words, Studies 2 and 3 seem to suggest that when managers are rewarded for acting justly, not only does their justice performance improve, but their core technical performance does not suffer. As Study 2 involved more complex tasks that better emulate common managerial situations where core technical and justice tasks co-occur and Study 3 was conducted with actual managers, these findings raise interesting questions about the possibility that certain rewards structures could enable managers to meet core technical responsibilities while

not harming employees' fairness perceptions.

In particular, it is possible that managers inefficiently allocate too many resources to core technical tasks under low justice rewards and therefore, when justice rewards are higher, core technical tasks are not harmed because personal resources allocated to justice tasks do not come at the expense of core technical tasks but from increased efficiency in carrying these tasks out. In other words, when justice tasks are not rewarded, managers might not only be incentivized to prioritize core technical tasks, but perhaps also over-incentivized to focus on such tasks, leading them to devote excess personal resources to these tasks, over and above what is needed for adequate performance (cf., Holmström & Milgrom, 1991; Ordóñez, Schweitzer, Galinsky, & Bazerman, 2009), and that could be productively used for other relational tasks such as adherence to justice rules. Findings of studies 2 and 3 suggest that, managers can “have it all” and maintain core technical performance while treating their employees fairly even as workload increases (at least to a certain extent). This is consistent with recommendations by practitioners suggesting that organizations clearly provide guidance to managers about effective ways to spend personal resources across different constitutes and tasks in order to ensure overall effectiveness (e.g., Bevans & De Smet, 2013). Rewarding justice might be one way provide this sort of guidance. As my studies were not designed to directly test this idea, future research could explore it further, because it has important implications in regards to ways organizations can facilitate multifaceted managerial performance.

Additionally, requiring managers to meet both justice and core technical demands might introduce costs that are not directly reflected in my theorizing or findings. Such dual requirements (and rewards) can increase the breadth of managers' role and place

additional demands that might cause increased fatigue and burnout. Future research should continue to explore the possible “dark side” of rewarding justice tasks in addition to core technical tasks. In this respect, studying enhanced roles with regard to including justice tasks could reveal an interesting paradox. Although increasing demands and creating conflict between roles generally has negative effects, it is possible that incorporating more justice demands into managers’ role can actually be beneficial, because in contrast to other role, acting justly provides indirect effects on their core technical performance by enhancing the contributions of employees who perform better, are more proactive and tend to help the manager more. Thus, increasing rewards for justice tasks could actually have different effects as compared to increasing rewards for other managerial performance requirements (e.g., change, innovation, being a good organizational citizen).

The relative importance ascribed to fairness in organizations. My theory and findings suggest a need for a shift in the fairness literature from a discussion of whether or not managers view fairness as important, to a discussion of how importantly is fairness viewed by managers *relative* to their other tasks and responsibilities. A number of studies have provided evidence that managers care about fairness (or at least the appearance of fairness) and believe it to be important for their success (Greenberg, 1990a; Meindl, 1989; Pepper, Gosling, & Gore, 2015; Scott et al., 2014). Yet, this research has neglected to explore the possibility that while fairness is viewed as important when considered in isolation, it is not seen as more important than (or at least equally important as) other managerial requirements (cf., Cooper & Scandura, 2015). As suggested by my findings, in certain situations (e.g., high workload), the relative importance ascribed to tasks

becomes more important in understanding managers' behavior than the absolute levels of the importance ascribed to each task. Indeed, in Study 1, people naturally viewed the core technical task as more important and relevant for their success as managers than a justice task. Even in Study 2, where justice rewards were manipulated to be equal to those associated with the core technical task, the relative importance of the justice task in comparison to the core technical task was lower than parity. These results are also indirectly supported by the findings in Study 3, which suggested that core technical rewards were stronger, on average, than justice rewards. This suggests that managers come into organizations with a belief about the importance of the two types of tasks, and that rewards in organization tend to strengthen their beliefs.

Although this paper focused on organizational rewards as an important antecedent determining the relative importance of each type of task, other personal and organizational factors might also affect the evaluation of outcome expectancies associated with different tasks, and future research should uncover such factors and their relative influence on managers' beliefs. For instance, justice rewards sway behaviors partly because they increase the accountability felt by managers towards such tasks. In this way, other factors that might increase managers' felt accountability towards employees, rather than towards other organizational stakeholders, are likely to increase the relative importance of treating employees fairly. For example, in organizations or industries where certain employees hold considerable power and influence, managers are likely to be more attuned to their needs and view the relative importance of acting in just way towards them as more important (cf., Blader & Chen, 2012). Another element that might be important is the discretion awarded to managers when completing different

tasks. Although managers are given discretion when it comes to meeting core technical requirements (Spreitzer, 1995), task objectives are usually hierarchically set and managers are required to justify the outcomes and the processes used to achieve them. Hence, managers have less control over the of time and effort they need to invest to meet such requirements (Lerner & Tetlock, 1999). On the other hand, managers hold considerable discretion over justice rules adherence (Scott et al., 2009). Even if organizations implement formal procedures (cf., Rupp & Cropanzano, 2002), the particular implementation of such formal procedures is usually left to managers (Johnson et al., 2014). Therefore, when faced with less available personal resources than is demanded by core technical *and* justice tasks, managers might be more likely able to reduce allocation of resources towards justice but are less able to do so when it comes to core technical demands.

Work demands and the multifaceted nature of performance. Finally, this paper contributes to the work demands literature. Work demands are aspects of individuals' job or role that act as barriers to goal attainment (e.g., workload; Bakker et al., 2014; LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005). Although organizational performance is multifaceted and employees frequently make tradeoffs between different facets of their performance (Bergeron, Shipp, Rosen, & Furst, 2011; Rapp et al., 2013), the effects of work demands on performance has been mostly explored without taking into account the possibility that different performance types might be differently affected by such demands (Bakker et al., 2014; Hambrick et al., 2005; LePine et al., 2005). This is especially true when it comes to managers (cf., Courtright et al., 2014; Decoster, Stouten, Camps, & Tripp, 2014; Mawritz, Folger, & Latham, 2014). That is, although managers

are frequently expected to fulfill multiple roles and display a range of behaviors at work (Conway, 1999; Yukl, 2012), research has examined the effects of workload and other managerial demands on performance broadly defined, neglecting to explore the possibility that different aspects of managerial performance are differently affected by the experience of demands (cf., Courtright et al., 2014). For instance, Hambrick et al. (2005) explicitly exclude from their theorizing about the effects of workload, the possibility that executives might, as a result of workload, react to the different types of tasks they face in different ways.

This paper thus advances our knowledge on the differential effects that work demands (e.g., workload) have on multiple aspects of managerial performance and sheds light on the mechanisms underlying managers' choices of which responsibilities to (de)prioritize. Although no managerial tradeoff is inherently wrong, by focusing on rewards and outcome expectancies as predictors of prioritization (cf., Schmidt & DeShon, 2007) my theorizing and findings suggest that when faced with high workloads, in the absence of clear rewards about justice from the organization, managers are likely to under-prioritize justice tasks in comparison to core technical tasks. Given the documented benefits of fairness, and the complexity of the managerial role and its relationship with organizational outcomes (Conway, 1999; Yukl, 2008) one might question whether this type of prioritization is the most effective choice for all managers in all organizations (cf., Holmström & Milgrom, 1991). My intention is *not* to argue that managers *should* prioritize their justice tasks more than their core technical tasks or that organizations *should* reward performance on such tasks more. Although the possible benefits of treating employees fairly is rooted in extensive and robust empirical evidence, I recognize that

choices about prioritization and rewards depend on the specific circumstances of each case. However, these are choices that managers make and thus it is important for both managers and organizations to make them intentionally while recognizing their implications. Future research could further highlight when and why different rewards structures are likely to have a greater effect on organizational outcomes.

Limitations

Although I found support for my theoretical model across three studies, the inferences one can draw from my findings are limited in several ways. First, in respect to Studies 1 and 2, the samples and nature of the simulations used and might limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, because Study 3 was a cross-sectional survey, it does not provide evidence of causation, only of correlation between the variables examined. Furthermore, in Study 3, both core technical and justice performance were rated by only one of the managers' employees. Ratings of one individual subordinate might not adequately represent managers' behaviors due to idiosyncratic biases. Although this is a possibility, there is evidence that employees tend to develop shared perceptions of their managers' adherence to justice rules (Mayer et al., 2007; Roberson & Williamson, 2012). Relatedly, employees are probably not the most appropriate organizational actors to evaluate managerial core technical performance (as opposed to top management). Having more objective performance ratings or at least measuring core technical task performance from the top management's perspective would have provided greater validity to these findings. However, the combination of the experimental method in Studies 1 and 2 with the more generalizable sample assessed in Study 3 and the consistency of the findings across the different samples (MTurk participants,

undergraduate students, managers and employees across a variety of industries and jobs) and designs improves confidence in my findings.

Importantly, my theory treated justice broadly, without considering whether certain justice rules might require more or less time and effort. A case in point is the consistency rule (part of procedural justice), which states that: “allocative procedures should be consistent across persons and over time” (Leventhal, 1980, p. 40). If managers consistently apply the same rules to all employees, they might save time and effort. Indeed, a common coping strategy for dealing with workload is the utilization of familiar responses (Barnes & Van Dyne, 2009; Hambrick et al., 2005). However, although consistency can be easy to implement, in some cases it might still require managers to consider whether circumstances have changed in a way that warrants a different decision criteria (cf., Blader & Rothman, 2014). Future research should devote attention to the effects of workload on adherence to different justice rules and the development of more nuanced theory separating the effects of workload on certain aspects of justice.

Additionally, my studies do not adequately address the fact that many of the theorized processes occur over time. For example, there might be variance in the amount of workload that is placed on the manager over time (Ilies et al., 2015) and thus managers might compensate for lack of justice or core technical performance at certain periods by engaging in more justice rules adherence (or more core technical task work) in other periods. More longitudinal and within-person research designs are needed to explore such questions in more detail. Finally, all of my samples were drawn from the U.S. thus limiting the inferences regarding cross-cultural generalizability of my findings (cf., Shao, Rupp, Skarlicki, & Jones, 2013). Future research should examine whether the relative

importance ascribed to justice tasks differs across cultures and whether such beliefs translate to different prioritization decisions by managers.

Finally, the theory and findings of this paper highlight situations under which justice is hindered as a result of resource scarcity and workload. My findings highlight how organizations might be able to put in place rewards systems to ensure that justice is not disregarded. However, in most of my empirical studies, justice was not enhanced. Future research could focus on contextual factors that can potentially not only prevent non-adherence to rules of justice but can also enhance it. One promising line of research lies in a recent distinction, or rather the continuum, of just and unjust actions, which seems to have different relationships with outcomes and might have differing antecedents as well (Colquitt, Long, Rodell, & Halvorsen-Ganepola, 2015).

Practical Implications

With the above limitations in mind, this paper offers a number of practical implications. Most importantly, my theorizing suggests that the responsibility for treating employees fairly should not be placed only on individual managers, but that organizational leaders need to think more broadly about whether and how they are creating work environments that guide managers to act (un)fairly. In this respect, my findings echo Brockner's (2006, 2010) assertion that making sure managers act fairly starts at the top. Organizations should probably monitor managers' perceived workload. Although it is unlikely that organizations could completely eliminate such demands or their depleting effects, balancing such demands and taking steps to reduce unnecessary constraints and hassles (Bakker et al., 2014) seem to be plausible ways to reduce some of the negative influences on justice performance. Further, rewarding, recognizing, and

celebrating managers who devote time, attention, and energy, despite workload, to act fairly (i.e., adhere to justice rules), could counteract at least some of the negative effects brought about by workload, perhaps without hurting core technical performance. In fact, given the organizational benefits of fairness, it might behoove organizations not to leave prioritization decisions to managers' interpretation. Organizations that take specific steps to prioritize fairness by explicitly including relational aspects as predictors of managerial evaluations and rewards, might be able to more effectively reap the benefits associated with fair treatment. Taken more generally, my theory and findings suggest that organizations should carefully consider managers' roles and how managerial rewards influence the way managers perceive these roles (Katz & Khan, 1978). In some organizational contexts, it might be highly beneficial to review how factors such as rewards and other signals (i.e., role modeling) affect managers' prioritization of different roles and to try and shape such decisions in ways that are strategically relevant for the organization.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Fair treatment of employees is important for those being treated as well as for the organizations employing them. Yet, even though managers recognize the importance of fair treatment, anecdotal and empirical evidence of unfair treatment in organizational settings is still abundant. In this dissertation, my aim was to try and explain this puzzle. My theory and findings suggest that, at least in part, the discrepancy between the overall importance ascribed to fair treatment and its implementation in everyday organizational life can be better understood when taking a holistic view of the context in which managers operate, their workload, other competing tasks, and the way they are rewarded. This requires a shift in the fairness literature from a study of fairness in isolation to a study of fairness in relation to other important managerial roles and demands. My hope is that this paper provides the foundation for fairness scholars to continue theorizing about the antecedents of fairness in the wider context of managers' role.

Appendices

Appendix A1: Core Technical and Justice Tasks (Study 1)

Answering a client complaint

One of ENS' major clients, VV Industries, complained that they were overcharged for services rendered on transaction 1555. ENS billed them \$20,000, but to date, VV Industries has paid only \$10,000, claiming that this settles their debt. Issues like this sometime arise when clients request changes to the original, agreed upon plan, after implementation has begun and this doesn't get properly incorporated in the billing system. Unless the contract with the client states otherwise, ENS charges every requested change based on a pre-determined rate.

Over the last few weeks you gathered all relevant information about the complaint (see your notes below). You have determined that VV Industries' complaint was partly justified.

Your task is to **write VV industries an email** to settle this issue. At a bare minimum, you need to communicate to VV Industries the amount they still owe us. Beyond this, you need to decide how to frame the message to ensure ENS keeps its good relationship with this major client. A well-crafted message includes:

- (a) a detailed explanation of how we handled their complaint
- (b) a clear explanation of what we discovered (be specific about amounts)
- (c) a proper apology for any mistakes on our side
- (d) highlighting the importance of ENS' relationship with VV Industries.

Notes from conversation with Devin Smith, Project Manager at VV Industries:

- Devin acknowledged that VV industries requested a number of last minute changes in regards to transactions 1555.
- Mentioned how happy VV industries was that despite all requested changes, ENS finished the project on time as per the contract.
- Claims that the contract between the companies states that \$10,000 covers all changes requested.

Notes from conversation with Cameron See, ENS employee who worked on the transaction:

- Remembers this project, because the contract specified a bonus of \$3,000 in case ENS finished the project on time. Says it was a challenge to meet the deadline because of all the requested changes, but we were able to do it.
- Frequently updated our accounting department of all changes requested by the client.

Notes from conversation with Elena Sampers, ENS accounting department

- Unless there is a clear contract on file in our system stating otherwise, ENS uses a default rate to bill changes requested by the client.
- In regards to Transaction 1555, there is no contract on file. Thus, using the default rates given the requested changes, they need to pay \$20,000.

Notes from conversation with Jordan Mahar, ENS contracting specialist:

- Found the original contract regarding transaction 1555.
- There was a clerical error on our side and the contract was not filed in our accounting system.
- The contract states that all changes are included in the overall price of \$10,000 and therefore our use of default prices was mistaken.

Communicating a personnel decision to an employee

Over the last few weeks, you were considering promoting one of two employees, Alex Goni or Taylor Tanor. Alex and Taylor were very close in their ranking on the official criteria used to make promotion decisions in ENS (i.e., tenure, technical knowledge, and performance). In the end, the decision came down to your judgment call as a manager regarding who is more deserving of a promotion and you decided to go with Taylor. It is now time to inform them.

You have already sent an email to Taylor. Your task now is to **write an email to Alex**, the employee who was **not** promoted. At a bare minimum, the email should inform Alex of the actual decision. Beyond this, you need to decide what further information to add that might help Alex better accept the decision. A well-crafted message includes:

- (a) an explanation of the process used to make the decision
- (b) a justification for your final decision
- (c) specific examples of Alex's behaviors justifying the decision
- (d) showing empathy and respect for Alex's situation and showing appreciation to keep Alex's motivation high.

Below are some of the notes you had in the employees' personnel file as of the last performance evaluation period:

Taylor Tanor: Very good employee. Always volunteers to lead new projects. Always on time and always comes prepared for team meetings and meetings with clients. Very active in keeping on top of own as well as others' work. Needs to improve social skills as gets into personal conflict with other employees. Other employees that I trust indicated that they feel Taylor tries to make sure everybody is acting as a team player and carrying their weight, but this creates tensions. For example, on the recent Water LLC project, Taylor really demanded that Cameron step-up, which caused some interpersonal tensions. But later Cameron admitted that Taylor was probably right, it was just a problem with how the issue was brought up.

Alex Goni: Great performer. Alex frequently comes up with ways to improve task-related processes. Has had some personal problems with some of team members lately, although everybody usually liked Alex before. Alex said that tensions resulted from a specific home-related issue (Partner was sick over last year) that spilled into work. Other employees that I trust indicated that they feel, "Alex always worries about Alex first and about the team later." For example, when they needed someone to volunteer for the Remington Steel Inc. project, Alex did not volunteer despite being the main expert on the issue at hand, because volunteering would have meant creating a back-log on personal projects.

Appendix A2: Example Response and Coding Scheme (Study 1)

Core Technical Task Response and Coding Guidelines

Code	Guidelines	Examples
0	Wrote nothing	
1	Just stating the decision without any further explanation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Dear client, I'm contacting you in regards to your contract with ENS. Firstly, I'd like to apologize for the confusion regarding the amount due on • VW Industries, I am sorry for the confusion in the billing of our services, and for any inconvenience this may have caused. I have reviewed the situation and would like to work with you to resolve the issues. Please know ENS is concerned with your matter and wish to make the situation right by you. We wish to
2	A bit more of an explanation, one of the other required issues appears (e.g., procedures used)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thank you for taking the time to inform us of your concerns. Unless there is a contract that specifies otherwise, ENS uses a default rate to bill customers. We have no record of a contract between VV industries and ENS stating different rates. If you have a copy of the contract then we would very much like a copy so we can resolve this as soon as possible. At this time our records show you owe us an additional 10,000.
3	Contains some parts and elaborates on them, but not all. Does not have to be accurate (i.e., can say you owe us 20,000) but there must be other aspects in the email which are correct. Alternatively, includes all required parts but doesn't go into detail in the explanations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Your business relationship with us is very valuable to us, and I deeply regret any confusion that has occurred during this billing dispute. After consulting with my contraction specialist, Jordan Mahar, I have found that due to an error on our part, we have sent you what seems to be a default bill. This means you are correct in your assessment that the existing contract is for \$10,000, which you have already paid. I hope we will be able to continue doing business together in the future, and I thank you for choosing ENS. • Dear Sir or Madam: I regret the recent conflict that our two firms are facing regarding payment for the recent completed project. I have done an investigation, which included reviewing notes from conversations with four different people who were involved in the project. On behalf of our firm, I apologize as it seems we made a clerical error. This seems to be the main reason there was a misunderstanding. In fairness, your payment of \$10,000 is hereby deemed sufficient and no further payment is expected. We look forward to future projects between our firms. Sincerely
4	Good answer overall, seems to touch on most, if not all required parts. Uses information from the "case." Includes a clear apology and explanation of what happened. Is correct in amount requested (including or excluding the 3,000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hello Devin, After a thorough investigation into the issue you raised in your email to me, I believe I have located the source of the discrepancy. I communicated with our ENS internal departments regarding the differential between the amount paid to date by VV, and the balance we had invoiced. After speaking with our accounting and contracting departments, I believe you are correct in your interpretation of the contract. I located the original executed agreement and the verbiage specifically states that al changes to the deliverable are included in the overall price of \$10,000, the balance paid by VV. As a result, I offer my sincerest apologies for the miscommunication we had, and I have removed the outstanding balance to reflect your account being paid n full. I appreciate your efforts and patience in resolving the issue and look forward to many future services between VV and ENS. Regards, KK

Code	Guidelines	Examples
5	Includes all parts, including explanation about process of investigation or details about who they talked with], must talk about 3000\$, polite and the entire email flows and makes sense. Must be correct about amount owed in terms of main payment [can say they give up on the \$3000 for some valid reason].	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Devin, Have reviewed the specifics of transaction #1555 with the appropriate parties here at ENS, the main issue seems to be a clerical record on our side, looks like we recorded at \$20,000 default rate, which is the default rate if a specific contract has not been recorded for a particular job transaction. In other words, we (incorrectly) assumed a default 20K rate on T1555 when in fact the actual price should have been \$10,000 plus an additional incentive rate of \$3,000 for completing the project on time (total contract of \$13,000). At the end of the day, we simply made a clerical error, albeit a material one, and I profusely apologize for the mistake. After thorough research, the corrected amount due is actually \$3,000, which is \$13,0000 - the previously paid \$10,000 that VV sent over. The remaining balance (\$3k) is the contractually specified bonus due for completing the project on time. In this case, it seems the bonus was warranted as a large number of last minute changes were applied to the project. As I said earlier, I sincerely apologize for the contract billing error, and we have taken steps on our side to correct the error so that this does not occur again in the future. Please feel free to call me at 555-555-5555 ext 55 if you have ANY further issues or concerns. If you could forward this to your folks in VV accounting for payment of the final \$3,000 (the bonus portion due ENS) we can put this matter to rest. Let me know if you have further questions, and as always, thanks for your business and support - we truly value our relationship with VV.

Justice Task Response and Coding Guidelines

Code	Guidelines	Examples
0	Wrote nothing	
1	Just stating the decision without any further explanation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dear Alex, I am writing to let you know that, although I appreciate your interest in the promotion we discussed, and consider you to be an exemplary employee and good candidate, we decided that the timing is just not right for you right now, and we will be moving in another direction. I know that there will be other opportunities in the coming months, and trust that y
2	A bit more information, at least one required part appears (e.g., “regret to inform”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dear Alex Goni, I regret to inform you that we have chosen another employee as the recipient of the promotion. Your hard work ethics are highly appreciated. It was overall an extremely hard decision to make as you were a top contender. There shall be man other opportunities for promotions, so keep up the good work! Sincerely, ENS
3	Contains some parts and elaborates on them, but not all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alex, I regret to inform you that we will not be able to promote you at this time. While discussing your productivity with other managers, we felt that this was not the right time. We have been very impressed with your production, but feel that a few areas could be improved to further advance your professional career. While your teamwork has been strong, a number of members have felt conflicts while working with you, so we need to resolve some of those issues. Also, there was another project that your kills would have been perfect for, and we need you to be more assertive and take a lead on these things.

Code	Guidelines	Examples
4	Good answer overall, seems to touch on most, if not all required parts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hi Alex, I just wanted to touch base with you regarding a very tough decision that I had to recently make. I have decided to promote Taylor. This was a very difficult decision, but Taylor has over the past year been able to take on more responsibility within the company and has been a slightly stronger asset for the company than you have. I understand that you have been going through some difficult times over the past year which might have made it more difficult for you to step up and assume more responsibility, and I am completely sympathetic to that reality. I want you to know that I truly value you as a top performer and a huge asset to the company, and I am very thankful to have you as part of our team. Keep doing a great job, and if there are any opportunities to volunteer in the future where you can step up and take on a little more responsibility, go for it! Let me know when you have a few minutes to meet so I can more fully explain my thought process to you in coming to this decision, and we can build a game plan for you for the future. Thanks, BF
5	Well developed and well written, contains every required part fully (i.e., not just mention it) and includes examples and information from the “case”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dear Alex, Thank you so much for your enthusiasm and interest in the potential promotion. We truly had a difficult choice to make and incredibly qualified candidates to choose from. Ultimately, we've decided to offer Taylor the promotion. During this difficult decision, we considered factors such as tenure, technical knowledge, and performance. While the decision was close, we ultimately felt that Taylor was more invested in the company, offering to take on additional work. Recently, we've felt that there have been several opportunities that aligned well with your talents that you opted not to take on. For instance, we were disappointed to see that you did not volunteer for the Remington Steel Inc. Project, despite being your area of expertise. We understand that there are several personal issues in your life at the moment and we empathize with you entirely. However, we don't feel it would be appropriate to add to your workload with a promotion at this time. Ultimately, we would love to keep you on in your current role and see you continue to work hard and display a high level of performance. If we see an improvement in your desire to take on new projects and your commitment to the company, we would absolutely love to consider you for future promotion. Again, this was a terribly difficult decision that came down to minor differences. You are a hugely talented employee and an asset to our company. We hope you'll continue to be so in the coming years and beyond. Best,

Appendix B1: Core Technical and Justice Tasks (Study 2)

Completing an official proposal for the new client acquisition role

You have been working on an innovative proposal for a new position devoted to obtaining new clients. You plan to promote either Alex or Taylor to this new role, which will likely develop into a leadership role. For your proposal to go through, your boss, Jess Gold, must be convinced that the extra costs (in terms of higher salary, benefits, and extra work space) are worth the benefits. Jess is skeptical, but agreed that if you write a good proposal, it will be considered in the top-managements' budgeting meeting next week.

Your task is to write (in the appropriate textbox below) a short proposal addressed to Jess. Your goal is to convince Jess that the new role should be created. At a bare minimum, the proposal needs to highlight the possible benefits of the new role and recommend a person for the role (i.e., Taylor or Alex). Beyond this, you need to decide what information to include and how to craft a clear and convincing message. A well-crafted message will include:

1. A detailed explanation of the process used to create the proposal (for example, what information you used, what are your assumptions, etc.)
2. A clear explanation of the expected costs of the new role
3. A comparison of the proposed role to similar roles with our competitors
4. How the employee you have recommended for the position fits the requirements

You MUST send your proposal in writing to Jess today.

Informing an employee about your decision

You are considering promoting either Taylor Tanor or Alex Goni to the new role. Both are eligible and expect the promotion. As the proposal must name the specific employee, you need to let the employee who you do NOT choose about the decision.

Your task is to write (in the appropriate textbox below) a message to the person you decided NOT to promote for the new role. As this person will keep working with you, your goal is to make sure they take the decision well and keep motivated. At a bare minimum, the message should inform this employee of the decision. Beyond this, you need to decide what further information to add that might help this employee better accept the decision. A well-crafted message will include:

1. An explanation of the process used to make the decision (what did you review, who or which information did you consult, etc.)
2. A clear justification of your final decision (that is, give the logic and reasoning, explain what criteria you used to make the decision, if possible provide concrete examples)
3. Careful wording and language to make sure the message is sensitive to the fact that this person is receiving bad news
4. Appreciation for the employee's past work in ENS and directions of how the employee can improve for possible future promotions

As per HR department rules, you MUST send this message in writing today.

Appendix B2: Example of Highly Scored Responses (Study 2)

Examples of highly scored responses on the core technical task

“The process I have used to create the proposal was to look at each and every detail about both employees. I used personal comments I have about each one, quotes from client satisfaction surveys, employee performance summaries for the year, and a cost-benefit analysis. My choice is to choose Taylor for the position. This is under the assumption that Taylor will rise up to the occasion and bring their great interpersonal skills when dealing with new clientele. By promoting Taylor, the cost will be \$40,000 for setup costs in the first year. Yearly costs for the first 2-4 years are \$25,000 if the success is mild, and with great success could reach \$220,000. In the first year with Taylor, I anticipate a \$100,000 additional revenue, followed by \$130,000 in the next 2-4 years and \$500,000 in the years to come. Our competitors have setup similar roles with varying degrees of success that I have carefully examined. Competitors B and C have both created this role and are each tasting success from the position. C has reaped more benefits from it, but B has definitely had gains from it as well. Competitor A, who is most similar to us as a company, decided not to make this decision but after my analysis I think it was an unwise decision on their part. This implementation of the new role could give us an advantage over Competitor A that we've been needing. The reason I chose Taylor is because Taylor has great interpersonal skills which is the most important skill in the short-term life of this role. What Taylor might lack in technical specialties and tenure, Taylor can more than make up for in the long-run. With this promotion, Taylor would obviously immediately undergo training programs that would increase Taylor's technical skills and also help raise conscientiousness which has been a slight issue in the past. What Taylor doesn't need is training to be a personal salesperson who can get the job done. Being sociable will not only help Taylor with clients, but will help when there...”

“I believe it would be in our best interests to create the client acquisition role and to promote Taylor Tanor to this position. I completed a full analysis on the new position by performing a cost-benefit analysis, looking at employee performance and feedback on the two potential hires, and analyzing competitors who created similar positions. By promoting Taylor, you are getting an excellent worker who co-workers have nothing but good things to say about, and at a lower cost than if you were to hire Alex. Because of Taylor's shorter tenure and lower salary, expected setup and yearly costs will be lower by \$10,000 and \$15,000-\$30,000 (depending on success), respectively, but we think she can provide the same additional revenue that Alex would (\$100,000 in year 1, \$130,000 with mild success years 2-4, and \$500,000 with great success years 2-4). Although Alex has more expertise, Taylor's social skills will allow her to gain and keep new clients for our business. I would recommend that if the position has success and is expanded to a team down the road, Alex could be added to provide advice while Taylor handles most of the client interaction. We determined that the role requirements show that selling abilities are most important in year one, and one client was quoted as saying, "somehow Taylor always finds ways to sell us more services," among other raving reviews. We think that clients would be drawn to Taylor's personality and she could help us to win over clients from our competitors. We will model our role of Competitor C, who created it 2 years

ago and has helped to increase average profit per client by 3%. They are half the size of ENS, so if we can make this same 3% increase it would lead to even higher profits for us. Competitor B is 1.5 times our size and has a 4-person department, so we could aim to have about 3 people on the team in 2 years' time. With the right person in the role and the proper development of it based on analysis of competitor's, we this..."

Examples of highly scored responses on the justice task

"Dear Alex,

After carefully considering both you and other ENS employees for our new role, we want to let you know how much we appreciate all that you do for ENS and all of your successes thus far. However, for this particular position, we do not feel that you are the best fit. In order to make our decision, we reviewed technical backgrounds, particular areas of expertise possessed by each candidate, the quantity of new business each candidate has gained for us in the past, as well as the quality of work performed by each candidate. As this position will also develop into a leadership role, we very heavily considered our personal experiences as well as the testimonials of others who had worked with each candidate, gaining insight into working habits, personalities, priorities, and leadership styles of each candidate. After considering both quantitative and qualitative information on all candidates, we decided to choose the candidate with the most extroverted personality, and the strongest leadership experience, ranking 85 and above on their 360 degree score. We believe the role of gaining new business will require an individual able to make others feel comfortable and assured, while inspiring their team. While you have excellent technical skills, 13 specialties in particular, and have helped grow our business as a highly dedicated and appreciated team member, we would love to give you more time to develop your leadership skills for future roles, as your scores tended to fall below 80. In the future, we would love for you to take more opportunities to help the team and therefore, help ENS by contributing your knowledge and skills. We would also love to see you continue to interact with clients, and to develop positive relations in order to enhance their experiences and promote our services. Thank you for your time and we hope to continue to grow with you in the future!"

"Hello Alex,

I am sorry to bring you this news, but it has been decided that you will stay in your current position and not be promoted. You are a very strong employee at the ENS company and we firmly believe that you will do better in your current position. Your tenure is very impressive and you are a very valuable asset to ENS. This decision was very difficult. I analyzed our Employee Performance Summary from 2015 as well as satisfaction surveys. The Employee Performance Summary took into account tenure in months, number of technical specialties, yearly performance rankings, and 360 score. While you are an excellent candidate in all of these areas, your current role tailors to your skillful, intelligent nature. One of the main parts of this new position is being able to talk to people. As you know, ENS prides itself on treating its employees with respect and fairness. We like all employees to be informed of all decisions made to be transparent as possible. While you do hold the intellect, this position needs someone who is confident in speaking with others. As a result, we do firmly believe that you are the best at your current position. If you do feel as though you would like to be promoted in the future, try

to talk to your coworkers more and take some social initiatives. Feel free to come to speak to me more about this. You are truly valued here at ENS. You have been an integral part of making our company the great empire that it is. I hope that you continue to make all of us proud. Best, XXX”

Tables

Table 1

Estimated Marginal Means and Standard Errors of Performance Across Conditions (Study 1)

Workload	Performance			
	Core technical (client complaint)		Justice (promotion decision)	
	M	SE	M	SE
Low (n = 122)	.14 ^a	.09	.31 ^a	.09
High (n = 111)	-.16 ^b	.09	-.34 ^b	.09

Note. N = 233; Means represent standardized scores. Means with no superscripts in common *within* performance type differ significantly as indicated by Bonferroni adjustments test for multiple comparisons between means ($p < .05$).

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Variables (Study 2)

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Workload condition ^a	.49	.50	-				
2. Justice rewards condition ^b	.49	.50	.00	-			
3. Prioritization of core technical task over justice task	3.15	1.08	.09	-.24**	-		
4. Core technical performance	1.73	.94	-.25**	-.01	.03	-	
5. Justice performance	2.78	1.00	-.30**	.19**	-.34**	.35**	-

Note. N = 239.

^a 0 – low, 1 – high ^b 0 – low, 1 – high

* $p < .05$ level ** $p < .01$ level

Table 3

Regression Analysis Predicating Prioritization of Core Technical Task and Core Technical and Justice Performance (Study 2)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	Prioritization		Prioritization		Performance		Performance		Performance	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Level 2 (Individual Level) N= 239</i>										
Intercept	.18**	.05	.12*	.06	.18	.10	.24	.12	.24	.13
Workload Condition (WL) ^a	.12	.06	.26**	.09	-.50**	.13	-.46**	.18	-.48**	.18
Justice Rewards (JR) ^b	-.28**	.06	-.14	.09	.14	.10	.01	.18	.02	.17
WL*JR			-.28*	.12			-.05	.25	-.03	.25
Prioritization of core technical task over justice task (PRIO)					.06	.06			.05	.07
<i>Level 1 (Performance Level)</i>										
Performance Type (PT) ^c					.02	.10	-.01	.14	.00	.14
PT*WL					-.03	.14	-.39	.21	-.25	.20
PT*JR							.11	.20	.04	.20
PT*WL*JR							.58*	.29	.42	.28
PT*PRIO					-.36**	.07			-.32**	.07
Pseudo-R ^{2d}	.05		.06		.05		.05		.05	

Note. Table entries represent unstandardized parameter estimates with standard errors; All continuous variables were standardized

^a Dummy coded: 0 – low, 1 – high ^b Dummy coded: 0 – low, 1 – high ^c Dummy coded: 0 – core technical, 1 – justice ^d Based on formulas suggested by Kreft and De Leeuw (1998) and Singer (1998), Pseudo R² is calculated as the sum of the total variance attributable to within and between variance components

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Estimated Marginal Means and Standard Errors of Performance across Conditions (Study 2)

Workload	Justice Rewards	Performance			
		Core technical (proposal)		Justice (promotion decision)	
		M	SE	M	SE
Low (n = 121)	Low (N = 61)	.24 ^a	.13	.23 ^a	.12
	High (N = 60)	.24 ^a	.13	.35 ^a	.12
High (n = 118)	Low (N = 59)	-.23 ^b	.13	-.62 ^b	.12
	High (N = 59)	-.27 ^b	.13	.03 ^a	.12

Note. N = 233; Means represent standardized scores. Means with no superscripts in common *within* performance type differ significantly as indicated by Bonferroni adjustments test for multiple comparisons between means ($p < .05$).

Table 5

Comparison of Indirect Effects of Workload Condition via Prioritization on Core Technical and Justice Performance at Different level of Rewards Condition (Study 2)

Indirect effect of workload condition (low → high) via prioritization on:	95% CI of indirect effect at:		95% CI of difference between indirect effects:
	Low justice rewards condition	High justice rewards condition	
Core Technical Performance	-0.02, .01	-0.02, .01	-0.03, .05
Justice Performance	-0.14, -0.02	-0.04, .06	.02, .14

Note. Table entries represent 95% confidence intervals (CI) of Monte Carlo-based simulations with 20,000 random draws of the indirect effects of workload condition on the two types of performance via prioritization at different justice rewards conditions. Significant indirect effects are shown in boldface. In the low justice rewards condition, the 95% confidence intervals of indirect effect on justice performance excluded 0, suggesting in this condition, workload condition was negatively associated, via prioritization, with justice performance.

Table 6

Exploratory Factor Analysis of Prioritization of Core Technical Tasks over Justice Tasks, Justice Rewards, and Core Technical Rewards Items in Pilot Study (Study 3)

	<i>Justice Rewards</i>	<i>Core Technical Rewards</i>	Prioritization
Being productive or getting things done	0.23	0.78	0.02
Meeting individual productivity requirements in terms of quantity (e.g., sales or productivity quotas or other relevant performance quantity measure)	0.24	0.75	-0.12
Meeting specific individual work requirements in terms of quality or accuracy	0.35	0.76	-0.08
Meeting specific individual goals set by upper management	0.47	0.58	-0.03
Appropriately rewarding or recognizing our employees based on their specific efforts and contributions	0.50	0.50	-0.02
Allowing our employees to express their views, feelings, and concerns about our decisions	0.73	0.26	-0.18
Sharing information with our employees in a candid, thorough, and timely manner	0.77	0.34	-0.16
Treating our employees with dignity, respect, and politeness	0.71	0.39	-0.24
Treating our employees fairly	0.85	0.27	-0.21
Prioritizing getting things done over treating my employees fairly	-0.10	0.00	0.76
Focusing on reaching financial/customer related goals or milestones rather than making sure that my employees are motivated and satisfied	-0.11	0.04	0.79
Focusing primarily on completing immediate task goals at the cost of employee satisfaction and engagement	-0.14	-0.06	0.73
Making sure that my team and I meet our short-term goals even if it strains my relations with my employees	-0.14	-0.16	0.67
Eigenvalue	3.11	2.78	2.38
% Variance explained	23.91%	21.28%	18.31%

Note. N = 137. Factor loading equal to or greater than .50 are shown in boldface.

Table 7

Means, Standard deviations, and Correlations of Variables (Study 3)

	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Manager's position tenure	6.35	6.48	-								
2. Manager's span of control	11.33	16.29	-.06	-							
3. Manager's fairness concerns	4.21	.71	.07	-.02	-						
4. Manager's perceived workload	3.45	.56	-.04	-.01	.14**	-					
5. Manager's prioritization of core technical tasks over fairness tasks	2.74	.87	-.02	-.03	-.19**	.15**	-				
6. Justice rewards	3.24	1.02	.09	-.08	-.01	-.01	-.11*	-			
7. Core technical rewards	3.32	1.07	.15**	-.10	.06	.03	-.07	.74**	-		
8. Employee rated fairness performance	4.27	.54	.04	-.11*	.05	.04	-.15**	.08	.10	-	
9. Employee rated core technical performance	4.43	.63	-.04	-.08	.00	.01	-.02	.00	.01	.60**	-

Note. N = 389.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 8

Regression Analysis Predicating Prioritization of Core Technical Tasks and Core Technical and Justice Performance (Study 3)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Prioritization		Prioritization		Performance		Performance	
	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE	B	SE
<i>Level 2 (Manager Level) N= 389</i>								
Intercept	2.41**	.04	2.41**	.04	4.43**	.03	4.43**	.03
Position tenure	.00	.01	.00	.01	.00	.00	.00	.00
Span of control	.00	.00	.00	.00	-.003*	.00	-.003*	.00
Fairness concerns	-.30**	.05	-.31**	.05	.02	.04	.00	.04
Core technical rewards	.03	.06	.03	.06	.03	.04	.03	.04
Justice Rewards (JR)	-.08	.06	-.09	.06	.00	.04	.00	.04
Perceived workload (WL)	.25**	.08	.24**	.08	.00	.06	.01	.06
WL*JR			-.17*	.07				
Prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks (PRIO)							-.01	.04
<i>Level 1 (Performance Level)</i>								
Performance Type (PT) ^a					-.17**	.03	-.17**	.03
PT*WL					.03	.05	.05	.05
PT*PRIO							-.08**	.03
Pseudo-R ^{2b}	.07		.08		.02		.02	

Note. Table entries represent unstandardized parameter estimates with standard errors. All variables (except dependent variable) were mean centered

^a Dummy coded: 0 – core technical, 1 – justice ^b Based on formulas suggested by Kreft and De Leeuw (1998) and Singer (1998), Pseudo R² is calculated as the sum of the total variance attributable to within and between variance components

* $p < .05$ ** $p < .01$

Table 9

Comparison of Indirect Effects of Perceived Workload via Prioritization on Core Technical and Justice Performance at Low and High levels of Justice Rewards (Study 3)

Indirect effects of perceived workload via prioritization on:	95% CI of indirect effect at low and high levels of justice rewards:		95% CI of difference between indirect effects:
	-1SD: Low	+1SD: High	
Core Technical Performance	-.036, .022	-.009, .014	-.001, .061
Justice Performance	-.070, -.009	-.015, .032	.024, .116

Note. Table entries represent 95% confidence intervals (CI) of Monte Carlo-based simulations with 20,000 random draws of the indirect effects of perceived workload on the two types of performance via prioritization at low and high levels of justice rewards. Significant indirect effects are shown in boldface. When justice rewards were low (-1SD), the 95% confidence intervals of indirect effect on justice performance excluded 0, suggesting that under low justice rewards perceived workload was negatively associated, via prioritization, with justice performance.

Figures

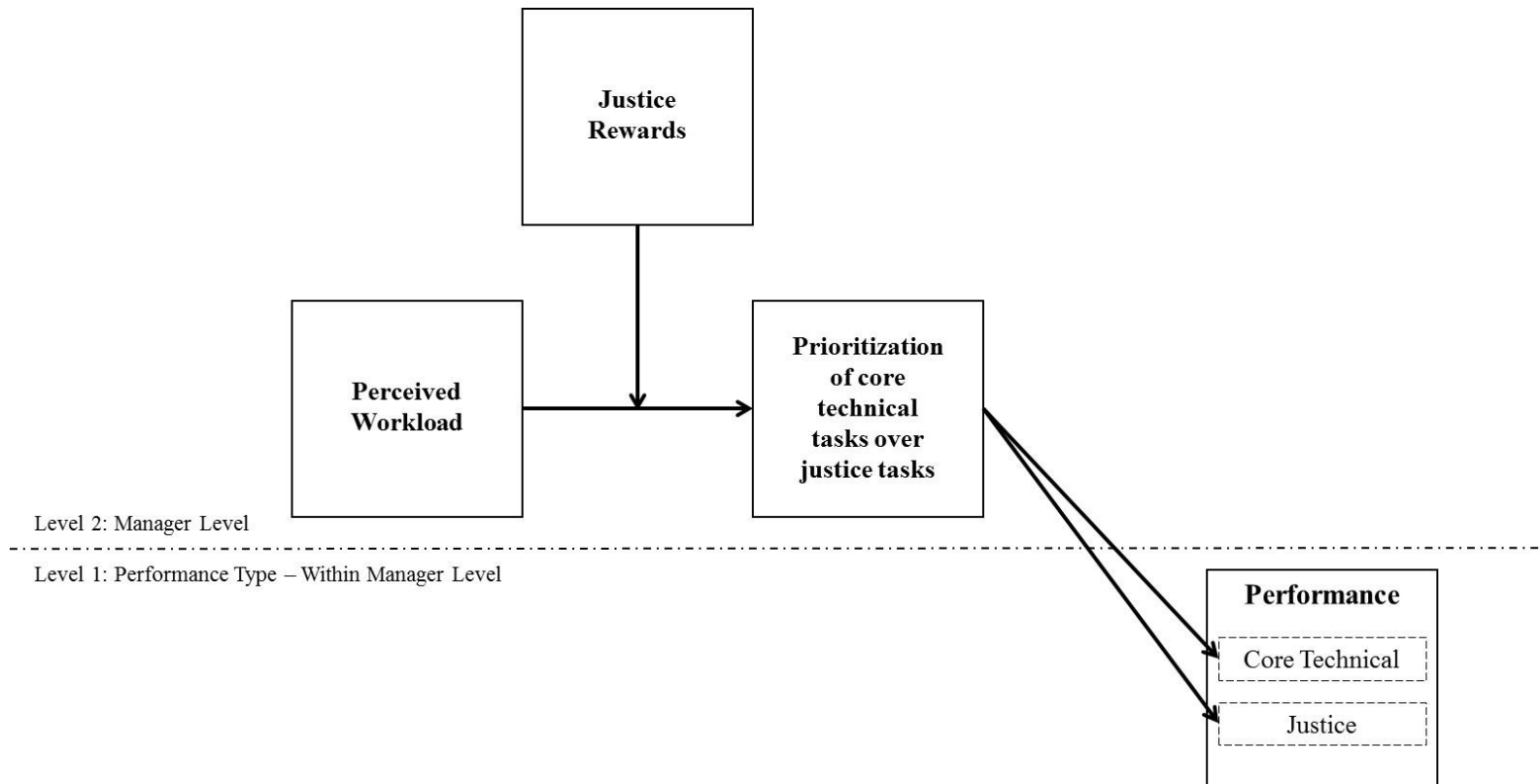


Figure 1. Theoretical model

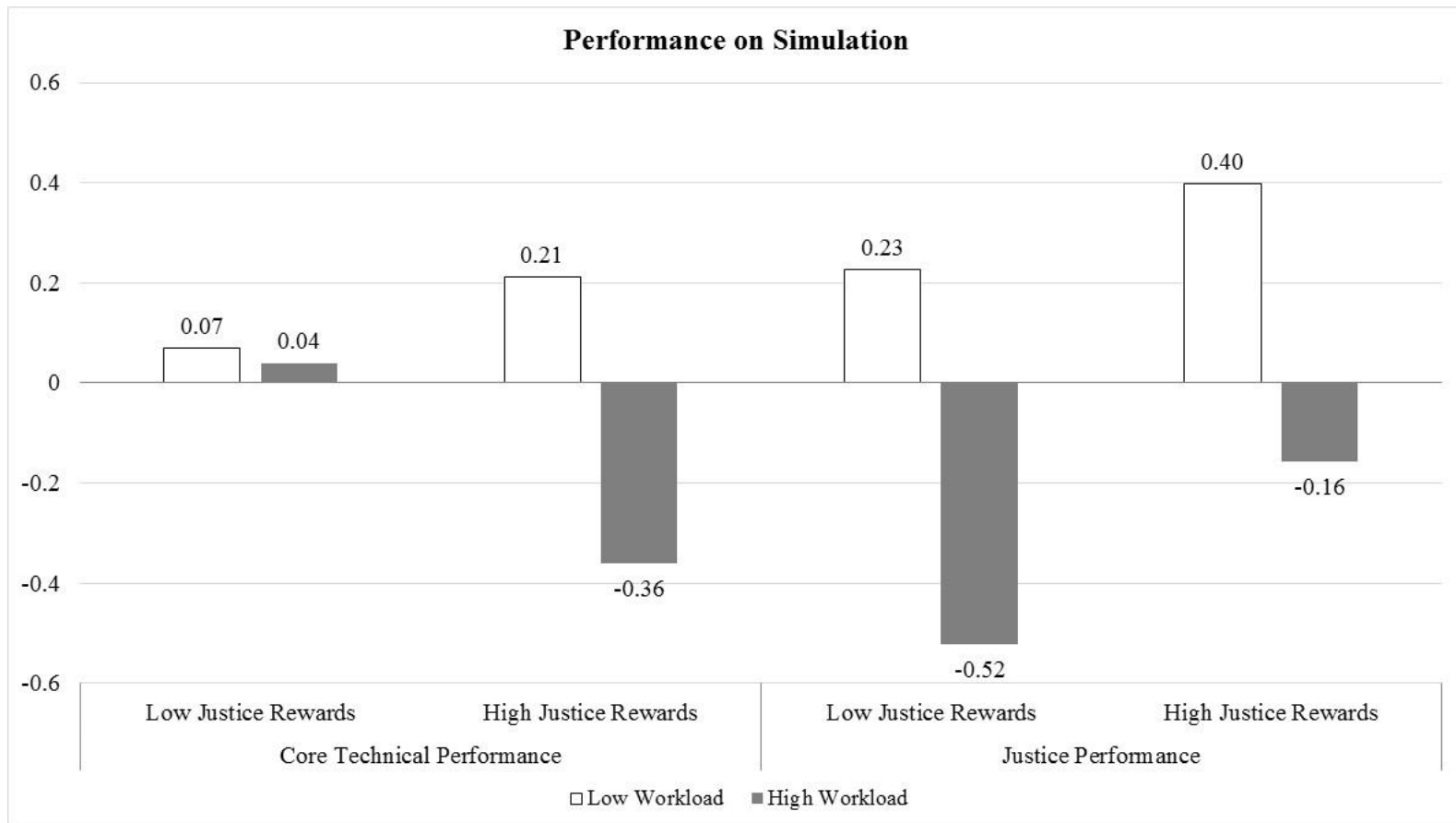


Figure 2. Interaction between justice rewards, workload, and performance type to predict (standardized) performance (Study 1)

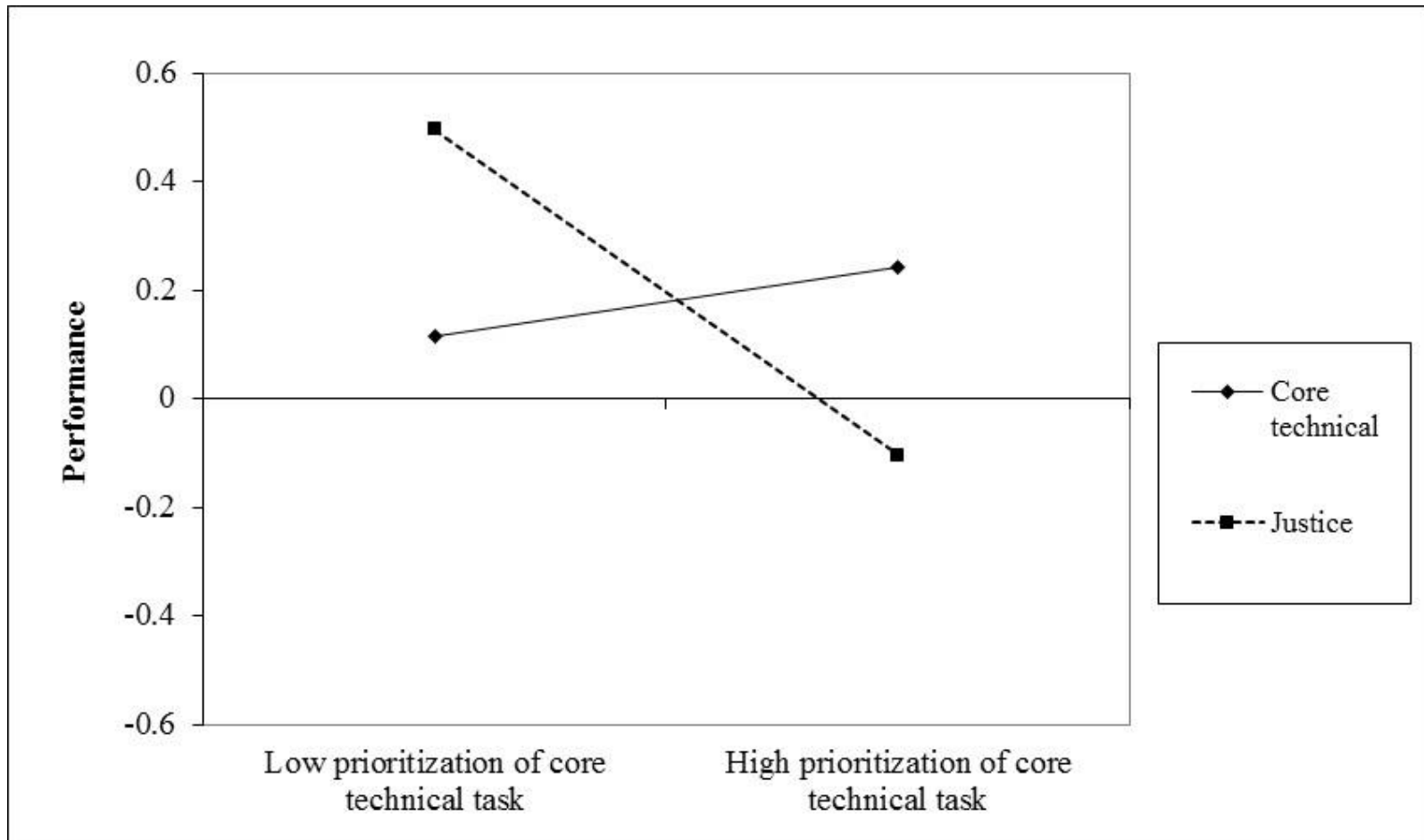


Figure 3. Interaction between prioritization and performance type to predict (standardized) performance (Study 2). Performance was a within person variable and was standardized. The interaction depicts the different relationships between prioritization and performance for each performance type. In particular, although prioritization was not related to performance on the core technical task ($B = .05, p = .473$), it was negatively related to performance on the justice task ($B = -.28, p < .001$).

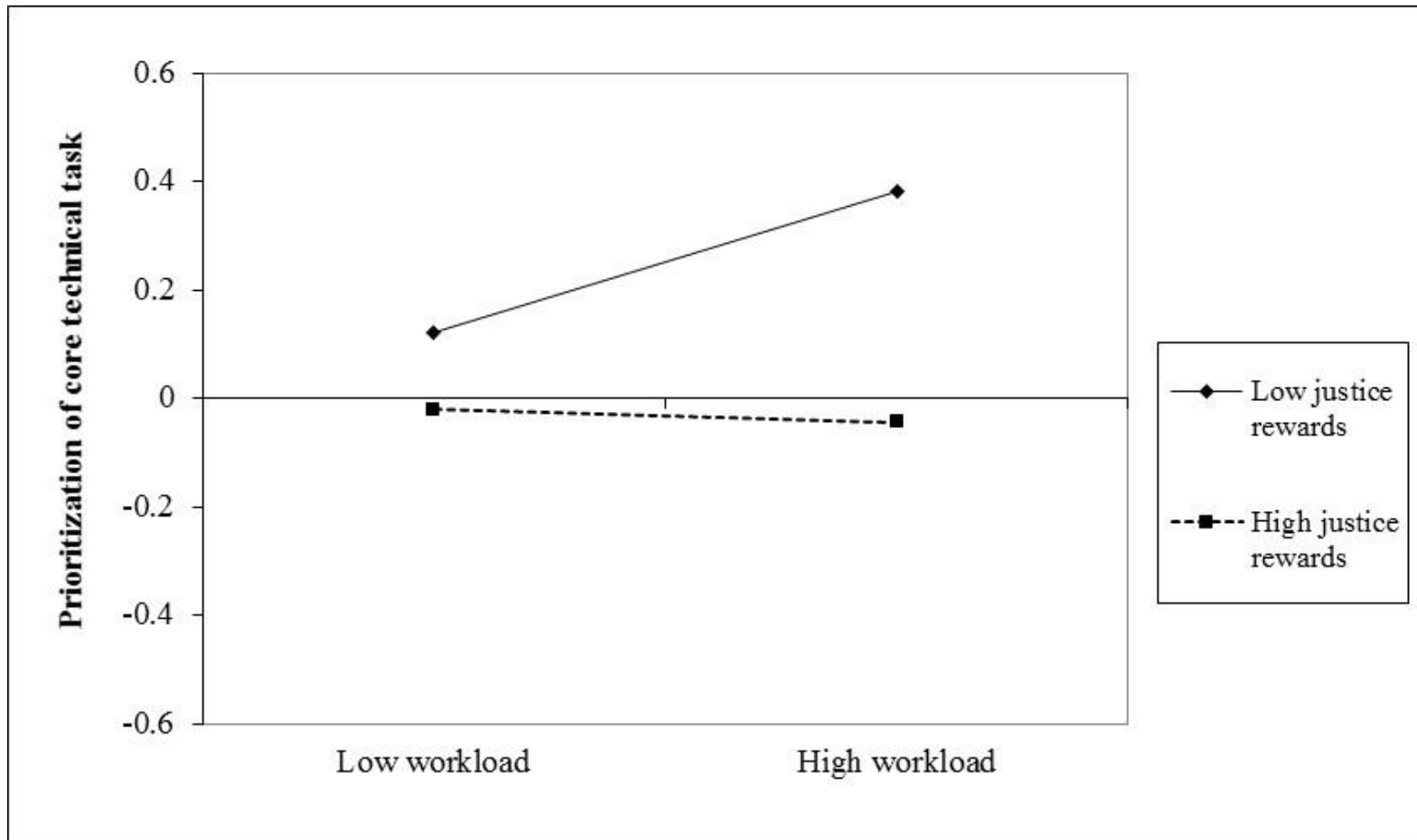


Figure 4. Interaction between workload and rewards condition to predict (standardized) prioritization of the core technical task over the justice task (Study 2).

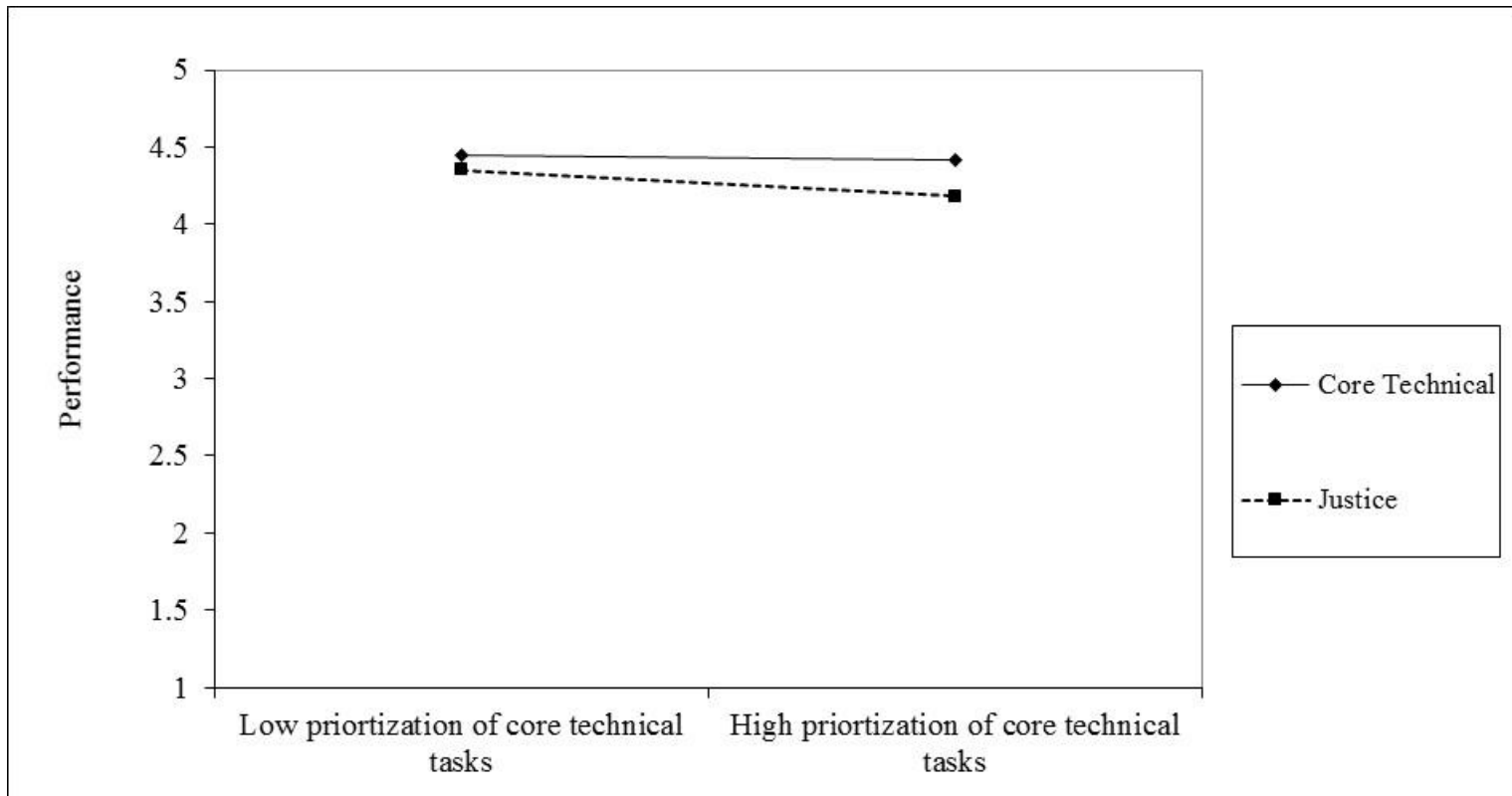


Figure 5. Interaction between prioritization and performance type to predict performance (Study 3). Performance was a within person variable. The interaction depicts the different relationships between prioritization and performance for each performance type. In particular, although prioritization was not related to performance on the core technical task ($B = -.01$, $p = .717$), it was negatively related to performance on the justice task ($B = -.10$, $p = .003$).

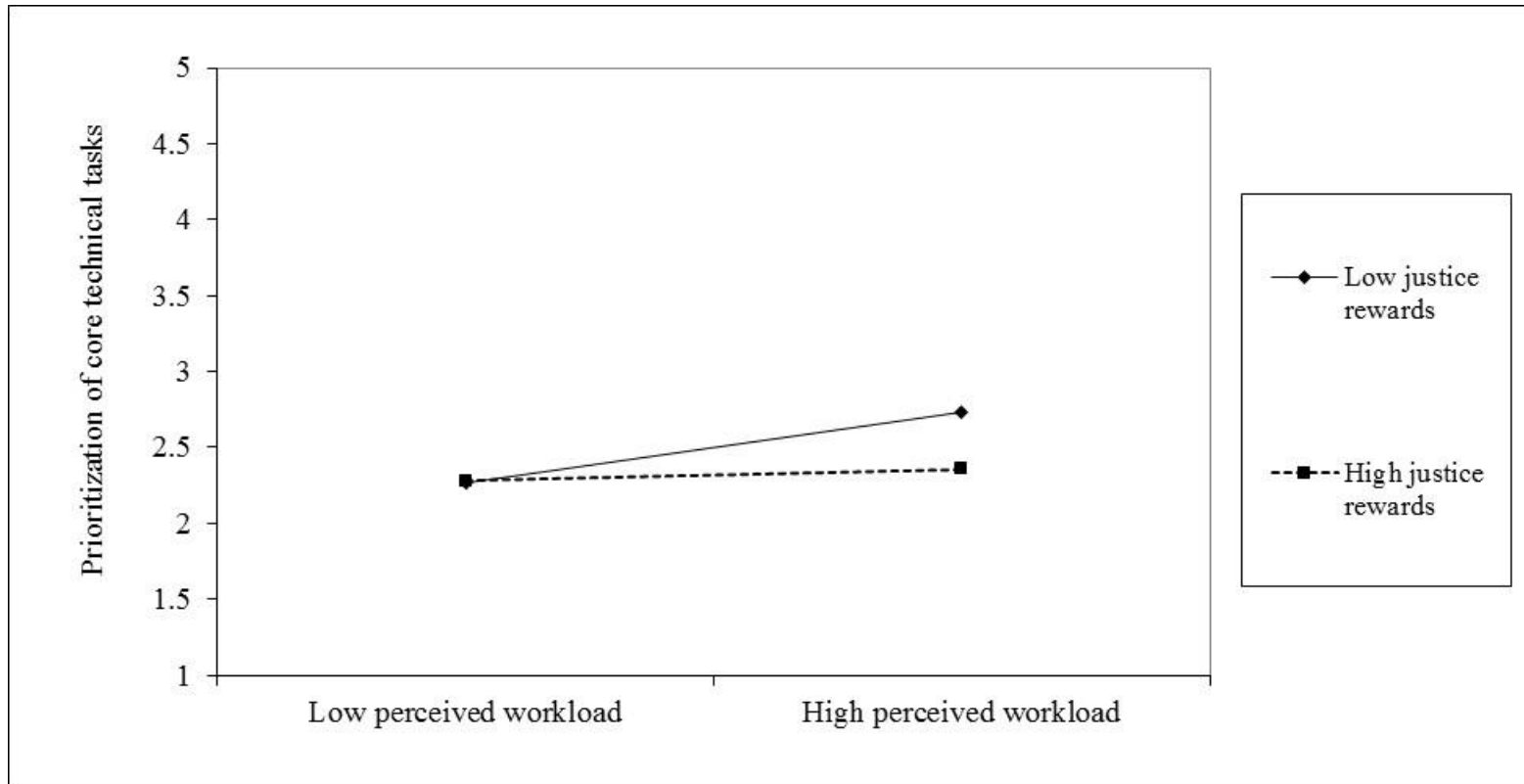


Figure 6. Interaction between managers' perceived workload and justice rewards to predict prioritization of core technical tasks over justice tasks (Study 3)

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