Responding to jerks at work: When and why employees prefer to reintegrate or punish workplace offenders

Motivation / Puzzle

Workplace transgressions are inevitable and occur frequently

Decreased:
- Employee Engagement
- Productivity
- Organisational Commitment
- Organisational Trust

Basic Research Questions

Does the organisational identification of those who observe workplace transgressions influence when they are willing to reintegrate and/or punish workplace offenders?

What are the mechanisms that explain why this occurs?

Key Papers


- Empirical paper
- Offender guilt probability
- Example of an offender-centric explanation for transgression observer response


- Theoretical paper
- Reintegrative and punitive observer responses can be used in combination
- Dealing with perceived wrongfulness
- Example of an observer-centric explanation

Idea

When observers’ organisational identification is high (vs. low)...

Observers’ organisational identification as a moderator/amplifier

 Punitive response
- More wrongful perceived as: less lenient, less proportional, offender is given, etc.

Reintegrative response
- Less wrongful perceived as: more lenient, more proportional, offender is given, etc.

Idea

Consolidating mechanisms from the literature

Contextual features

- Cognitive judgments
- Group dynamics

Testing competing mechanistic models

- Offender-centric
- Observer-centric

Evaluation of the offender’s guilt-certainty / ambiguity of the offender’s wrongfulness

Personal reaction to alleviate threat (personal, relational, group-values, moral standards)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study #</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study 1</td>
<td>Correlational</td>
<td>Real life recollection</td>
<td>N = 400 • US working adults • Amazon Mechanical Turk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Studies 2-4</td>
<td>Experimental</td>
<td>Hypothetical scenarios with piped text</td>
<td>Ns = 240 / study • US working adults • Amazon Mechanical Turk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study 5</td>
<td>Experience sampling</td>
<td>Real life in the moment</td>
<td>N = 240 • Australian working adults • Community sample</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Data**

**What's New?**

**Theoretical novelty:**

- Cognitive judgments
- Emotions
- Group dynamics
- Interaction

**Methodological novelty:**

- Short-term longitudinal design to understand how processes evolve over time

**Contribution**

- Evaluation of the offender's guilt-certainty / ambiguity of the offender's wrongfulness
- Personal reaction to alleviate threat (personal, relational, group-values, moral standards)

**Tools**

- Scales
- Experimental manipulations

**Design**

- Scales
- Experimental manipulations

**Analysis**

- SPSS, PROCESS, & Mplus
- Grounded Theory Approach

**Practical contribution:**

- Help maintain:
  - Employee Engagement
  - Productivity
  - Organisational Commitment
  - Organisational Trust

**Other Considerations**

- Help maintain:
  - Employee Engagement
  - Productivity
  - Organisational Commitment
  - Organisational Trust

- Provide organisations with a means to facilitate constructive responses from observers

**Collaboration**

- Data: none
- Tools: none
- Idea: feedback from leading academics and practitioners

**Target audience**

- Journals: A and A*
- Practitioners: conferences and newsletters

**Risk**

- No result: low
- Obsolescence: low
- Competitor: low

**Ethics**

- Already obtained

**Scope**

- Appropriate – general working adults
Thank you!

Mylyn Dat: m.dat@uq.edu.au