Abstract

Background: Research on organizational injustice has mainly focused on the victim’s perspective. This study attempts to contribute to our understanding of third parties’ perspective by empirically testing a model that describes third party reactions to mistreatment of employees. Method: Data were obtained from a sample (N = 334) of Spanish employees from various organizations, nested into 66 work-groups, via a survey regarding their perceptions of organizational mistreatment. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the data. Results: The proposed model had a limited fit to the data and it was re-specified. Organizational mistreatment, employee performance, and employee organizational commitment explained internal attributions blaming the organization. Moreover, coworkers’ organizational identification showed a positive impact on external attributions of responsibility. Lastly, supportive organizational climate and internal attributions accounted for a large percentage of variance in coworkers’ perceptions of organizational unfairness. Conclusions: The final model explains the perceptions of injustice on the basis of internal attributions of responsibility in the face of organizational mistreatment of employees.

Keywords
Organizational justice, organizational mistreatment, third party, causal attributions, organizational identification.