

When Do Fair Procedures Not Matter? A Test of the Identity Violation Effect

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Considerable research has demonstrated that fair procedures help improve reactions to decisions, a phenomenon known as the *fair process effect*. However, in the present research, the authors identify when and why objectively fair procedures (i.e., receiving voice) may not always improve justice perceptions. Findings from 2 studies ($N_s = 108$ and 277) yield support for the proposed *identity violation effect*, which posits that when an outcome violates a central aspect of one's self (i.e., personal and/or social identity), objectively fair procedures do not improve procedural and distributive justice perceptions. Further, consistent with the motivated reasoning hypothesis, the Voice \times Identity Violation interaction on justice perceptions was mediated by participants' tendency to find a procedural flaw—namely, to doubt that opinions were considered before making the decision.

Keywords: justice, fair, voice, identity

Early work on organizational justice focused on distributive justice, or the perceived fairness of decision outcomes (Adams, 1965). In the mid- to late 1970s and early 1980s, scholars began to examine the idea that individuals care not only about decision outcomes but also about the fairness of procedures (i.e., procedural justice) used to make those decisions (Leventhal, 1976; Leventhal, Karuza, & Fry, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). This paradigm shift resulted in a considerable body of empirical research on what is now known as the *fair process effect*¹ (Folger, 1977; Folger, Rosenfield, Grove, & Corkran 1979)—the finding that fair procedures improve reactions to decisions. Recent meta-analytic reviews on organizational justice demonstrate robust relationships between procedural justice and many organizational outcomes, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, evaluations of authority, trust, organizational citizenship behavior, and performance (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001).

Of note, work by Brockner and colleagues (Brockner, 2002; Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996) highlights that fair procedures yield a stronger effect when outcomes are unfavorable, such

that reactions to unfavorable outcomes are assuaged if the procedures used to arrive at the outcomes are deemed fair. However, it is important to note that a number of studies in Brockner and Wiesenfeld's review did not conform to the predicted interaction. Some studies reported nonsignificant interactions, whereas other studies yielded significant interactions but in a different pattern than the typical interaction. Brockner and Wiesenfeld concluded that although the predicted pattern of the interaction is robust, there are undoubtedly boundary conditions of the effect. Specifically, Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996) stated, "It is entirely possible . . . that when outcome favorability is low in an absolute sense, procedural justice will have little buffering effect" (p. 206). This statement suggests there are contexts when objectively fair procedures will have little effect in the face of unfavorable outcomes.

Building on Brockner and Wiesenfeld's (1996) recognition that boundary conditions exist, in the present research we examine the following question: When do fair procedures *not* mitigate negative reactions to an unfavorable outcome? Answering this question is important because current justice literature presumes that as long as fair procedures are used, reactions to unfavorable outcomes will be improved. Thus, the purpose of this research is to examine boundary conditions of the fair process effect. In what follows, we describe recent theory and research examining boundary conditions of the fair process effect, highlight how the present studies extend extant research, present a theoretical model and hypotheses, and present and discuss the results from two studies.

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¹ Though we refer to the *fair process effect* throughout this article, it should be noted that van den Bos (2005) labels the influence of voice on justice perceptions as the "fair voice effect" (p. 278).

Theoretical Overview and Hypotheses

Boundary Conditions of the Fair Process Effect and Theoretical Model

Although there is robust support for the fair process effect, a stream of research has recently emerged that examines when fair procedures do not improve reactions to unfavorable decisions. This body of work is based on Skitka's (2002) value protection model (VPM). The VPM seeks to explain how individuals determine whether a decision is fair or unfair and posits that a desire to uphold one's sense of self plays a critical role in how individuals reason about fairness. According to the VPM, individuals have moral mandates, defined as an attitude or a position that is developed from a moral conviction that something is ethical or unethical (Mullen & Skitka, 2006a). A moral mandate is "a selective self-expressive stand on a specific issue, not a generalized orientation toward the world" (Skitka, 2002, p. 589). In a series of lab studies examining reactions to actual and fictional court cases, Skitka and colleagues found that when the outcome of a trial or Supreme Court decision violated one's moral mandate, objectively fair procedures did not improve perceptions of procedural and distributive justice (Mullen & Skitka, 2006a, 2006b; Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Houston, 2001; Skitka & Mullen, 2002). This finding is referred to as the *moral mandate effect* (Skitka, 2002). This body of research on the moral mandate effect provides convincing evidence that when an individual has a moral mandate on an issue, that person will be more likely to be influenced by whether an outcome supported the moral mandate than whether the procedures used to make the decision were fair. Essentially, when the ends are inconsistent with a moral mandate, the means do not matter.

In extending this stream of research, an important question emerges: Must an outcome violate a moral mandate to render procedures inconsequential? There is theoretical and empirical support for the notion that individuals are motivated to not only defend their moral mandates but to protect their sense of self more generally. Classic work by James (1890/1950) and more recent work in Skitka's (2003) accessible identity model of justice reasoning (AIM) highlight two main components of the self: (a) personal identity and (b) social identity.² *Personal identity* refers to "a sense of self built up over time as the person embarks on and pursues projects or goals that are not thought of as those as a community, but the property of a person" (Hewitt, 1997, p. 93). James's conception of personal identity includes the aspect of self that concerns moral sensibility and conscience; a desire for achievement, mastery, and competence; and ultimately self-actualization. Thus, although one aspect of personal identity relates to morality, it is clearly only part of one's personal identity according to James. In contrast, *social identity* is the aspect of one's self that is derived from membership in various groups (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). James noted that individuals "have many social selves" (p. 358). Indeed, all individuals are a part of and feel a sense of belonging with multiple social categories (e.g., nationality, political affiliation, work group), and such affiliation provides an important part of one's sense of social self. Social identity helps satisfy a desire to belong, to feel accepted, and to gain status and standing. There is considerable theoretical and empirical support for the notion that individuals seek to protect and uphold both

their personal and their social identities (Baumeister & Leary, 1995; Steele, 1988).

To clarify the relations between moral mandates, personal identity, and social identity, we provide Figure 1. As depicted in the figure, consistent with the VPM, moral mandates influence the moral aspect of one's personal identity. In line with work by Aquino and colleagues (Aquino & Reed, 2002; Reed & Aquino, 2003), we refer to the aspect of personal identity that is concerned with being moral as moral identity. Consistent with James (1890/1950), moral identity represents only one aspect of personal identity as a desire for achievement, mastery, competence, and self-actualization are also part of personal identity. The circle representing personal identity partly overlaps with social identity but is largely distinct. We expect personal and social identity to be related in part because of the process of *depersonalization*, which refers to a "shift towards the perception of self as an interchangeable exemplar of some social category" (Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987). When depersonalization occurs, it becomes difficult for an individual to separate one's social identity from one's personal identity.

Although the VPM focuses specifically on the moral component of personal identity (i.e., moral identity), given the desire of individuals to protect and uphold their personal and social identities more generally, it is reasonable to suggest that any violation of personal and social identity by a decision outcome should reduce the influence of fair procedures. To be clear, the VPM highlights the link between moral mandates and personal identity, and posits that when a decision is inconsistent with one's moral mandate, individuals are motivated to protect their personal identity by deeming the decision-making process and outcome as unfair. In this research we take the stance that while the research on moral mandates has been useful in identifying boundary conditions of the fair process effect, focusing solely on moral mandates may be too narrow a focus for understanding when fair procedures are inconsequential. Thus, we take the stance that decisions that are not necessarily related to one's morals but that violate one's personal or social identity are likely to render the influence of fair procedures negligible. We deem identity violation as a more extreme case of what is commonly referred to as identity threat (Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 2002). In the case of identity violation, one's identity is defied as opposed to simply the potential for violation present with identity threat. We view these constructs as conceptually similar, with identity violation being stronger in intensity. In sum, in this research we test a phenomenon we refer to as the *identity violation effect*, which posits that when a decision outcome violates an individual's personal or social identity, objectively fair procedures have a weaker influence on justice perceptions.

² It should be noted that we focus specifically on personal and social identity in this research. James (1890/1950) and Skitka (2003) describe a third identity, material identity. Material identity overlaps with personal and social identity but focuses on the aspect of self that is defined by an individual's possessions and relative wealth. We focus on personal and social identity because they have been examined in much more detail and have been linked to justice in prior theory and research (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Though not examined in this research, the identity violation effect does not preclude violations of material identity.

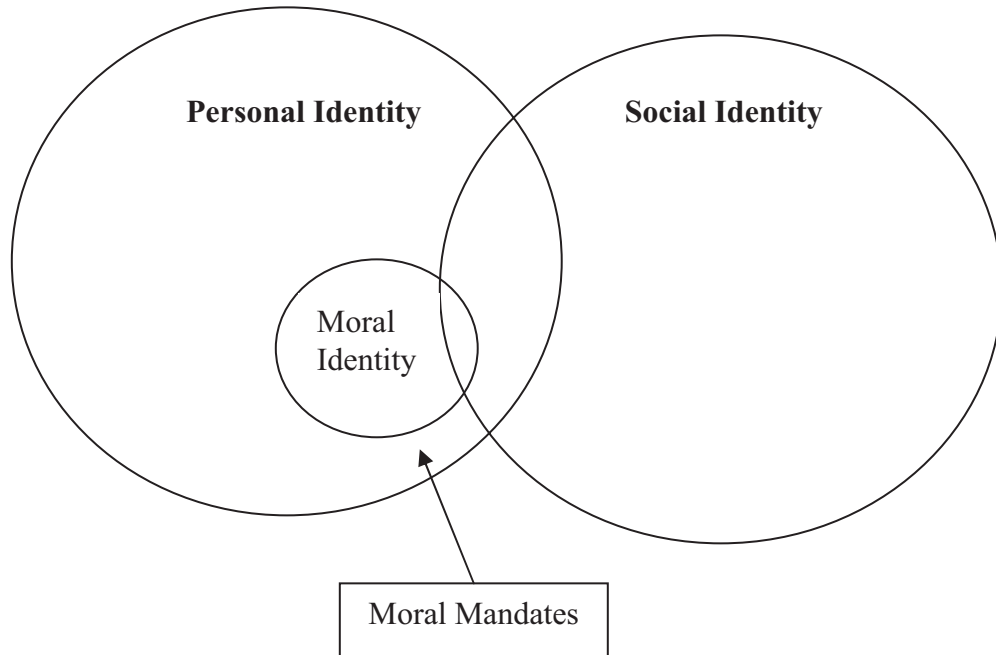


Figure 1. Relationships between moral mandates, moral identity, personal identity, and social identity.

Not only do we expand the moral mandate effect by examining personal and social identity, we empirically examine the process through which the identity violation effect occurs. Consistent with the VPM, we expect individuals to engage in *motivated reasoning* when formulating justice perceptions. Motivated reasoning refers to a set of cognitive processes that individuals engage in to ensure that they come to a desired conclusion (Kunda, 1990). Within the context of the identity violation effect, individuals who have their identity violated by a decision outcome will be motivated to find flaws in the procedure to justify being upset about the decision outcome (Skitka, 2002). In a work context, one important procedural flaw by management is to not consider the opinions voiced by employees. Specifically, we expect the identity violation effect

to be mediated by *doubting that opinions were considered* by management before making the decision.

We provide our theoretical model in Figure 2. As illustrated in the figure, we expect the relationship between the procedural justice experience (i.e., being provided voice) and procedural and distributive justice perceptions to be moderated by personal and social identity violations, such that the relationship between voice and justice perceptions is weaker when identity violation is high. We focus on both procedural and distributive justice perceptions as outcomes for a number of reasons. First, recent meta-analyses have found strong relationships between fair procedures (i.e., voice) and distributive justice (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001). In fact, sometimes the relationships between voice

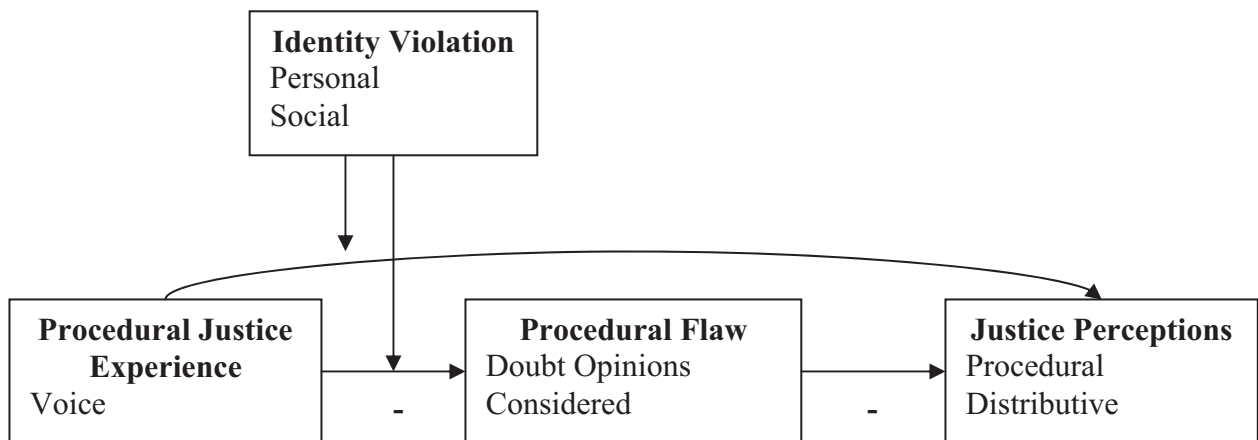


Figure 2. Identity violation effect theoretical model.

and distributive justice are at the same magnitude of voice and procedural justice. Second, consistent with Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996), unfavorable outcomes lead people to more carefully scrutinize procedures, and thus perceptions of the procedure and outcome are likely to be highly related. Third, we sought to be consistent with the pioneering work by Skitka and colleagues on the moral mandate effect by examining both procedural and distributive justice perceptions as outcomes. Thus, through motivated reasoning processes, we expect the identity violation effect to be mediated by a tendency to look for procedural flaws by doubting that opinions were considered by management before making the decision. In what follows, we draw on the identity and justice literatures and the VPM to provide a rationale for the hypotheses.

Personal Identity

According to James (1890/1950), personal identity consists of moral sensibility and conscience, and also a desire for achievement, mastery, and competence. The VPM provides the most detailed explanation for the role of personal identity in formulating justice perceptions and serves as a useful theory for exploring boundary conditions of the fair process effect (Skitka, 2002). The VPM highlights that individuals have moral mandates and that moral mandates have implications for upholding one's personal identity such that individuals are motivated to uphold their moral convictions. To protect one's personal identity, people will make "a number of cognitive, affective and behavioral adjustments, all of which have implications for whether they feel events are fair or unfair" (Skitka, 2002, p. 589). Skitka and Bravo (2005) echoed this sentiment, stating that "threats to more primary foundations of self-definition elicit stronger needs for identity protection than threats to less primary self-definitions" (p. 112). In sum, the VPM posits that people are motivated to uphold their personal identity by remaining true to moral mandates, and that when decisions are inconsistent with one's moral mandates, procedural and distributive justice perceptions will tend to be less favorable regardless of whether the procedures used to make the decision were objectively fair. Empirical work drawing on the VPM has demonstrated that when an individual has a moral mandate about a political issue (e.g., immigration, civil rights, or abortion) and a decision is made that goes against one's moral mandate, predecision perceptions about the fairness of the procedures used to make the decision have no influence on postdecision procedural and distributive justice perceptions (Mullen & Skitka, 2006a; Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Houston, 2001; Skitka & Mullen, 2002).

Whereas the VPM focuses on the moral aspect of personal identity, James's (1890/1950) conceptualization of personal identity is much broader as it also encompasses a desire for achievement, mastery, and competence. Research demonstrates that when such personal goals related to achievement are thwarted, individuals react negatively (Steele, 1988). Indeed, individuals are motivated to protect not only the moral aspect of personal identity but also these more achievement-oriented aspects of personal identity. To address the fact that personal identity includes more than just a moral component, we conceptualize personal identity broadly in the current research to examine whether the moral mandate effect extends to personal identity more generally. Further, whereas the VPM draws a conceptual link between moral mandates and personal identity, only moral mandates and not personal identity have

been examined in prior work. Thus, to provide a stricter test of the role of personal identity, we directly assess violations of personal identity in the present research. Finally, whereas all existing research on the VPM has focused exclusively on reactions to court cases or trials, in the present research we examine the role of identity violations within organizational contexts, and in Study 2 we focus on actual decisions made at one's place of employment. It may be particularly important to use a broad conceptualization of personal identity when examining work contexts, because in addition to the potential for decisions with a moral component, many decisions by management have implications for one's achievement. Thus, we predict that when an outcome violates one's personal identity, objectively fair procedures will be weakly related to one's procedural justice perceptions. Similarly, whereas fair procedures have been shown to relate to distributive justice (see Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001), we expect this relationship will be diminished when there is a personal identity violation. Specifically, we predict the following:

Hypothesis 1: Personal identity violation will moderate the relationship between voice and (a) procedural and (b) distributive justice perceptions such that the relationship between voice and justice perceptions will be weaker when personal identity violation is high.

Social Identity Violation

The VPM and empirical research supporting the VPM have focused on personal identity—at least the moral component of personal identity. However, scholars generally accept that people not only have personal identities but also have social identities (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). Indeed, people derive a part of themselves from the groups and organizations in which they work (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Such attachment to groups is important because it addresses individuals' fundamental need to belong, desire to feel accepted, and will to gain status and standing (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Because of its important influence on individuals' self-perceptions, attitudes about others, and behaviors, social identity has received more attention than personal identity in recent years (Hogg, Terry, & White, 1995).

This increased interest in social identity has also been reflected in the organizational justice literature. Traditionally, research integrating organizational justice and identity has considered how fairly a group member is treated and its implication for how much that individual is valued in the group (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). Fair treatment signals that one is an important group member, and subsequently one's social identity is upheld. The study of justice in groups, however, need not be limited to interpersonal treatment between group members (Hogg & Terry, 2000). Rather, people care whether something or someone threatens the identity of the group as a whole (i.e., social identity). In this way, identity is a social construct that can be examined at multiple levels of inclusion (Clayton & Opatow, 2003). For example, people respond to injustices that threaten their work groups, organizations, occupations, governments, nations, and so on. To expand justice and identity research beyond interpersonal treatment, we examine how individuals respond to decisions, and procedures used to make those decisions, that impact a group with which one closely identifies. Thus, whereas the VPM focuses specifically on

personal identity, we think the influence of having one's social identity violated could yield similar reactions to having one's personal identity violated. Thus, we examine organizational decisions that allow for an examination of both personal and social identity. Given the importance of the social context in organizations, it is important to see whether social identity violations also neutralize the effects of fair procedures.

Considerable research supports the notion that people care about their group's interest (Platow, Hoar, Reid, Harley, & Morrison, 1997) and thus are concerned with whether the group's outcomes are favorable. In essence, when individuals identify with a group, a process of depersonalization occurs and individuals' conceptualization of themselves in that specific context is more related to the group norms (Terry & Hogg, 1996). Moreover, there is some theoretical and empirical support for the notion that individuals will devalue procedural justice when an outcome to a group that one belongs to is unfavorable. For example, Leung, Tong, and Lind (2007) draw on social identity theory to argue that the concern for collective outcomes can matter more than fair procedures. They also argue that groups are more likely to be self-serving (i.e., outcome focused) than individuals. Further, they predict that decisions that impact one's group are more likely to be evaluated in terms of the implications for the group's outcomes as opposed to justice concerns. Consistent with the theoretical underpinnings from social identity theory, Leung et al. found that group outcome favorability had a stronger influence on the endorsement of a policy than did procedural justice perceptions. Thus, when part of a group, individuals shift their focus to group outcomes rather than individual outcomes, and the group outcomes may become more salient than the procedures. To be clear, although Leung et al.'s work did not examine the moderating role of social identity violations, their findings do suggest that outcomes that impact members of a group one closely identifies with impact one's reactions and can make justice concerns less salient when group outcomes are unfavorable.

Together these findings lend support for the notion that when one's social identity is violated, the existence of fair procedures is unlikely to have a strong effect on postdecision reactions. Leung et al. (2007) provide a rationale as to why group members may focus more on collective outcomes than on the fairness of procedures:

One answer to this question may lie in Skitka's work on moral mandates (Skitka, 2003; Skitka & Mullen, 2002), which posits that outcomes and procedures may take on moral meanings as a function of one's moral mandates. An interesting derivation is that procedural justice may become unimportant if there are strong moral mandates associated with a certain outcome, a prediction that has been empirically supported (Skitka & Mullen, 2002). We may extrapolate from this theoretical perspective that protecting a group's collective outcome is a fundamental concern of its group members, and this emphasis may function like a moral mandate, as depicted in Skitka's framework. (p. 486)

Indeed, when individuals strongly identify with a social group, they see themselves and their groups in similar terms and define themselves as part of their groups (Tyler & Blader, 2003). Because group identification serves a self-esteem function, attacks directed toward one's group are tantamount to attacks against one personally. When a decision violates one's social identity, something central to the group is undermined and thus fair procedures are

likely to have a negligible effect on whether the procedures are perceived as fair. Similarly, because the outcome violates one's social identity, perceptions of the outcome (i.e., distributive justice) are also expected to be weakly influenced by fair procedures.

Hypothesis 2: Social identity violation will moderate the relationship between voice and (a) procedural and (b) distributive justice perceptions such that the relationship between voice and justice perceptions will be weaker when social identity violation is high.

Motivated Reasoning and Searching for Procedural Flaws

We hypothesize that identity violations will moderate the relationship between voice and justice perceptions, but what is the process by which this happens? One explanation is the motivated reasoning hypothesis (Kunda, 1990), which is one aspect of the VPM. The motivated reasoning hypothesis states that when an outcome threatens one's identity, "people may be motivated to engage in more critical information processing and seek out flaws with the procedures in an attempt to explain how they produced the 'wrong' outcome" (Mullen & Skitka, 2006a, p. 630). Such processing may include a reevaluation of the procedural aspects leading to a decision and/or a biased memory search to bolster one's belief that the procedures were unfair.

The motivated reasoning hypothesis is consistent with the notion that moral reasoning is generally post hoc, and thus, procedural and distributive justice judgments are more likely to be influenced by whether the decision upheld one's identity than whether the procedures were objectively fair (Haidt, 2001). In the present research, we expect that when an individual has an opportunity to provide voice before a decision and the decision ultimately violates one's personal and/or social identity, the individual will be motivated to devalue or degrade the procedures by searching for procedural flaws. One important procedural flaw is not considering opinions before making a decision. We predict that the process of doubting whether opinions were considered by management serves as an explanatory mechanism for the identity violation effect.

Hypothesis 3: The interactive effect of voice and personal identity violation on (a) procedural and (b) distributive justice perceptions will be mediated by a doubt that opinions were considered.

Hypothesis 4: The interactive effect of voice and social identity violation on (a) procedural and (b) distributive justice perceptions will be mediated by a doubt that opinions were considered.

Overview of Research

To test these hypotheses, we conducted two experimental studies in which an important decision was made by management. In both studies, whether the participants (a) received voice and (b) got a favorable outcome were manipulated, and personal and social identity violation were measured. In Study 1, participants read about a decision regarding a restrictive policy and reported on their procedural and distributive justice perceptions. In Study 2, we build on the first study by examining employee reactions to decisions made at

their place of employment and also assessing an underlying process for the proposed identity violation effect.

Study 1

The purpose of Study 1 is to examine whether personal and social identity violation moderate the relationship between voice and procedural and distributive justice perceptions. Study 1 is an experiment in which voice and the decision outcome are manipulated and personal and social identity violation are measured. We expect voice to have a weaker effect on procedural and distributive justice perceptions when the decision outcome violates one's personal or social identity.

Method

Sample

Participation in this study was voluntary, and confidentiality was assured. One hundred eight undergraduate students (69% female, 31% male) at a large university in the eastern United States participated in this study. The age of the participants ranged from 18 to 22, with a mean of 18.74 ($SD = 1.9$). Sixty-eight percent of the participants were Caucasian, 15% African American, 4% Hispanic, and 7% Asian/Pacific Islander; 6% marked "other." The mean number of jobs held by the participants was 3.28 ($SD = 1.75$), with a mean tenure at their current or most recent job of 1.56 years ($SD = 1.90$).

Design and Procedure

The study had a 2 (voice vs. no voice) \times 2 (outcome favorable vs. outcome unfavorable) between-subjects design.

Upon entering the room, participants were informed that they would be asked to take part in a study aimed at understanding a decision the administration was in the process of making. Specifically, a major issue on the college campus was whether the administration planned to limit fan behavior at the university's sporting events. A pilot study confirmed that participants were well aware of this issue and had strong feelings about having their behavior restricted by the administration. Similarly, the pilot study revealed that the vast majority of students were upset that the administration was considering restricting their behavior and deemed a restriction on fans' behavior an unfavorable occurrence. To be clear, although we manipulated the decision outcome, we focus on the interaction between voice and the identity violation in formulating and testing the hypotheses.

Participants were told they would be asked to read a fictitious letter from the school administration about how it planned to handle the fan behavior situation. After introducing the study, the experimenter handed the participants a fictitious letter on the university's letterhead signed by "Pat Johnson" with an address in the university's "Administration Building." The letter began as follows:

As you may be aware, there has been considerable debate on campus regarding the issue of fan behavior at [university name] sporting events. To give you a brief background, there have been issues with the use of profanity in speech and on t-shirts, inappropriate cheers, and rioting after certain sporting events. The administration believes something must be done to address this problem.

The next part of the letter introduced the voice manipulation. In the voice condition, the letter continued as follows:

In an effort to give voice to the students, a public forum was held to allow students to express their opinions about the issue of fan behavior. The student government, campus committees, administration, and even some of the coaches came to listen to student input. Students provided a number of reasons why they should be able to express themselves to ensure their First Amendment rights.

In contrast, in the no-voice condition the letter continued as follows:

The administration has decided they are best suited for determining what steps should be taken to rectify the problem. Thus, they are not going to hold a public forum to hear students' opinions on the issue.

Following the voice manipulation, information was provided about the decision made by the administration. In the favorable condition, the letter continued as follows:

Recently, the administration met to determine how to handle this issue. The administration decided that although they do not approve of some of the fan behavior, they respect students' opinions and first amendment rights, and have decided not to restrict fan behavior.

In contrast, in the unfavorable condition the letter continued as follows:

Recently, the administration met to determine how to handle this issue. The administration decided that not restricting fan behavior would result in the same inappropriate fan behavior. Thus, the administration has decided to eliminate profanity on clothing and to discontinue the use of cheers that are deemed inappropriate.

In all conditions, the letter concluded with the following statement:

We hope this decision will help [university name] regain its status as a university with fans that make us proud.

After reading this letter, participants responded to manipulation check items, procedural and distributive justice measures, personal and social identity violation scales, and demographic measures. At the conclusion of the study, participants were debriefed and then released.

Measures

Manipulation checks. Voice and outcome favorability manipulation checks were adapted from recent articles on organizational justice (see Brockner, De Cremer, van den Bos, & Chen, 2005; van den Bos & van Prooijen, 2001; van Prooijen, van den Bos, & Wilke, 2004) for the purpose of this study. The voice manipulation check had two items: "The administration provided a forum for students to express their opinions" and "The administration allowed students to voice their opinions" ($\alpha = .98$). The outcome favorability manipulation check also included two items: "I am personally satisfied with the final decision that was made by the administration" and "The decision the administration made with regards to resolving the fan behavior issue is favorable to me" ($\alpha = .91$). The response format was a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*).

Social identification. Because some of the hypotheses require a level of identification with one's social group, we included the

following three items to measure social group identification: "Being a [university mascot] fan is a big part of my identity," "Being a [university mascot] is important to me," and "I feel proud to be a part of the [university mascot] family" ($\alpha = .71$). Using the same 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*), descriptive statistics revealed that there was a high level of identification with one's social group ($M = 4.17$, $SD = 0.72$).

Identity violations. Because there were no established measures in the literature, we developed *personal* and *social* identity violation measures for the purpose of this study. The personal identity violation measure contained four items: "I feel like the decision made by the administration violated some of my personal identity," "The decision made by the administration goes against things that are central (i.e., very important) to my personal identity," "I feel like something that is very important to my personal identity was violated by the administration's decision," and "Some things that I value and that are a part of my personal identity were disregarded by the administration's decision" ($\alpha = .93$). Social identity violation was also measured with a four-item scale: "I feel the decision made by the administration is damaging to the [university name] fans," "The decision made by the administration goes against [university name] fans," "I feel like something that is very important to [university name] fans was violated by the administration's decision," and "Some things that I value and that are a part of my identity as a [university name] fan were disregarded by the administration's decision" ($\alpha = .91$). The response format was a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*).

We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) on the personal and social identity violation items to ensure that each measure was unidimensional with appropriate items loading only on their respective factors. The two-factor solution produced an adequate fit, $\chi^2(17, N = 106) = 50.31$, $p < .001$; standardized root-mean-square residual (SRMR) = .06, root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA) = .11, comparative fit index (CFI) = .95. Larger values for the CFI (.95 or above) indicate a better fit (Bollen, 1989; Hu & Bentler, 1999). We compared this model with a single-factor model to determine whether the identity items were better represented as a single construct. The fit indices for the single-factor model indicated a worse fit, $\chi^2(19, N = 106) = 164.11$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .11, RMSEA = .36, CFI = .79. A chi-square difference test showed that the two-factor model fit the data significantly better than the single-factor model, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(2) = 113.81$, $p < .001$. Overall, the CFA results confirmed that personal and social identity violations are better suited as separate constructs.

Procedural and distributive justice. Procedural and distributive justice were measured using scales established by Gilliland (1994). Gilliland's measure has been used successfully in a number of justice studies and has demonstrated good psychometric properties (cf. Chapman & Zweig, 2005; Phillips, Douthitt, & Hyland, 2001). We used Gilliland's measure in Study 1 as opposed to the generally accepted Colquitt (2001) measure (used in Study 2) because given the context of the study, we wanted a measure that asked about whether the procedures were fair more generally, whereas in Colquitt's measure each item represents a different procedural justice rule. We deemed it unlikely that participants had enough information to draw inferences about each of the justice rules in Colquitt's measure, so we opted to use Gilliland's more general measure in Study 1. Procedural justice was assessed with four items. Sample items include "I feel the process the administration used to arrive at its decision was fair" and "The procedures

used to arrive at the decision are fair" ($\alpha = .91$). Distributive justice was also assessed with four items. Sample items include "I feel the administration's decision was fair" and "Overall, I feel the result of the decision process was unfair" (reverse coded; $\alpha = .92$). The response format for all justice items was a 5-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree*; 5 = *strongly agree*).

We conducted a CFA on the procedural and distributive justice items to ensure that each measure was unidimensional with appropriate items loading only on their respective factors. The two-factor solution produced an adequate fit, $\chi^2(17, N = 106) = 47.14$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .06, RMSEA = .11, CFI = .96. We compared this model with a single-factor model to determine whether the justice items were better represented as a single construct. The fit indices for the single-factor model indicated a worse fit, $\chi^2(19, N = 106) = 222.35$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .13, RMSEA = .36, CFI = .73. A chi-square difference test showed that the two-factor model fit the data significantly better than the single-factor model, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(2) = 175.21$, $p = .001$. Overall, the CFA results confirmed that procedural and distributive justice are better suited as separate factors.

Overall CFAs. In addition to the CFAs conducted for the identity violations and justice dimensions separately, we also deemed it useful to conduct CFAs with both identity violations and justice dimensions in the same model. The four-factor solution with personal identity violation, social identity violation, procedural justice, and distributive justice as distinct constructs produced a good fit, $\chi^2(98, N = 106) = 206.18$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .07, RMSEA = .10, CFI = .97. We compared this model with a two-factor model that included all of the identity violation items in one factor and all of the justice items in the second factor, $\chi^2(103, N = 106) = 728.66$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .12, RMSEA = .24, CFI = .88. We also ran a one-factor model with all of the items loading on a single factor, $\chi^2(104, N = 106) = 827.70$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .13, RMSEA = .27, CFI = .83. Chi-square difference tests showed that the four-factor model fit the data significantly better than the two-factor, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(5) = 522.48$, $p < .001$, and one-factor, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(6) = 621.52$, $p < .001$, models. These CFA results provide further support for the distinctiveness of the four constructs.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

The means, standard deviations, reliabilities, and intercorrelations among the key variables are presented in Table 1.

Manipulation Checks

Before testing the hypotheses, we examined whether the manipulations were successful by conducting one-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs). The voice manipulation had a significant effect on participants' voice, $F(1, 106) = 241.67$, $p < .001$; $d = .70$. Results indicated that participants in the voice condition reported higher voice ($M = 4.36$, $SD = 0.83$) than participants in the no-voice condition ($M = 1.48$, $SD = 1.08$). In addition, results of a one-way ANOVA support the notion that individuals in the favorable condition ($M = 3.66$, $SD = 0.97$) reported the outcome being more favorable than individuals in the unfavorable condition ($M = 2.39$, $SD = 1.19$), $F(1, 106) = 37.08$, $p < .001$; $d = .26$.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Correlations Among Study 1 Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
Manipulations								
1. Voice	.52	.50	—					
2. Outcome favorability	.49	.50	.02	—				
Moderators								
3. Personal identity violation	2.52	1.03	-.23*	-.15	(.93)			
4. Social identity violation	2.77	1.13	-.19	-.49**	.67**	(.91)		
Outcome variables								
5. Procedural justice	2.99	1.20	.59**	.27**	-.39**	-.50**	(.91)	
6. Distributive justice	3.11	1.16	.25*	.49**	-.57**	-.76**	.62**	(.92)

Note. Values in parentheses are reliabilities.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Hypothesis Tests

Hierarchical regression analysis was used to test all of the hypothesized relationships. Hypothesis 1a predicted that personal identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and procedural justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when personal identity violation was high. The results show that there was not a statistically significant interactive effect between voice and personal identity violation on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.09$, ns , $\Delta R^2 = .00$), indicating no support for Hypothesis 1a (see Table 2).

Hypothesis 1b predicted that personal identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and distributive justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when personal identity violation was high. Results indicate a statistically significant interactive effect between voice and personal identity violation on distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.46$, $p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .02$). The plotted interaction is shown in Figure 3. Results from a simple slope analysis (see Aiken & West, 1991) indicate that for participants with a low personal identity violation (one SD below the mean), voice was more strongly related to distributive

justice ($B = 0.70$, $p < .05$) than for participants with a high personal identity violation (one SD above the mean; $B = -0.07$, ns). Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was supported.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that social identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and procedural justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when social identity violation was high. Results indicate that there was an interactive effect between voice and social identity violation on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.45$, $p < .05$, $\Delta R^2 = .03$). Results from a simple slope analysis indicate that for participants with a low social identity violation (one SD below the mean), voice was more strongly related to procedural justice ($B = 1.65$, $p < .05$) than for participants with a high social identity violation (one SD above the mean; $B = 0.85$, $p < .05$) (see Figure 4). Therefore, Hypothesis 2a was supported.

Hypothesis 2b predicted that social identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and distributive justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when social identity violation was high. Results indicate that there was an interactive relationship between voice and social identity violation on

Table 2
Study 1 Results of Regression Analysis

Variable	Procedural justice				Distributive justice			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Hypotheses 1a and 1b								
Voice	.53**	0.91, 1.64	.61*	0.44, 2.49	.12	-0.09, 0.66	.55	0.22, 2.31
Personal identity violation	-.28**	-0.50, -0.14	-.23	-0.57, 0.02	-.54**	-0.79, -0.43	-.33*	-0.67, -0.07
Voice \times Personal Identity Violation			-.09	-0.44, 0.29			-.46*	-0.75, -0.002
Total R^2	.42**		.42		.34**		.36*	
Total ΔR^2			.00				.02*	
Hypotheses 2a and 2b								
Voice	.51**	0.90, 1.57	.92**	1.32, 3.13	.10	-0.07, 0.51	.47**	0.28, 1.86
Social identity violation	-.40**	-0.58, -0.28	-.20	-0.45, 0.02	-.75**	-0.89, -0.63	-.57**	-0.78, -0.37
Social \times Personal Identity Violation			-.45*	-0.65, -0.05			-.41*	-0.56, -0.04
Total R^2	.50**		.53*		.59**		.61*	
Total ΔR^2			.03*				.02*	

Note. CI = confidence interval.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

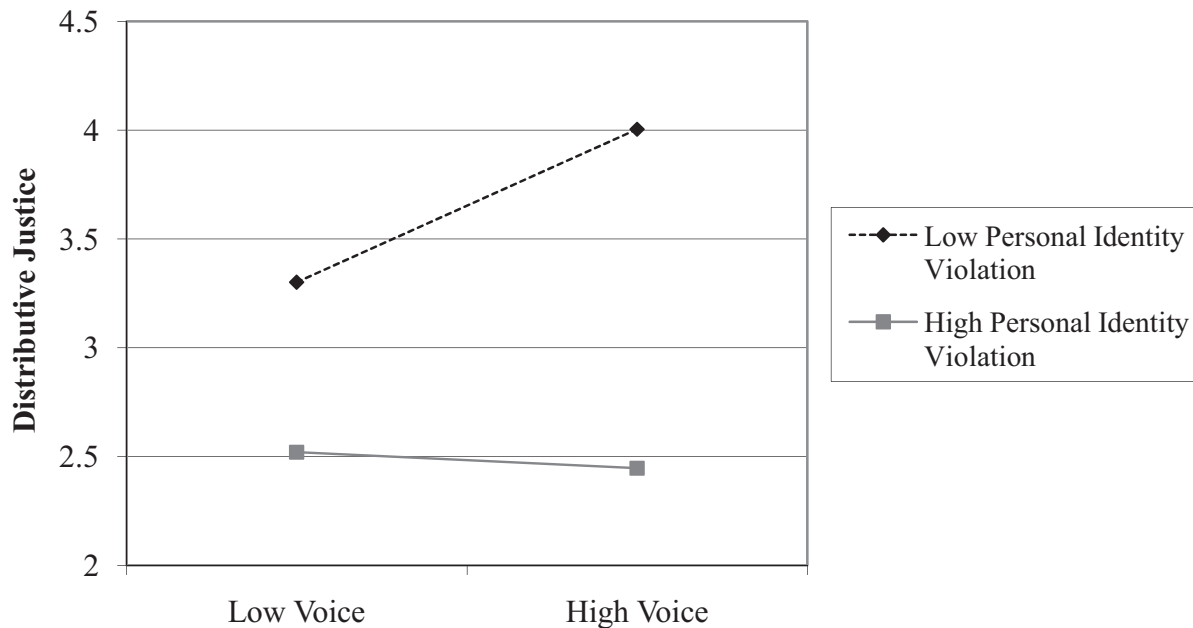


Figure 3. Study 1: Interaction between voice and personal identity violation on distributive justice.

distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.41, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .02$). Simple slope results indicate that for participants with a low social identity violation (one *SD* below the mean), voice was more strongly related to distributive justice ($B = 0.58, p < .05$) than for participants with a high social identity violation (one *SD* above the mean; $B = -0.11, ns$) (see Figure 5). Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was supported.

Discussion

The purpose of Study 1 was to examine boundary conditions of the fair process effect by examining personal and social identity violations as moderators of the effects of fair procedures. Consistent with the proposed identity violation effect, when an individual's personal or social identity was violated by a decision outcome, being

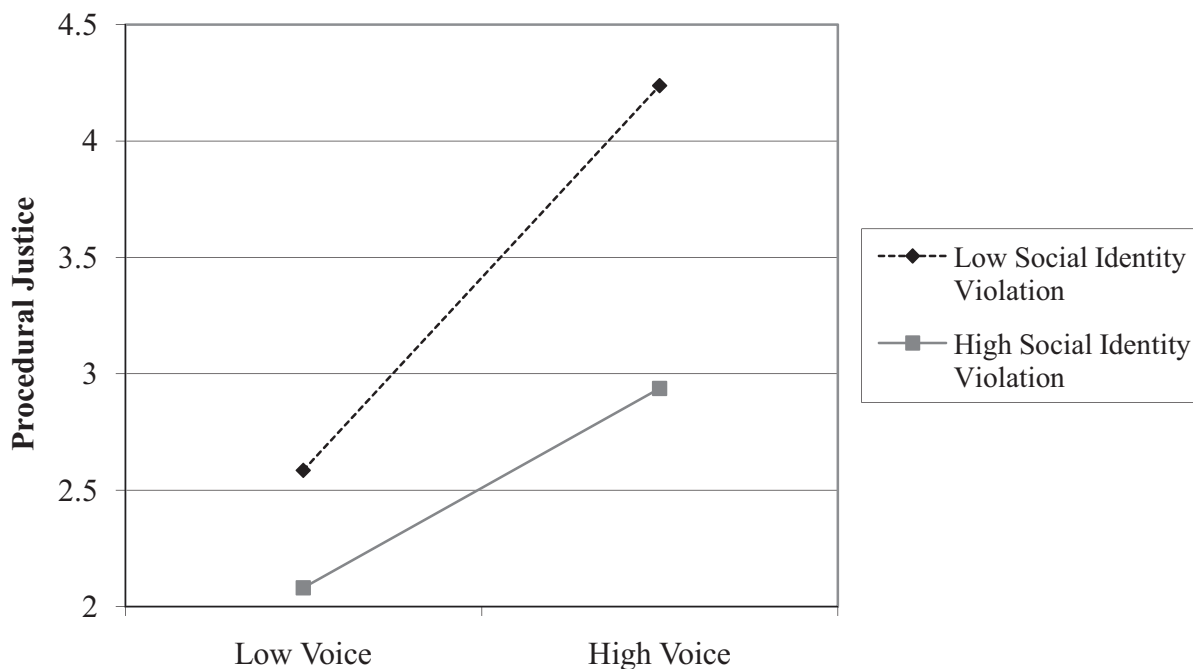


Figure 4. Study 1: Interaction between voice and social identity violation on procedural justice.

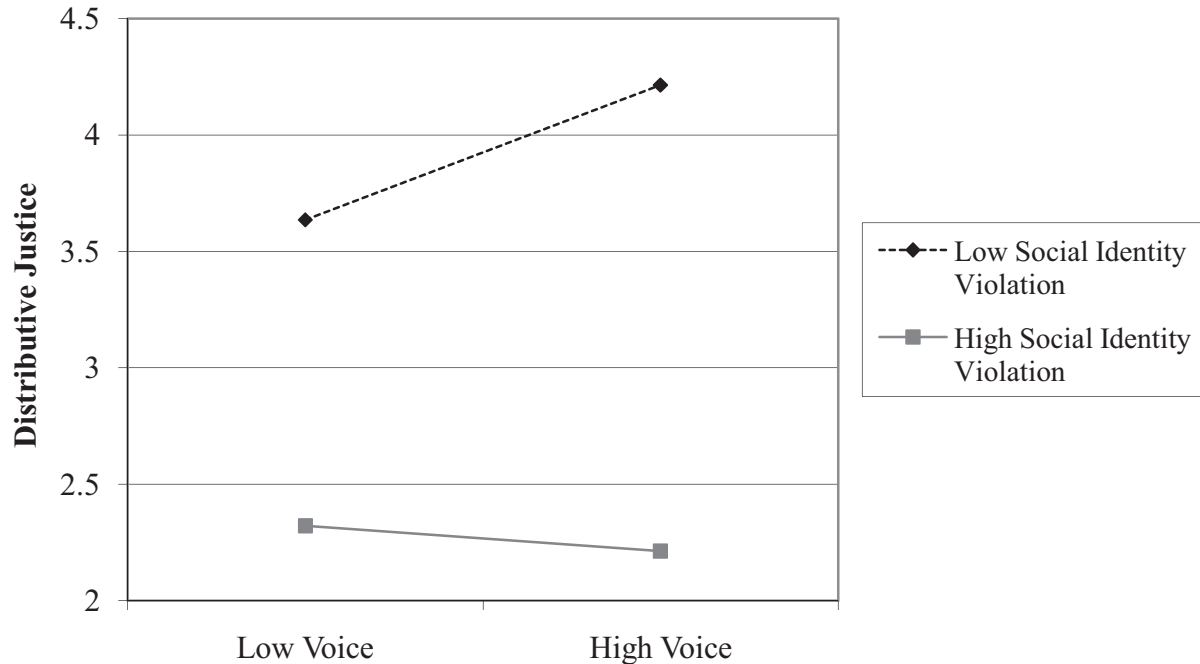


Figure 5. Study 1: Interaction between voice and social identity violation on distributive justice.

provided voice had a weaker effect on procedural and distributive justice perceptions. The only nonsignificant finding was for Hypothesis 1a, involving the interaction between voice and personal identity violation on procedural justice. Given our participants' strong identification with other university fans, it may be that personal identity violations were less egregious than social identity violations in the context of this study. Thus, the present research provides additional boundary conditions on the fair process effect and extends work on the moral mandate effect. Indeed, we find that it does not take the violation of a moral mandate to reduce the influence of fair procedures; rather, when one's personal or social identity is violated by a decision outcome, there is a negligible effect of fair procedures.

Study 2

In Study 2 we also examine the interaction between voice and personal and social identity violations on procedural and distributive justice perceptions by building on some of our findings in Study 1. First, instead of manipulating voice and the decision outcome within the context of a university policy decision that impacts students, in Study 2 we ask participants to recall an incident in their actual work experiences. Thus, Study 2 improves the generalizability of the findings in Study 1 because instead of a hypothetical decision made at a university, Study 2 examines actual decisions that affected participants at work. Second, we examine a mediator of the identity violation effect. Specifically, we draw on the motivated reasoning hypothesis (Kunda, 1990) to examine whether an individual's tendency to look for procedural flaws by doubting that opinions were considered by management before making the decision serves as a mediator of the identity violation effect. Third, we use well-established measures of pro-

cedural and distributive justice (Colquitt, 2001) in Study 2 to see whether the results generalize to other justice scales.

Method

Sample

Participation in this study was voluntary, and confidentiality was assured. Forty-four MBA students and 233 senior-level undergraduate students at a large university in the southeastern United States participated in this study, for a total of 277 participants (47% female, 53% male).³ The age of the participants ranged from 19 to 47, with a mean of 23.88 ($SD = 4.3$). Seven percent of the participants were African American, 9% Asian American, 62% Caucasian, 12% Hispanic, 4% international, and 3% biracial; 3% marked "other" or did not indicate an ethnicity. The mean years of

³ At the institution where the data were collected, many of the undergraduates are commuter students who are older than typical undergraduates, and many of the MBA students are recent college graduates. To exemplify this point, the mean difference in ages of undergraduates ($M = 23.35$) and MBA students ($M = 26.70$) was quite small, although it was statistically significant, $F(1, 273) = 23.67, p < .01$. In further support of the notion that the two samples are similar in terms of work history is that the number of years of work experience for undergraduates ($M = 6.58$) and MBA students ($M = 6.23$) did not significantly differ, $F(1, 273) = 0.27, ns$. Finally, analyses were run with and without MBA students, and the only major difference was that the interaction between voice and personal identity violation on doubt opinions considered dropped to nonsignificance ($\beta = .21, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .01, ns$). It is possible that this nonsignificant result was due to decreased statistical power, as the beta value dropped only from .26 to .21.

work experience for the participants was 6.52 ($SD = 4.03$). The mean number of jobs held by the participants was 3.95 ($SD = 3.18$), and mean tenure at their current job was 2.83 years ($SD = 2.25$).

Design and Procedure

Study 2 was a 2 (voice vs. no voice) \times 2 (outcome favorable vs. outcome unfavorable) between-subjects design. Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions. Participants read instructions that asked them to think of an important decision that was made at their current or most recent job that impacted them and/or their fellow coworkers (whom they work with closely) in a profound way. The instructions emphasized that the decision should be about something that is very important to them and/or their fellow coworkers—a decision that really speaks to who they are as a person. Additionally, the participants were told that the decision should be one in which they did (or did not) have the opportunity to voice their opinions about the issue prior to the decision being made, and in which they were extremely satisfied (or dissatisfied) with the ultimate decision.

After thinking of a decision that fit the criteria outlined above, the participants were asked to answer open-ended questions regarding the decision. Thereafter, participants were instructed to respond to a series of scale questions regarding the decision they had described. The scale questions included procedural justice and distributive justice, personal and social identity violation, doubt that opinions were considered, manipulation checks, and demographics. At the conclusion of the study, participants were debriefed and then released.

Measures

Manipulation checks. Voice and outcome favorability manipulation checks were adapted from recent articles on organizational justice (see Brockner et al., 2005; van den Bos & van Prooijen, 2001; van Prooijen et al., 2004) for the purpose of this study. The voice manipulation check had two items: “Management provided an opportunity for me to express my opinions prior to the decision” and “Management allowed me to voice my opinions prior to the decision” ($\alpha = .97$). The outcome favorability manipulation checks included two two-item scales. Personal outcome favorability items included “I am personally satisfied with the final decision that was made by management” and “The decision management made was favorable to me” ($\alpha = .92$). Coworker outcome favorability items included “Fellow coworkers I work with closely were satisfied with the final decision that was made by management” and “The decision management made was favorable to fellow coworkers I work with closely” ($\alpha = .95$). The participants responded using a Likert-type scale with ratings from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Social identification. Just as we did in Study 1, in Study 2 we assessed level of identification with one’s social group—in this case, identification with coworkers that one works with closely. We included the following three items to measure social group identification: “I strongly identify with my fellow coworkers that I work with closely,” “My fellow coworkers I work with closely are very important to me,” and “I care about what happens to my fellow coworkers that I work with closely” ($\alpha = .86$). Using the same Likert-type scale with ratings from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5

(*strongly agree*), descriptive statistics revealed that there was a high level of identification with one’s social group ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 0.83$).

Identity violations. Personal and social identity violation measures were the same as those used for Study 1, except that *administration* was replaced with *management*. Both personal ($\alpha = .95$) and social ($\alpha = .95$) identity violation measures had good reliability. To further validate these measures, and to be consistent with Study 1, we conducted a CFA. The two-factor solution produced a better fit, $\chi^2(17, N = 273) = 100.87$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .04, RMSEA = .12, CFI = .97, than the one-factor solution, $\chi^2(19, N = 273) = 677.29$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .12, RMSEA = .41, CFI = .73. A chi-square difference test showed that the two-factor model fit the data significantly better than the one-factor model, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(2) = 576.42$, $p < .001$. Overall, the CFA results further confirmed that personal and social identity violation are better suited as separate constructs.

Procedural and distributive justice. Procedural and distributive justice were measured using Colquitt’s (2001) scales. Procedural justice was assessed with seven items. Sample items include “Were you able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?” and “Were those procedures applied consistently?” ($\alpha = .81$). Distributive justice was assessed with four items. Sample items include “Did the outcomes reflect the effort you had put into your work?” and “Were your outcomes appropriate for the work you had completed?” ($\alpha = .96$). Responses were made on a Likert-type scale with ratings from 1 (*to a small extent*) to 5 (*to a large extent*).

Consistent with Study 1, we conducted a CFA to ensure that procedural and distributive justice are distinct constructs. The two-factor solution produced a better fit, $\chi^2(41, N = 273) = 227.73$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .08, RMSEA = .14, CFI = .90, than the one-factor solution, $\chi^2(43, N = 273) = 535.08$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .17, RMSEA = .24, CFI = .74. A chi-square difference test showed that the two-factor model fit the data better than the one-factor model, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(2) = 307.35$, $p < .001$. Overall, the CFA results further confirmed that procedural and distributive justice are better suited as separate constructs.

Doubt that opinions were considered. A *doubt opinions considered* measure was created for the purpose of this study and assessed with four items: “I doubt management really took employee opinions into account when making its decision,” “It is likely that management tried to appear fair but did *not* really take employee opinions into account,” “I am confident that management took employees’ opinions into account” (reverse coded), and “I believe management considered the views of employees when making its decision” (reverse coded) ($\alpha = .87$). Responses were made using a Likert-type scale with ratings from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 5 (*strongly disagree*).

Overall CFAs. As we did in Study 1, in addition to the CFAs conducted for the identity violations and justice dimensions separately, we also deemed it useful to conduct CFAs with both identity violations, the two justice dimensions, and the doubt opinions considered measure in the same model. The five-factor solution with personal identity violation, social identity violation, procedural justice, distributive justice, and doubt opinions considered as distinct constructs produced a good fit, $\chi^2(220, N = 273) = 606.87$, $p < .001$; SRMR = .06, RMSEA = .08, CFI = .97. We compared this model with a three-factor model that

included all of the identity violation items in one factor, all of the justice items in a second factor, and the doubt opinions considered items in the third factor, $\chi^2(227, N = 273) = 2,113.96, p < .001$; SRMR = .13, RMSEA = .17, CFI = .89. We also ran a one-factor model with all of the items loading on a single factor, $\chi^2(230, N = 273) = 4,311.15, p < .001$; SRMR = .15, RMSEA = .25, CFI = .75. Chi-square difference tests showed that the five-factor model fit the data significantly better than the three-factor, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(7) = 1,507.09, p < .001$, and one-factor, $\chi^2_{\text{difference}}(10) = 3,704.28, p < .001$, models. These CFA results provide further support for the distinctiveness of the five constructs.

Results

All descriptive statistics, reliabilities, and intercorrelations between the study variables are presented in Table 3.

Manipulation Checks

Before testing the hypotheses, we examined whether the manipulations were successful by conducting one-way ANOVAs. The voice manipulation had a significant effect on participants' voice perceptions, $F(1, 276) = 28.32, p < .001, d = 0.09$. Results indicated that participants in the voice condition reported higher voice ($M = 2.57, SD = 1.45$) than participants in the no-voice condition ($M = 1.73, SD = 1.11$). The effect of the outcome favorability manipulation was captured by the outcome favorability manipulation checks—one measure for personal outcome favorability and another for coworker outcome favorability. The outcome favorability manipulation had a significant effect on participants' measured personal outcome favorability, $F(1, 276) = 51.38, p < .001, d = 0.16$. Results indicated that participants in the favorable outcome condition reported higher outcome favorability ($M = 3.01, SD = 1.58$) than those in the unfavorable outcome condition ($M = 1.80, SD = 1.14$). The outcome favorability manipulation also had a significant effect on participants' perceptions of their coworkers' outcome favorability, $F(1, 276) = 27.79, p < .001, d = 0.09$. Results indicated that participants in the favorable outcome condition reported higher coworker outcome favorability ($M = 2.69, SD = 1.52$) than those in the unfavorable outcome condition ($M = 1.83, SD = 1.10$).

Tests of Hypotheses

Hierarchical regression was used to test all hypotheses. Hypothesis 1a predicted that personal identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and procedural justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when personal identity violation was high. Results indicate that there was an interactive effect between voice and personal identity violation on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.30, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .02$). Results from a simple slope analysis indicate that for participants with a low personal identity violation (one *SD* below the mean), voice was more strongly related to procedural justice ($B = 0.48, p < .05$) than for participants with a high personal identity violation ($B = 0.02, ns$) (see Figure 6). Therefore, Hypothesis 1a was supported. A summary of the results for Hypotheses 1a–2b is provided in Table 4.

Hypothesis 1b predicted that personal identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and distributive justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when personal identity violation was high. Results indicate that there was not an interactive effect between voice and personal identity violation on distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.11, ns$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1b was not supported.

Hypothesis 2a predicted that social identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and procedural justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when social identity violation was high. There was an interactive effect between voice and social identity violation on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.35, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .02$). Simple slope results indicate that for participants with a low social identity violation (one *SD* below the mean), voice was more strongly related to procedural justice ($B = 0.52, p < .05$) than for participants with a high social identity violation ($B = 0.02, ns$) (see Figure 7). Therefore, Hypothesis 2a was supported.

Hypothesis 2b predicted that social identity violation would moderate the relationship between voice and distributive justice perceptions such that the relationship would be weaker when social identity violation was high. There was an interactive relationship between voice and social identity violation on distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.30, p < .05, \Delta R^2 = .02$). Simple slope results indicate that for participants with a low social identity violation (one *SD* below the mean), voice was more strongly related to distributive justice ($B =$

Table 3
Descriptive Statistics, Reliabilities, and Correlations Among Study 2 Variables

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Manipulations									
1. Voice	.53	.50	—						
2. Outcome favorability	.56	.50	-.08	—					
Moderators									
3. Personal identity violation	2.41	1.24	.01	-.20**	(.95)				
4. Social identity violation	2.81	1.33	.04	-.21**	.68**	(.95)			
Outcome variables									
5. Procedural justice	2.63	0.91	.13*	.25**	-.34**	-.40**	(.81)		
6. Distributive justice	2.88	1.32	.07	.20**	-.35**	-.38**	.45**	(.96)	
Mediator									
7. Doubt opinions considered	3.62	1.21	-.15*	-.27**	.46**	.50**	-.58**	-.43**	(.87)

Note. Values in parentheses are reliabilities.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

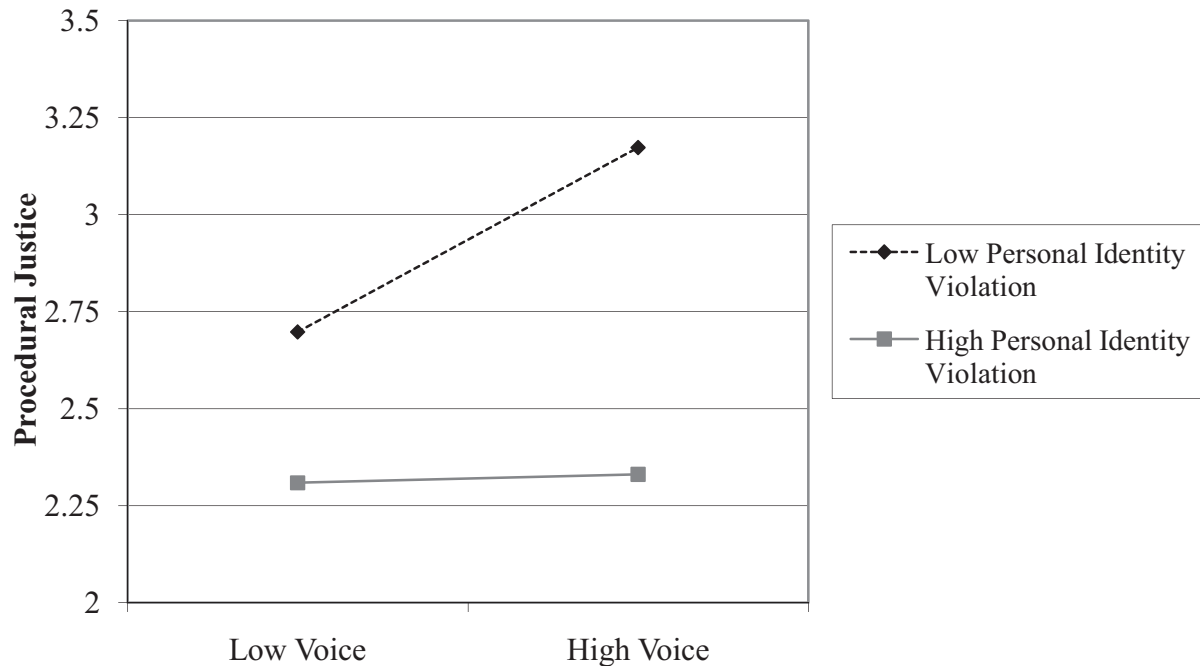


Figure 6. Study 2: Interaction between voice and personal identity violation on procedural justice.

0.52, $p < .05$) than for participants with a high social identity violation ($B = 0.02$, ns) (see Figure 8). Therefore, Hypothesis 2b was supported.

To test Hypotheses 3a–4b, we followed procedures recommended by MacKinnon, Lockwood, Hoffman, West, and Sheets (2002) to test for mediation. According to MacKinnon et al., for mediation to occur, the antecedent variables must predict the mediator (Step 1) and the mediator must predict the outcome variables while controlling for the antecedent variables (Step 2).⁴

Hypotheses 3a and 3b predicted that the interactive effect of voice and personal identity violation on procedural justice perceptions (3a) and distributive justice perceptions (3b) would be mediated by a doubt that opinions were considered. First, the relationship between the independent variable (the interactive effect between voice and personal identity violation) and the mediator (doubt opinions considered) was found to be statistically significant ($\beta = .26$, $p < .05$). Results from a simple slope analysis indicate that for participants with a low personal identity violation (one SD below the mean), voice was more strongly related to doubt opinions considered ($B = -0.61$, $p < .01$) than for participants with a high personal identity violation ($B = -0.09$, ns) (see Figure 9). Second, the relationships between the mediator and the dependent variables were statistically significant while controlling for the independent variables ($\beta = -.51$, $p < .01$, for procedural justice perceptions and $\beta = -.34$, $p < .01$, for distributive justice perceptions). These results provide support for mediation.

To explore whether full or partial mediation occurred, we calculated the direct and indirect effects. The direct effects of the voice and personal identity violation interaction on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.19$, $p > .05$) and distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.03$, $p > .05$) were both nonsignificant. The indirect effects of the voice and personal identity violation inter-

action on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.13$, $p < .05$) and distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.09$, $p < .05$) were both significant. Overall, the results suggest that full mediation occurred for both hypotheses; therefore, Hypotheses 3a and 3b were supported. The results for Hypotheses 3a–4b are provided in Table 5.

Hypotheses 4a and 4b predicted that the interactive effect of voice and social identity violation on procedural justice perceptions (4a) and distributive justice perceptions (4b) would be mediated by a doubt that opinions were considered. First, the relationship between the independent variable (the interactive effect between voice and social identity violation) and the mediator (doubt opinions considered) was found to be statistically significant ($\beta = .41$, $p < .01$). Results from a simple slope analysis indicate that for participants with a low social identity violation (one SD below the mean), voice was more strongly related to doubt opinions considered ($B = -1.61$, $p < .01$) than for participants with a high social identity violation ($B = -0.83$, $p < .01$) (see Figure 10). Second, the relationships between the mediator and the dependent variables were statistically significant while controlling for the independent variables ($\beta = -.47$, $p < .01$, for procedural justice perceptions and $\beta = -.30$, $p < .01$, for distributive justice perceptions). The results provide support for mediation.

To explore whether full or partial mediation occurred, we calculated the direct and indirect effects. The direct effects of the

⁴ In addition to the MacKinnon et al. (2002) procedure for mediation testing, we also used Baron and Kenny's (1986) more conservative approach to test for mediation. The results were essentially identical to those found using the MacKinnon et al. procedure. In addition, results from Sobel tests further confirmed the mediation findings.

Table 4
Study 2: Results of Regression Analysis

Variable	Procedural justice				Distributive justice			
	Step 1		Step 2		Step 1		Step 2	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Hypotheses 1a and 1b								
Voice	.14*	0.05, 0.45	.38**	0.25, 1.13	.07	-0.10, 0.49	.16	-0.23, 1.07
Personal identity violation	-.34**	-0.33, -0.17	-.21*	-0.27, -0.03	-.35**	-0.50, -0.26	-.31**	-0.50, -0.15
Voice \times Personal Identity Violation			-.30*	-0.35, -0.02			-.11	-0.33, 0.15
Total R^2	.13**		.15*		.13**		.13**	
Total ΔR^2			.02*				.00	
Hypotheses 2a and 2b								
Voice	.15**	0.08, 0.47	.44**	0.35, 1.26	.09	-0.07, 0.52	.33*	0.19, 1.55
Social identity violation	-.41**	-0.36, -0.21	-.27**	-0.29, -0.08	-.39**	-0.49, -0.27	-.27**	-0.42, -0.11
Social \times Personal Identity Violation			-.35*	-0.34, -0.04			-.30*	-0.45, -0.01
Total R^2	.19**		.20*		.15**		.17*	
Total ΔR^2			.02*				.02*	

Note. CI = confidence interval.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

voice and social identity violation interaction on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.17, p > .05$) and distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.18, p > .05$) were both nonsignificant. The indirect effects of the voice and social identity violation interaction on procedural justice perceptions ($\beta = -.19, p < .05$) and distributive justice perceptions ($\beta = -.12, p < .05$) were both significant. Overall, the results indicated that full mediation occurred for both hypotheses; therefore, Hypotheses 4a and 4b were supported.⁵

Discussion

The results of Study 2 are consistent with the proposed identity violation effect. Specifically, when an outcome violated one’s personal or social identity, receiving voice generally did not have a significant effect on procedural and distributive justice perceptions. The only nonsignificant interaction was between voice and personal identity violation on distributive justice. As was the case in Study 1, the only nonsignificant interaction involved personal identity violations, suggesting that social identity violations may be a larger concern when in an organizational context. Further, this interactive effect was mediated by the extent to which individuals doubted that opinions were considered by management when making the decision. This mediating effect is consistent with the motivated reasoning hypothesis (Kunda, 1990). In sum, results from Study 2 lend support for an underlying explanation for the identity violation effect.

General Discussion

The purpose of this research was to examine boundary conditions of the fair process effect. Specifically we tested the identity violation effect, the notion that objectively fair procedures have a weaker positive effect on procedural and distributive justice perceptions when an outcome violates one’s identity. Results from two studies provide support for the proposed identity violation effect. Further, the findings from Study 2 lend support for the motivated reasoning hypothesis (Kunda, 1990) as an explanatory mechanism for the effect. Specifi-

cally, when an individual was able to provide voice but the outcome violated his or her identity, that person tended to doubt that opinions had been considered, and subsequently procedural and distributive justice perceptions were less favorable. In sum, the findings from these two studies suggest that fair procedures are not always likely to have their intended positive effect. In addition, we also extend research testing the VPM by directly assessing personal identity violation, examining the role of social identity violation, examining the motivated reasoning hypothesis as an underlying process, and testing the model in an organizational context with personally relevant decisions.

Theoretical Implications

The results of this research have a number of theoretical implications. A primary implication of these findings is that there are boundary conditions on the fair process effect. Given the extensive outcomes associated with fair procedures, it is important to better understand when fair procedures have a positive effect. The results of this research suggest that one caveat to the universality of the fair process effect is how damaging an outcome is to one’s personal and social identity. In general, we found strong support for the interaction between voice and personal and social identity violation on procedural and distributive justice perceptions such that fair procedures had a weak, often nonsignificant, effect on

⁵ A reviewer noted that the results may be due to intense caring as opposed to a personal or social identity violation. To address this possibility, we ran all of the analyses controlling for two-item measures of personal intense caring (“I greatly care about the issue the decision was about” and “I have a strong stance on the issue that the decision was about”; $\alpha = .89$) and social intense caring (“My fellow coworkers greatly care about the issue the decision was about” and “My fellow coworkers have a strong stance on the issue that the decision was about”; $\alpha = .92$). When we controlled for these two measures of intense caring, there were no major changes to the results.

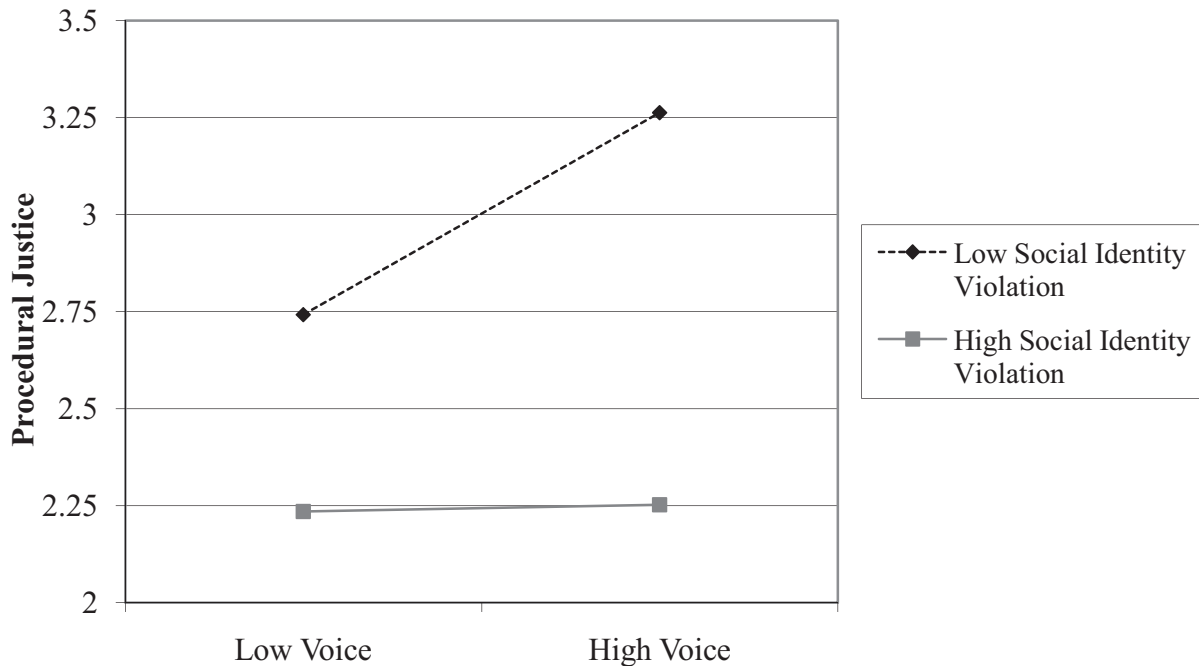


Figure 7. Study 2: Interaction between voice and social identity violation on procedural justice.

procedural and distributive justice perceptions when an outcome was identity violating. The only nonsignificant interactions were with voice and personal identity violation on procedural justice perceptions in Study 1 and distributive justice perceptions in Study 2. Indeed, given that both of these interactions involve personal identity violations, it may be that social identity violations are

more likely to be responsible for the identity violation effect, at least with the types of decisions in organizational contexts examined in this research. It should be noted that although the effect sizes for the interactions were not large, they are consistent with much of the research on interactions in the organizational sciences (Aguinis, Beaty, Boik, & Pierce, 2005).

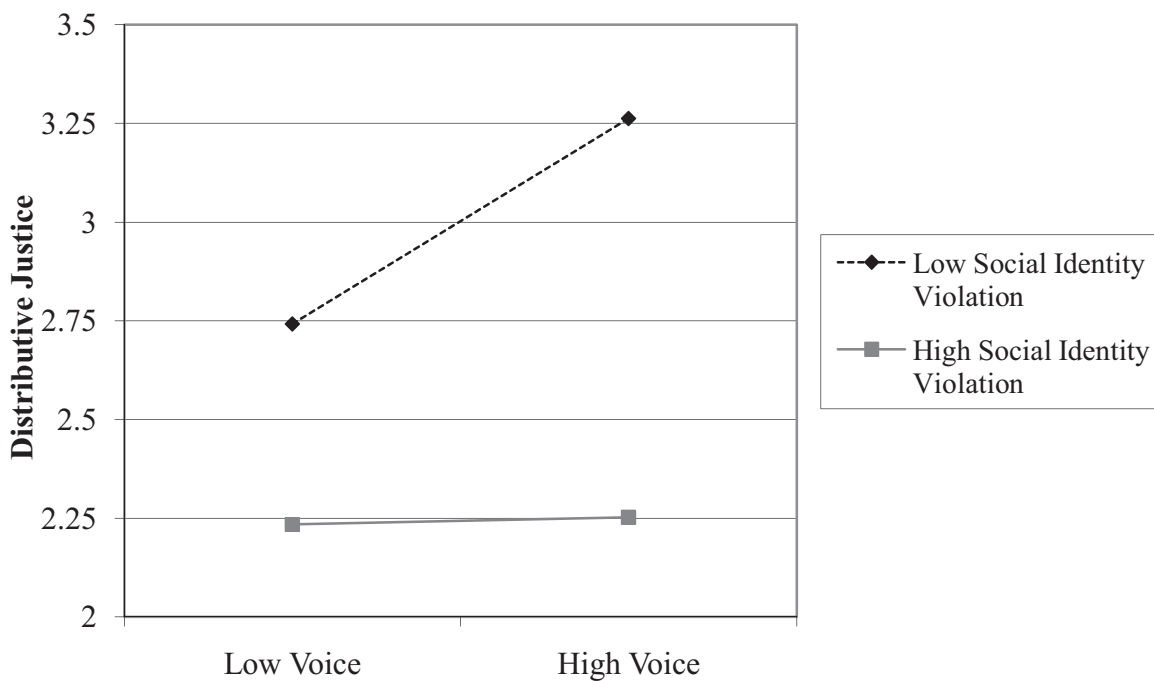


Figure 8. Study 2: Interaction between voice and social identity violation on distributive justice.

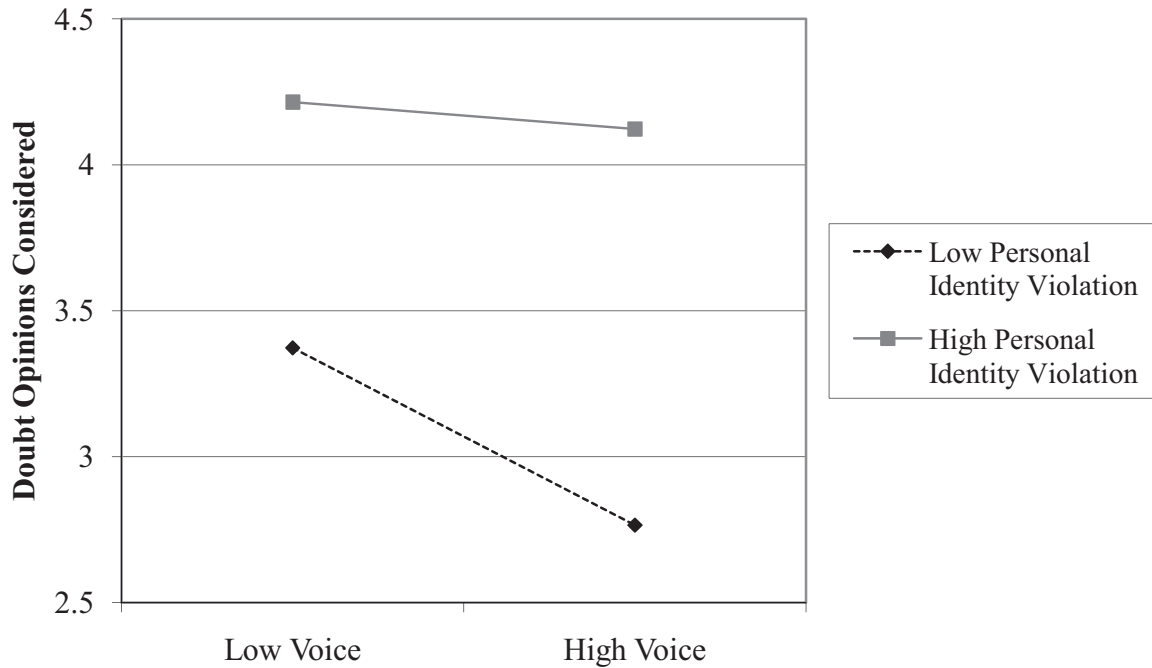


Figure 9. Study 2: Interaction between voice and personal identity violation on doubt opinions considered.

Despite these two nonsignificant interactions, strong support was found for the identity violation effect across the two studies. These findings are in contrast to work by Brockner and colleagues (Brockner, 2002; Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996) on the interaction between procedural justice and outcome favorability, which focuses on how unfavorable outcomes make fair procedures *more* important. The argument made by Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996) is that when an outcome is unfavorable but procedures are fair, “individuals’ needs for self-esteem and self-identity are likely to be fulfilled” (p. 200). The results of the present research suggest that if an outcome violates one’s personal and social identity,

objectively fair procedures are likely not enough to reaffirm one’s sense of self.

In addition to implications for the procedural justice and outcome favorability interaction, this research sought to extend work on the moral mandate effect and the VPM. The VPM posits that individuals strive to uphold their personal identity by “affirming their sense of self by selectively endorsing self-expressive moral positions or stands [moral mandates]” (Skitka, 2002, p. 589). Whereas prior research has not actually assessed personal identity but instead focused on moral mandates, in the present research we directly assessed personal identity violations and found that when

Table 5
Study 2: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis, Test of Mediation

Variable	Step 1 for mediation		Step 2 for mediation			
	Doubt opinions considered		Procedural justice		Distributive justice	
	β	95% CI	β	95% CI	β	95% CI
Hypotheses 3a and 3b						
Voice	-.35**	-1.40, -0.30	.21*	-0.01, 0.78	.06	-0.48, 0.79
Personal identity violation	.34**	0.18, 0.48	-.03	-0.13, 0.09	-.17*	-0.36, -0.01
Voice × Personal Identity Violation	.26*	0.004, 0.41	-.19	-0.26, 0.03	-.03	-0.26, 0.20
Doubt opinions considered			-.51**	-0.47, -0.30	-.34**	-0.51, -0.24
Total R ²	.24*		.35**		.22**	
Hypotheses 4a and 4b						
Voice	-.50**	-1.78, -0.65	.21	-0.04, 0.81	.19	-0.16, 1.19
Social identity violation	.34**	0.18, 0.44	-.11	-0.17, 0.03	-.16*	-0.31, -0.002
Voice × Social Identity Violation	.41**	0.11, 0.47	-.17	-0.23, 0.04	-.18	-0.36, 0.07
Doubt opinions considered			-.47**	-0.44, -0.27	-.30**	-0.47, -0.19
Total R ²	.30**		.36**		.23**	

Note. CI = confidence interval.
* *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01.

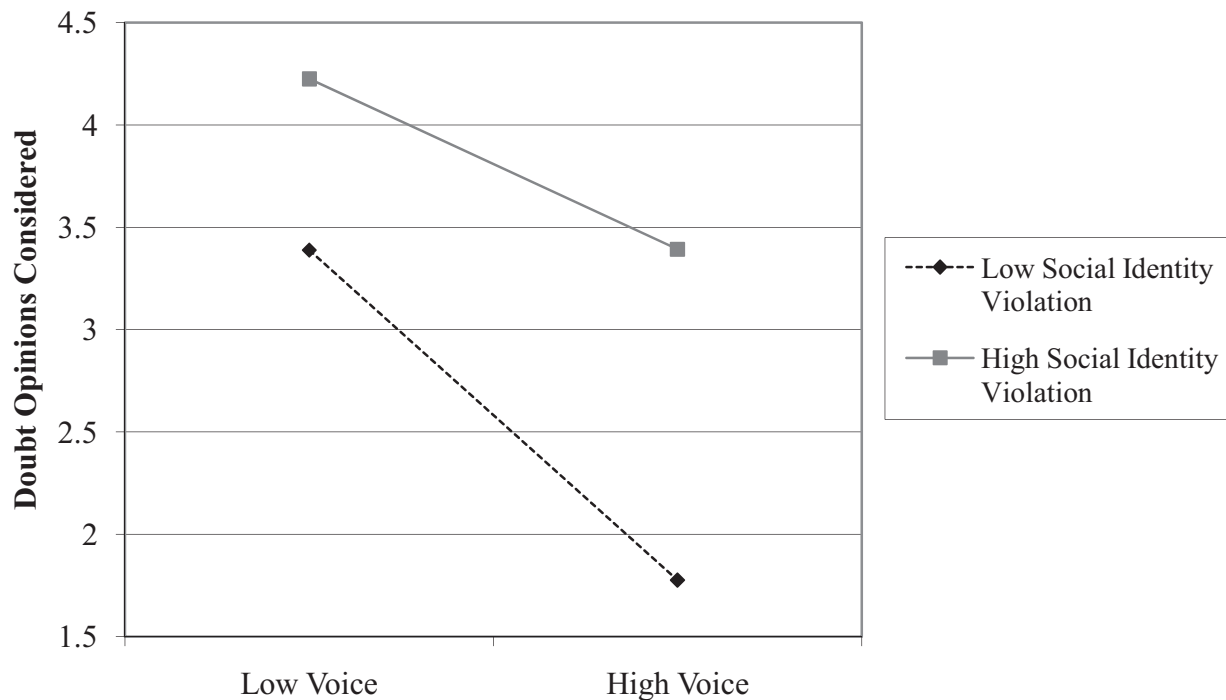


Figure 10. Study 2: Interaction between voice and social identity violation on doubt opinions considered.

an outcome was deemed in violation of one's personal identity, the existence of objectively fair procedures (i.e., voice) had little effect on one's procedural and distributive justice perceptions. Thus, this research extends the VPM to highlight that outcomes need not be deemed morally reprehensible to reduce the influence of fair procedures; rather, when an outcome violates one's personal identity the effects of fair procedures are negligible.

Another important extension of prior work on the VPM is that we examined social identity violations in this research. The majority of organizational justice research that focuses on social identity suggests that fair procedures are important because they help an individual feel like a valued group member (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992). However, justice research has generally failed to examine the effects of perceived injustice of members of a group to which one identifies. This is especially important because of the social context that exists in organizational life. We found robust support for the notion that a social identity violation moderates the relationship between voice and procedural and distributive justice perceptions, such that fair procedures are weakly related to justice perceptions. In fact, whereas two interactions with personal identity violation were not significant, all four interactions with social identity violation were significant. The current study, thus, aligns with Leung et al.'s (2007) findings that group members may care more about collective outcomes than about procedures.

A final implication of this research relates to understanding the underlying mechanism for the identity violation effect. In Study 2 we found support for motivated reasoning, as individuals who received voice and had their identities violated were more likely to doubt that opinions had been considered by management when making the decision, and subsequently, procedural and distributive

justice perceptions were less favorable. These findings are consistent with Brockner and Wiesenfeld's (1996) speculation that "unfavorable outcomes may [sometimes] lead people to scrutinize the procedures that gave rise to those outcomes" (p. 202). While Brockner and Wiesenfeld suggest that such scrutinizing will elevate the importance of fair procedures, the motivated reasoning hypothesis also holds that individuals will be motivated to engage in critical processing to devalue objectively fair procedures if an outcome is identity violating.

Of interest, Mullen and Skitka (2006a) did not find support for the motivated reasoning hypothesis but instead found that emotion, in the form of anger, served as an explanation for why a violation of one's moral mandates caused procedural justice to be degraded. Although our focus is on motivated reasoning in this research, in Study 2 we assessed anger with a single item from the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (Watson & Clark, 1994). Specifically, we asked respondents to report the extent to which they felt "anger" when reflecting on the incident they described previously. In contrast to Mullen and Skitka's findings, the interaction between voice and personal and social identity on justice perceptions was not mediated by anger in Study 2. Thus, unlike Mullen and Skitka, we did not find support for anger as a mediator but did find support for motivated reasoning. However, Mullen and Skitka's operationalization of motivated reasoning consisted of a recall task regarding the number of procedural violations in a hypothetical scenario, the time spent reviewing the specifics of the scenario, and response latencies from a sentence recognition task. It is possible that these assessments of motivated reasoning did not best reflect the process by which individuals seek out procedural flaws when an outcome violates their identity. These processes may be more automatic (Haidt, 2001), suggesting that extensive cognitive

effort is not needed to rationalize why objectively fair procedures were in some way flawed (i.e., opinions were never taken into account by management). Future research should examine whether identifying procedural flaws is an automatic or cognitively taxing process and further explore mechanisms for the identity violation effect.

Practical Implications

In addition to the theoretical implications, there are important practical implications of this research. One practical managerial application of these findings is that although managers can often assuage the negative effects of unfavorable decisions by reinforcing that procedures used to make the decisions were fair, it is important for managers to be aware that if a decision damages a central part of an individual (i.e., one's identity), it is unlikely that providing voice or having consistent procedures can remedy the situation. Managers must be aware that when a decision violates an employee's personal and/or social identity, they must be prepared to deal with the likely reactions. Indeed, although not directly predicted, there was a strong negative relationship between both types of identity violation and the outcomes of interest.

How then can a manager deal with this predicament? According to fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998, 2001), perceptions of injustice occur only after an individual determines that another situation *would* have been better, the present situation *could* have been avoided, and the decision *should* have been different. By employing social accounts or justifications that help demonstrate that the manager had no control over the decision, a manager could potentially help minimize negative reactions. Further, perhaps interpersonal justice—treating employees with dignity and respect—could help during times of identity violation. It is possible that an empathetic, caring manager can prove more useful than providing voice—the justice manipulation in the present research. Indeed, it may be easier for individuals to doubt that opinions were considered than to believe that the empathic concern of a supervisor was disingenuous.

In addition, managers need to be aware of the fact that individuals are influenced not only by decisions that impact them personally but also by decisions that impact groups to which they identify. If an organizational decision is damaging to a member of one's social group, it is likely that many of the people in that group will be disenchanting as well. Thus, managers need to think broadly about how decisions will affect organizational members: Even when a decision is aimed at a specific individual, it may affect others in the work group.

Limitations and Future Directions

Like all research, the present study has some limitations. One potential limitation is that the outcomes in this study were self-report assessments of procedural and distributive justice. However, a strength of this research is that we found similar results using two different measures of procedural and distributive justice, thus making us more confident in our findings. In addition, although our research examined outcomes consistent with prior work on the VPM (Skitka, 2002), and both types of justice perceptions have been meta-analytically linked to important organizational outcomes (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001), it

would be interesting to examine other outcomes in future work. Future research endeavors should expand on the dependent variables examined, particularly getting managerial and objective reports of behavior and performance as well as job attitudes.

A second limitation is that although we examined a new boundary condition for the fair process effect, we explored only one possible moderator—a violation of one's identity. One issue that would be interesting to study in future research relates to when an outcome is deemed so unfavorable that fair procedures cannot assuage negative reactions. In the present research, we drew on the identity literature and found support for the notion that when one's personal or social identity is violated by an outcome, fair procedures yield a minimal effect. Similarly, considerable research on the VPM has found that when one's moral mandates are violated, fair procedures are rendered inconsequential (Mullen & Skitka, 2006a, 2006b; Skitka, 2002; Skitka & Houston, 2001; Skitka & Mullen, 2002). And Brockner and Wiesenfeld (1996) posit that a potential boundary condition of the procedural justice and outcome favorability interaction is the negativity of the outcome. As they stated,

the productivity and morale of employees who survive a layoff would still be expected to plummet if the downsizing organization acted in procedurally fair ways but provided little or no concrete support—for example, severance pay and outplacement services—to the employees who had been laid off. (Brockner & Wiesenfeld, 1996, p. 206)

Thus, it is unclear whether there must be a moral violation (as espoused in the VPM) or an identity violation (as proposed here) or whether an outcome that is highly negative that one cares intensely about is powerful enough to cause fair procedures to have a minimal effect. However, when we did control for intense caring, we still found support for the identity violation effect, suggesting that the effect is more than just caring a lot about a decision (see footnote 5). Future research that examines other forms of severely negative outcomes as boundary conditions of procedural justice effects would be useful.

A third limitation is that a single procedural justice rule was assessed in this research. Although voice is the most common operationalization of procedural justice when it is manipulated, future research should examine similar relationships using alternative indicators of procedural justice, such as Leventhal's rules (Leventhal, 1976; Leventhal et al., 1980). In addition, examining interactional justice, such as treating people with dignity and respect and providing an explanation for the decision, could prove fruitful (Bies & Moag, 1986).

A fourth limitation is that we examined only whether an outcome was identity violating. However, using the same logic for why an outcome might be identity violating, it is likely that there are times when a *procedure* could violate one's identity. For example, according to Leventhal's (1976) justice rules, if a procedure is deemed as something that violates one's identity, the effects of the decision outcome may be less important than the fact that the procedure was identity violating. Indeed, as Skitka (2002) noted, prior work has demonstrated that if an individual has a value for the procedural justice rule of consistency, he or she is less likely to support affirmative action programs with preferential treatment of protected group members (Bobocel, Son Hing, Davey, Stanley, & Zanna, 1998). Future research that examines identity

violations on procedural justice would be an interesting extension of the present research.

Fifth, although the lab provided an excellent venue for manipulating procedural justice and the decision outcome, thus increasing internal validity, and Study 2 allowed us to assess real-world work situations, given that all participants were students some questions about the generalizability of the results may remain. It should be noted, however, that lab research has been shown to generalize to organizational settings (Campbell, 1986; Locke, 1986). In addition, a potential limitation in Study 2 is the use of a critical incident methodology because of the potential of bias in recalling events. However, this method has been used successfully in the justice literature in recent years (Ambrose, Hess, & Ganesan, 2007; Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006; Brockner et al., 2003). Indeed, as Ambrose et al. (2007) stated, “our interest is less in the accuracy of the account than in the respondents’ recollections of the event and their current attitudes” (p. 33). Further, because of the ethical and practical problems of using fair procedures for some employees and not for others, the most appropriate approach to ask people about their actual work experiences (i.e., without treating participants unethically) was the critical incident methodology. It should be noted that using multiple research methodologies, as done in this research, helps compensate for limitations in any particular method (Dipboye, 1990).

Conclusions

The goal of this research was to better understand when fair procedures do not matter. Consistent with the identity violation effect, fair procedures had a negligible effect when the outcome violated one’s personal or social identity. This research demonstrates that a moral violation need not occur, but that a severe violation to something central to an individual—one’s personal and/or social identity—is likely to render the influence of fair procedures inconsequential because individuals will be motivated to doubt whether the procedures were in fact fair. Although procedural justice research has been valuable in that it acknowledges that people care about more than just decision outcomes, if the ends are damaging enough, the means simply may not matter much.

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