

# Employee Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Supervisor Justice Rule Compliance: A Three-Study Investigation

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Researchers have paid limited attention to what makes organizational authority figures decide to treat their employees either justly or unjustly. Drawing from the actor-focused model of justice, as well as the stereotype content model, we argue that employee conscientiousness and agreeableness can impact the extent to which supervisors adhere to normative rules for distributive, procedural, informational, and interpersonal justice, as a result of supervisors' evaluations of their employees' effort and their liking of the employees. Supervisory compliance with justice rules may, in turn, impact the extent to which employees judge themselves to be treated either justly or unjustly. We tested these possibilities in 3 studies. In Study 1, we utilized a meta-analysis to demonstrate positive relationships between employees' conscientiousness, agreeableness, and their justice perceptions. In Study 2, we conducted 3 experiments to test the causal relationship between employee personality and supervisor intentions to comply with justice rules. In Study 3, we conducted an employee-supervisor dyadic field survey to examine the entire mediation model. Results are discussed in terms of the potential roles that both employees and supervisors may play in shaping employees' justice perceptions.

*Keywords:* actor-focused model of justice, employee personality, employee justice perceptions, stereotype content model, supervisor justice rule compliance

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Concerns about justice have produced an immense and rapidly increasing body of research (Colquitt, 2012; Greenberg, 2006, 2010). Much of this interest has been driven by evidence that justice is related to workplace effectiveness (Colquitt et al., 2013). When employees believe that they have been treated justly, they are likely to respond with better work attitudes and more effective work behaviors (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Rupp, Shao, Jones, & Liao, 2014). These findings have led to research that examines factors that motivate supervisors to act either justly or unjustly (Scott, Colquitt, & Paddock, 2009). How-

ever, these investigations tend to focus on factors about the supervisors, such as their empathy or ego depletion (Johnson, Lanaj, & Barnes, 2014; Patient & Skarlicki, 2010; Whiteside & Barclay, in press). In sharp contrast, justice research has viewed recipients of (in)justice as if they were largely interchangeable, ignoring how a supervisor's experiences and feelings about an employee could be swayed by the employee's attributes, leading him/her to engage in just/unjust treatment toward the employee. If employee attributes such as personality can make supervisors act either fairly or unfairly to the focal employees, then the management practice that

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simply encourages supervisors to be fair to all employees may fail to strike a responsive chord with managers because it misses an important mechanism that influences their justice rule compliance.

Connecting supervisor justice rule compliance to employee personality will not only offer a more complete picture of how employee justice perceptions come to being, but will also identify a more active role that employees may take in managing the justice they receive by shaping their supervisor's cognition and behavior. Investigating how employee personality can influence supervisor justice compliance will also advance the discussion about ways to create a more just workplace. Such an investigation will raise two fundamental questions for practice: Is it fair for a supervisor to treat their employees fairly or unfairly based on their personality, and do employees with certain personality traits deserve to be treated less justly by their supervisors?

To address this missing link in the literature, we combine insights from the stereotype content model (Fiske, Cuddy, & Glick, 2007; Fiske, Cuddy, Glick, & Xu, 2002) with the actor-focused model of justice (Scott et al., 2009) and contend that supervisors' compliance with justice rules is subject to influence by their cognitive evaluations of employees' competence and affective experience of employees' warmth. More importantly, we link supervisors' cognitive and affective reactions to employees' personality, specifically conscientiousness (Barrick, Mount, & Strauss, 1993) and agreeableness (Graziano & Tobin, 2009). Individuals high on conscientiousness are highly motivated, trustworthy, and organized. Thus, they may be judged as competent by their supervisors who may have a rational reason to treat these employees fairly. Highly agreeable individuals are trusting, cooperative, and sympathetic. Thus, these individuals may be judged as warm by their supervisors who may have an affective reason to treat them fairly. In all, we posit that employees higher on these two traits may be more likely to be judged favorably by their supervisors (specifically in terms of effort rating and interpersonal liking), and therefore receive more just treatment from their supervisors which ultimately impacts employee justice perceptions. The proposed theoretical model is presented in Figure 1.

This paper contributes to the literature in three important ways. First, by integrating employee personality, supervisor cognitive and affective evaluations of the employee, supervisor compliance with justice rules, and employee justice perceptions, we simultaneously consider both the actor and the receiver of justice. Doing so answers the call to investigate "the dynamics of the relationship between supervisors and subordinates" (Cornelis, van Hiel, de Cremer, & Mayer, 2013, p. 611) in the justice literature that tends to examine these two parties in isolation from each other. Second, we investigate the theoretical pathways through which employee personality relates to their justice perceptions, thereby addressing the need in personality research to "specify the mechanisms linking particular personality traits or dimensions to criteria" (Raja, Johns, & Ntalianis, 2004, p. 350). This investigation can also open the door for future research on potential boundary conditions of the employee personality-justice perceptions relationship. Third, by demonstrating employees' conscientiousness and agreeableness as distal antecedents to their justice perceptions, our research suggests that employees may play a proactive role in shaping their supervisors' justice treatment. Meanwhile, our research has practical implications for the workplace as it opens up discussions on how organizations can prepare and train supervisors to ensure just treatment of employees with different levels of conscientiousness and agreeableness.

### Actor-Focused Justice and Subordinate Personality

Justice refers to "the application and use of a set of moral principles for guiding the manner in which one behaves toward other people, at least with respect to outcome distributions, decision processes, and interpersonal treatment" (Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2015, p. 4). Justice research has historically focused on the "target" or "receiver" of justice, that is, the person toward whom justice behavior is directed. This perspective treats perceptions of justice as an independent variable (Folger & Skarlicki, 2001), emphasizing how individuals respond when they have experienced various levels of justice (Colquitt & Shaw, 2005). In contrast,

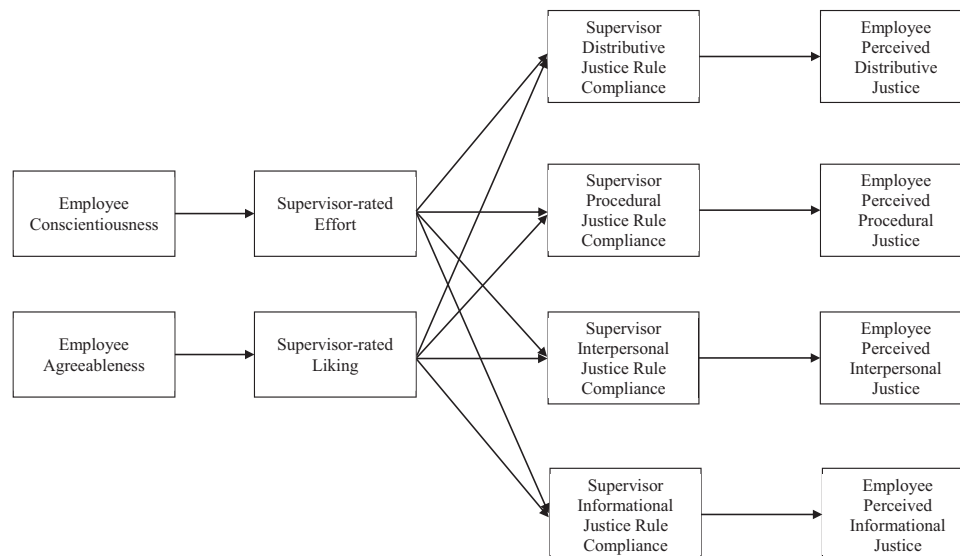


Figure 1. Overall theoretical model.

much less clear is why managers may choose to treat their employees in a just or unjust fashion. Scott and his colleagues (2009) noted the lack of research from “the actor’s perspective” (p. 756), arguing that “without understanding why managers violate justice rules, it is difficult to create interventions that are targeted at increasing managerial justice rule adherence” (p. 757). Scholars have recently begun to respond to this call, with a focus on various attributes of the leader. For example, Patient and Skarlicki (2010) found that empathic supervisors behave more justly than do those lower in empathy, while Brebels, De Cremer, Van Dijke, and Van Hiel (2011) found similar results for leaders with a strong moral identity. While much has been learned from these studies, this stream of research tends to emphasize the decision-making authority (e.g., managers) and de-emphasize attributes of subordinates. Emerging research (e.g., Korsgaard, Roberson, & Rymph, 1998; Scott, Colquitt, & Zapata-Phelan, 2007) has suggested that certain subordinate attributes may elicit more or less justice from those in authority.

### An Actor-Focused Model of Justice

Organizations and cultures possess normative guideposts known as justice rules (Cropanzano, Fortin, & Kirk, 2015), which serve as evaluative criteria that allow individuals to determine whether they have been treated with fairness. Generally speaking, justice rules can be organized into four dimensions (Rupp, Shapiro, Folger, Skarlicki, & Shao, 2017). Distributive justice refers to the level of fairness with respect to the outcome one receives. Three primary distributive justice rules have been identified in the literature, namely equity (employees receive the outcomes consistent with their contributions), equality (everyone receives the same outcome irrespective of their actual contribution), and need (the allocation of outcomes based on each person’s specific needs). Procedural justice refers to the fairness of the decision process, including specific rules such as consistency (reduce the level of variability with which procedures have been applied), bias-suppression (reduce the influence of the decision-maker’s personal interest), and accuracy (the use of correct and all available information for decision-making). Interpersonal justice refers to the extent to which an employee is treated with politeness, sensitivity, and dignity (Bies, 2001, 2015). Finally, informational justice refers to the extent to which interpersonal communication is characterized by candidness, thoroughness, and timeliness (Greenberg, 1993). A supervisor behaves more justly when adhering to these four sets of rules and less justly when violating them (Colquitt & Rodell, 2015).

Scott et al. (2009) suggested that supervisors comply with or violate justice rules based upon two families of motives: “cold” cognition and “hot” affect. Cognitively, the extent to which managers comply with or violate justice rules depends on the cost-benefit analyses of their actions. In other words, managers sometimes make a rational assessment as to whether justice is a wise organizational practice. Affectively, Scott and colleagues (2009, p. 761) argued that managers “adhere to justice rules towards subordinates who triggered positive affect but violate justice rules towards subordinate who triggered negative affect.” Given that supervisors have “cold” and “hot” motives for treating people justly, subordinates who elicit these motives are more likely to be treated justly than those who do not. However, it remains unclear

which individual differences are most likely to (a) give a supervisor a strong cost/benefit reason and (b) improve a supervisor’s workplace affect. To answer this question, we propose that supervisors are more likely to abide by justice rules for cognitive reasons when subordinates are higher in conscientiousness and for affective reasons when subordinates are higher in agreeableness.

### Conscientiousness and Agreeableness

According to the stereotype content model, judgments of other people tend to be dominated by two broad dimensions—competence and warmth (Fiske et al., 2002, 2007). Competence is viewed as an agentic dimension, reflecting the ability to achieve and to respond effectively to challenges. People who are high in competence are viewed as capable of achieving desirable outcomes (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glick, 2008). Warmth is viewed as a communal dimension, reflecting the desire to connect to and cooperate with others (Cuddy et al., 2008). People who are high in warmth are judged to have good intentions in interpersonal contexts. Cuddy, Glick, and Beninger (2011) maintained that these two dimensions—competence and warmth—are relevant to social judgments that are made in work organizations. People are evaluated more favorably if they are higher on competence and warmth. By extension, we maintain that employees who are higher on these two dimensions are also more likely to be treated justly, as they will provide rational reasons for justice (competence) and generate positive supervisor affect (warmth).

### Conscientiousness and Cognition

Conscientiousness is a Big Five personality trait (Digman, 1990) that reflects dependability, achievement striving, and self-discipline (Barrick, Stewart, & Piotrowski, 2002; Hough, Oswald, & Ock, 2015). Conscientiousness is closely tied to the assessment of individuals’ competence (McCrae & Costa, 2010), especially in the work context. As a dispositional factor that drives individuals to get ahead (Judge, Piccolo, & Kosalka, 2009), conscientiousness is positively related to job performance (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick et al., 1993; Hurtz & Donovan, 2000; Salgado, 1997; Witt, Burke, Barrick, & Mount, 2002) and negatively related to disruptive behaviors such as counterproductive work behavior (Henle & Gross, 2013; Hogan, 2007; Salgado, 2002). Meta-analytic evidence suggests that employees higher in conscientiousness exhibit greater work motivation than do those who are lower in conscientiousness (Johnson, 2003; Judge & Ilies, 2002; Judge, Klinger, Simon, & Yang, 2008). Given these findings, it is likely that employees higher in conscientiousness will receive higher effort ratings from their supervisor.

*Hypothesis 1:* Employee conscientiousness is positively related to their effort level as rated by the supervisor.

A high effort rating, which denotes supervisors’ recognition of the physical and cognitive exertion put forth by an employee in his or her attempt to complete work requirements, is beneficial to supervisors and others. Other things being equal, work organizations are likely to be more effective when their employees exert higher levels of effort. Based on the actor-focused model (Scott et al., 2009), a cost/benefit assessment would suggest that it is ratio-

nal for managers to treat conscientious employees as justly as possible. This suggests that:

*Hypothesis 2:* Employee effort as rated by the supervisor is positively related to the supervisor's adherence to distributive (2a), procedural (2b), interpersonal (2c), and informational justice (2d) rules.

Notice that Hypotheses 1–2 qualify the usual causal order between motivation and justice. It is common to argue that employees respond to just treatment by reciprocating with more effort (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003). However, we argue that, based on the actor-focused model of justice, supervisors are more likely to adhere closely to justice rules when interacting with employees higher in conscientiousness due to the effort level evinced by these employees.

*Hypothesis 3:* The relationships between employee conscientiousness and supervisor adherence to distributive (3a), procedural (3b), interpersonal (3c), and informational justice (3d) rules are mediated by employee effort level rated by the supervisor.

### Agreeableness and Affect

Agreeableness, another Big Five personality trait (Digman, 1990), indicates a concern with social harmony and communion with other people (Barrick et al., 2002; CostA&McCrae, 1992; Hogan, 2007; Hough et al., 2015), and therefore acts as a good indicator of warmth (cf., Cuddy et al., 2008, 2011). Consistent with the stereotype content model (Fiske et al., 2002, 2007), people high in agreeableness are described by others as warm, trusting, cooperative, and kind (Graziano, 1994). Those who are low in agreeableness are viewed as antagonistic and bellicose (Graziano & Eisenberg, 1997; Henle & Gross, 2013). Agreeable people experience less conflict, are more helpful, and are less prejudiced (Graziano & Tobin, 2009). Most relevant here, agreeable people typically enjoy more amicable interpersonal relationships (White, Hendrick, & Hendrick, 2004). Given these findings, we pose the following prediction.

*Hypothesis 4:* Employee agreeableness is positively related to interpersonal liking as rated by the supervisor.

Research has documented the tendency for agreeable people to be cooperative rather than antagonistic, friendly rather than hostile, and altruistic rather than egocentric (Costa & McCrae, 1992; Johnson, 2003). It is not surprising to discover that these attributes promote high-quality relationships (Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Ilies, 2009). However, these qualities gain additional theoretical importance when one recalls the actor-focused model. In particular, this framework posits that whether supervisors adhere to or violate justice rules depends partially on the positive affect that they experience (Scott et al., 2009). For this reason, liking, which involves positive feelings toward another person, may motivate more justice rule compliance by the supervisor.

*Hypothesis 5:* Interpersonal liking as rated by the supervisor is positively related to the supervisor's adherence to distributive (5a), procedural (5b), interpersonal (5c), and informational justice (5d) rules.

Individuals are more likely to be influenced by those whom they like (Cialdini, 1993) and often give them higher performance ratings (Lefkowitz, 2000). Because individuals higher in agreeableness are more likely to be viewed as cooperative, altruistic, and sympathetic (McCrae & Costa, 2010), they are more likely to be well liked by others. Empirical evidence is supportive of this argument showing that agreeableness is a cause of likability (Wortman & Wood, 2011). Taken together, we propose that employees higher in agreeableness are more likely to be well liked by their supervisor. Because of the good feelings that accompany liking, these supervisors will show an increased propensity to adhere to justice rules.

*Hypothesis 6:* The relationships between employee agreeableness and supervisor adherence to distributive (6a), procedural (6b), interpersonal (6c), and informational justice (6d) rules are mediated by interpersonal liking rated by the supervisor.

Thus far we have proposed that employee conscientiousness and agreeableness boost supervisor effort rating and liking which in turn should increase supervisory compliance with justice rules. As Figure 1 illustrates, rule adherence should be positively related to subordinate perceived justice. This is a central assumption in justice research, though it has rarely been tested explicitly. Supervisors' compliance with or violation of justice rules is a theoretically obvious but understudied antecedent of employee justice judgments. Focusing on interpersonal and informational justice, Zapata, Olsen, and Martins (2013) found that supervisor-rated justice rule compliance was positively related to employee justice perceptions. Consistent with this central assumption, we argue that supervisor justice rule compliance should affect the extent to which their employees believe that they have been treated justly on the corresponding dimensions.

*Hypothesis 7:* Supervisor's adherence to distributive (7a), procedural (7b), interpersonal (7c), and informational justice (7d) rules is positively related to employee perceptions of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice.

Hypotheses 1–3 and 7 imply that the relationship between employee conscientiousness and their justice perceptions should be mediated through a two-step process. Employees higher in conscientiousness are likely to receive high effort ratings from their supervisors who in turn will meet the justice rules to a greater extent. When supervisors adhere to justice rules, higher levels of justice perceived by their employees will ensue.

*Hypothesis 8:* Employee conscientiousness will be positively related to their perceived distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice, and these effects will be consecutively mediated by employee effort rated by the supervisor and supervisor adherence to distributive (8a), procedural (8b), interpersonal (8c), and informational justice (8d) rules.

Similarly, Hypotheses 4–6 and 7 imply that employees higher in agreeableness will be well-liked by their supervisors. These good feelings will push the managers to demonstrate high levels of justice rule compliance which will in turn increase these employees' justice perceptions.

*Hypothesis 9:* Employee agreeableness will be positively related to their perceived distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice, and these effects will be consecutively mediated by interpersonal liking rated by the supervisor and supervisor adherence to distributive (9a), procedural (9b), interpersonal (9c), and informational justice (9d) rules.

## Research Overview

We tested our hypotheses in three steps. First, we conducted a meta-analysis (Study 1) of the relationship between employee conscientiousness and agreeableness and their justice perceptions. We then used three experiments (Study 2) to establish the causal relationship between employee personality and supervisor intentions to comply with justice rules. Finally, we used a field study (Study 3) to test the entire mediation model.<sup>1</sup>

### Study 1: Meta-Analysis of Employee Personality and Their Justice Perceptions

As an initial step in our research, we sought to determine the relationships between the two employee personality variables (conscientiousness and agreeableness) and employees' justice perceptions in the extant literature. Meta-analysis is an especially useful tool for quantitatively summarizing available research evidence and, as such, it also provides directions for future theoretical investigations (Schmidt & Hunter, 2015).

## Method

**Literature search.** We used a number of approaches to identify studies to be included in this meta-analysis. First, we used the PsycINFO database to search for empirical studies that were published between 1975 and 2013. Following Colquitt et al. (2001), we also chose 1975 as the starting date, because this was when Thibaut and Walker (1975) first introduced the construct of procedural justice. We then searched for studies that included any of the variants of the terms "conscientiousness," "agreeableness," or "personality" in combination with the terms "justice" or "fair." Second, we used the search terms: "justice" or "fair" to search the official conference programs of both the Academy of Management Annual meeting and the Society for Industrial/Organizational Psychology Annual conference from 2008 to 2013. We e-mailed the authors of these conference papers to request full papers. Third, we also manually reviewed every article published between 1991 and 2013 in several journals that regularly publish justice-related studies. These included *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, *Human Relations*, *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, *Social Justice Research*, and *Journal of Business and Psychology*.

**Inclusion criteria.** We examined the Abstract, the Method, and the Results sections of each study to determine whether the study should be included in the subsequent analyses. We established several inclusion criteria. First, we included studies with a direct measure of employee justice perceptions and conscientiousness/agreeableness. Thus, we excluded studies that experimentally

manipulated justice as opposed to directly measuring them. The most commonly used justice measure in the primary studies was the justice measure developed by Colquitt (2001). Other studies have used the measure by Moorman and colleagues (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Moorman, 1991). To maintain the distinctiveness of the four justice dimensions, we decided not to include justice measures that tapped on more than one justice dimensions. Second, we excluded studies that were not empirical in nature (such as review articles and case analyses). Third, because of our interest in how supervisor adherence to justice rules may be associated with employee justice perceptions, we decided to exclude studies that did not specifically reference justice rules in the justice measures. Fourth, when the same dataset appeared to have been used in multiple published studies, we decided to use the one study that included most of the variables of interest to our analysis. After eliminating those studies that did not meet these criteria, we retained a total of 40 studies that included 131 correlations used in our meta-analysis.

**Coding procedures.** The third author of the paper coded all the studies included in this meta-analysis for the following elements: sample size, reliability coefficients, and effect size (see Appendix A). To cross check coding accuracy, the fourth author independently coded 12 of the articles. The interrater agreement rate was 97.5%. Differences were resolved through discussion.

**Statistical procedures.** We followed the three-step procedure recommended by Schmidt and Hunter (2015) and performed a random-effect meta-analysis. First, we computed mean observed correlations and standard deviations based on the sample-weighted correlation reported in each study. In a number of studies where the correlations between multiple facets of one justice type and personality were reported, we computed composite correlations (Schmidt & Hunter, 2015). Second, we computed true score correlations and standard errors after correcting for unreliability of both justice and personality. Most of the studies included in our meta-analysis reported reliability coefficients of the justice and personality measures. When the reliability coefficient was not provided in a given study, we imputed the sample-weighted reliability coefficient for the same variable from all other studies in our database and used this estimate as a substitute in our analyses. Third, we generated 95% confidence intervals for the sample-weighted correlations and 80% credibility intervals for the true score correlations. A hypothesized relationship is likely under the influence of moderator(s) when its credibility interval is wide or includes zero. We also reported the percentage of variability of the correlations accounted for by all study artifacts.

## Results and Discussion

Table 1 includes the number of independent samples ( $k$ ), the total number of participants ( $N$ ), the sample-weighted mean observed correlation ( $\bar{r}$ ), the standard deviation of the mean observed correlation ( $SD \bar{r}$ ), the true score correlation ( $\rho$ ), the standard

<sup>1</sup> To avoid unnecessary repetition, we omit possessive nouns in variable names whenever there is no ambiguity. Specifically, we use (a) *conscientiousness* and *agreeableness* to refer to employees' conscientiousness and agreeableness; (b) *perceived effort* and *liking* to refer to supervisors' perceptions of focal employees' effort and their interpersonal liking of focal employees; and (c) *justice perceptions* to refer to employees' justice perceptions.

Table 1  
*Meta-Analytic Results From Study 1*

Justice perception	Trait	<i>k</i>	<i>N</i>	$\bar{r}$	$SD\bar{r}$	$\rho$	$SD_{\rho}$	95% $CI_L$	95% $CI_U$	80% $CV_L$	80% $CV_U$	Var %
Distributive justice	Conscientiousness	24	8313	.16	.11	.19	.13	.05	.26	.02	.36	20
	Agreeableness	16	5606	.16	.08	.19	.10	.05	.26	.07	.32	32
Procedural justice	Conscientiousness	31	9412	.14	.12	.17	.13	.03	.25	.01	.34	23
	Agreeableness	22	6859	.17	.10	.21	.12	.06	.28	.05	.37	25
Interpersonal justice	Conscientiousness	16	5710	.13	.14	.16	.16	.03	.24	-.04	.35	14
	Agreeableness	10	3530	.14	.07	.17	.06	.04	.24	.09	.25	53
Informational justice	Conscientiousness	7	2479	.17	.09	.20	.09	.07	.27	.09	.32	32
	Agreeableness	5	1942	.11	.05	.14	.00	.01	.21	.14	.14	100

*Note.* *k* = number of independent samples; *N* = total sample size;  $\bar{r}$  = sample-size-weighted mean observed correlation;  $SD\bar{r}$  standard deviation of the mean observed correlation;  $\rho$  = mean true score correlation;  $SD_{\rho}$  = standard deviation of the true score correlation; 95%  $CI_L$  and 95%  $CI_U$  = lower and upper bounds of the 95% confidence interval for mean observed correlation; 80%  $CV_L$  and 80%  $CV_U$  = lower and upper bounds of the credibility interval for mean true score correlation; Var % = percentage of variance accounted for by statistical artifacts, fixed to 100% when exceeding 100% (see Hunter & Schmidt, 2004, p. 399).

deviation of the true score correlation ( $SD_{\rho}$ ), the confidence interval for the mean observed correlation (CI), the credibility interval for the true score correlation (CV), and the percentage of variance accounted for by all the statistical artifacts.

**Distributive justice.** The true score correlation between distributive justice perceptions and conscientiousness was .19. The true score correlation between distributive justice and agreeableness was .19. For both personality traits, neither the confidence interval nor the credibility interval included zero.

**Procedural justice.** The true score correlation between procedural justice perceptions and conscientiousness was .17. The true score correlation between procedural justice and agreeableness was .21. For both personality traits, neither the confidence interval nor the credibility interval included zero.

**Interpersonal justice.** For conscientiousness, the true score correlation with interpersonal justice perceptions was .16. Although the confidence interval did not include zero, the credibility interval did. For agreeableness, the true score correlation with interpersonal justice was .17 and neither the confidence interval nor the credibility interval included zero.

**Informational justice.** For conscientiousness, the true score correlation with informational justice perceptions was .20. For agreeableness, the true score correlation with informational justice was .14. For both personality traits, neither the confidence interval nor the credibility interval included zero.<sup>2</sup>

**Summary of Study 1.** In all, we found that employees' conscientiousness and agreeableness were significantly related to their justice perceptions. One notable exception was found for interpersonal justice. Although the relationship between interpersonal justice and conscientiousness was significant based on the 95% CI, the 80% CV included zero, suggesting the presence of potential moderator(s).

Three limitations of Study 1 should be noted. First, this meta-analysis included studies that used justice measures referencing the supervisor, the organization, or neither. Rupp and colleagues (2014, p. 162) noted in their review that, of all the justice measures, "less than 4% have been explicitly multifoci in their perspective. Further, studies that have incorporated measures of DJ, PJ, and/or IJ have made no reference to source, or made reference to multiple sources in the same measure, nearly 35% of the time." This is an important limitation because our conceptual model focuses on how employees perceive being justly treated by their supervisors. Past research has suggested

that justice rule adherence or violation can come from different sources (organization, supervisor, customer, or coworkers; Lavelle, Rupp, Manegold, & Thornton, 2015). Employees at the receiving end of these treatments are able to recognize these different sources and respond accordingly. Therefore, an argument can be made that the relationship between employee personality and their supervisor-referenced justice perceptions is theoretically different from the relationship between employee personality and their organization-referenced justice perceptions, as they may be transmitted through different mechanisms. Second, the primary studies included in the meta-analysis used a cross-sectional design thus causality cannot be inferred. Third, we were not able to test the mediators with our meta-analysis because the mediators proposed in our model are largely absent in empirical research. To address these limitations, we conducted an experimental study that focused on the supervisor as the actor. This design allowed us to establish the causal linkage between employee personality and supervisor justice rule adherence. We also included measures of supervisor perceived employee effort and liking of the employee in the study to test for mediation.

## Study 2: Three Experimental Examinations

Given the "universal" use of competence and warmth in interpersonal judgments (Fiske et al., 2007, p. 77), the hypothesized conscientiousness-effort and agreeableness-liking associations can surface even when individuals are judging relatively unknown others. Thus, we expect that individuals who are placed in fictitious supervisory positions may decide to more (vs. less) strictly adhere to justice rules in response to employee trait descriptions consistent with higher (vs. lower) conscientiousness and agreeableness. To increase the generalizability of our findings, we utilized both between-subjects and within-subjects designs.

We used a 2 (high/low conscientiousness)  $\times$  2 (high/low agreeableness) between-subjects design in *Experiments A* and *B*. *Experiment A*, based on a scenario on allocating employee bonus, assessed participants' intentions to comply with procedural and

<sup>2</sup> We also meta-analyzed the relationship between employee justice perceptions and the other three Big Five factors (emotional stability, openness to experience, and extraversion). Results are available as an online supplement.

distributive rules. *Experiment B* involved a scenario delivering negative news to evaluate intentions to adhere to interpersonal and informational rules. The between-subjects design also allowed us to study perceived effort and liking as mediating mechanisms without risking revelation of the purpose of the study. In *Experiment C*, we used a within-subjects design to examine whether the same participants may indicate different levels of intentions to comply with justice rules when dealing with two subordinates with high versus low levels of conscientiousness (or agreeableness).

## Method

**Participants and procedures.** This study was approved by the IRB at Michigan State University (IRB#: ×17-215e; Study title: Supervisor justice decision-making study). Participants were recruited from Mechanical Turk (MTurk), a crowdsourcing platform that allows researchers to reach out to a vast pool of potential respondents online. Recent research has shown that MTurk can yield data with quality comparable to traditional forms of participant recruitment (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011; Goodman, Cryder, & Cheema, 2013). We posted the survey task on MTurk and made it viewable to all adult participants residing in the United States. Participants read one of three scenarios (see below;  $N_s = 305, 304,$  and  $305$  for Experiments A, B, and C, respectively) and made justice-related decisions. Participants for Experiments A and C received \$1.00 each, whereas participants for the longer Experiment B received \$1.25. Across all respondents, the average hourly pay rate was \$11.04.

We took proactive approaches to guard against insufficient effort responding (IER; Huang, Curran, Keeney, Poposki, & DeShon, 2012) and to ensure data quality. First, following Huang, Bowling, Liu, and Li (2015), we asked participants to pay close attention to the survey material and informed them that their responses would be screened for inattentiveness. Second, after the main scenarios, we presented 25 filler items that contained five IER items (e.g., “I have never used a computer”) from Huang et al. (2015). Consistent with recent guidelines to screen for insufficient effort before hypotheses testing (DeSimone, Harms, & DeSimone, 2015; Huang et al., 2012; Meade & Craig, 2012), we adopted a conservative a priori cutoff and excluded respondents who answered incorrectly to three or more of the five IER items. After this screening, we retained 288, 286, and 290 respondents for Experiments A, B, and C, respectively, which represented 95% of overall completed responses. This final sample was on average 36 years old ( $SD = 11$ ), with 56% males. The majority (86%) of respondents reported being currently employed, working on average for 39 hours per week ( $SD = 9$ ).

### Materials.

**Scenario for Experiment A.** Participants were asked to imagine themselves being a grocery store manager who needed to allocate performance-based bonuses to each store employee (see Appendix B for the scenario). They were told that the same bonus allocation scheme had been used in the past few years, but a recent 10% budget cut strained their ability to follow the same scheme. They were then asked to decide the amount of bonus for an employee named Tracy. After reading a randomly assigned personality description about Tracy (see *Manipulations* below), participants reviewed a datasheet containing Tracy’s past performance evaluations and bonuses. From years 2014 through 2015, Tracy received 12 performance evaluation

points in each year, and earned, in accordance with the previous scheme, \$1,200 in bonus. Participants were then asked to respond to three questions that assessed their intended procedural justice behaviors, before indicating the amount of bonus they would allocate to Tracy in 2016, when she received 12 performance evaluation points again.

**Scenario for Experiment B.** In a scenario adapted from Patient and Skarlicki (2010), participants were asked to imagine themselves being a manager who needed to inform an employee Jim of his upcoming layoff (see Appendix C for the scenario). The scenario presented organizational factors behind the decision to lay off employees (i.e., loss of large accounts, declining revenues) as well as criteria for identifying employees to be laid off (i.e., financial performance of the current division, individual performance, and seniority). According to Patient and Skarlicki (2010), the scenario was designed to share the blame on both the organization and the employee, thus making it possible for the respondent to adopt different strategies that vary on interpersonal and informational justice when delivering the news to the employee. Participants were randomly assigned to read a personality description about Jim (see *Manipulations* below) before choosing the language they would use to deliver the layoff news (see *Measures* below).

**Scenario for Experiment C.** Participants were instructed to imagine themselves being a director for fashion design, whose team would add two designers through a recent acquisition (see Appendix D for the scenario). The director heard about the two incoming designers from their former boss, who happened to be a friend. Although the two designers “perform their jobs quite well and receive identical performance evaluations,” they have “distinctive interpersonal styles.” Participants were randomly assigned to either the conscientiousness or the agreeableness condition, where they read contrasting personality statements about the two employees (see *Manipulations* below). After that, they rated their intentions to comply with distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice rules for both employees.

**Manipulations.** For the between-subjects experiments (A and B), participants were randomly assigned into one of four conditions (high/low conscientiousness × high/low agreeableness). For the within-subjects Experiment C, participants were randomly assigned to one of two conditions: (a) conscientiousness or (b) agreeableness. The goal of using the two conditions was not to compare them—such a comparison held no substantive interest—but rather to create two subsamples for testing the effects of conscientiousness and agreeableness separately. Within each condition, one employee was described as having a high level of the assigned trait, while the other employee was described as having a low level of the same trait.

We adapted the trait descriptions from Goldberg’s (1992) personality markers and the International Personality Item Pool (IPIP; Goldberg et al., 2006), and employed the act frequency approach (Buss & Craik, 1983; Huang, Ford, & Ryan, 2016) to create the high versus low trait contrasts. Specifically, a high trait manipulation presented behavioral tendencies very much consistent with the high trait level (e.g., for high agreeableness, “Tracy is remarkably warm and cooperative”), whereas a low trait manipulation included mixed behavioral tendencies (e.g., for low agreeableness, “Tracy is often warm and cooperative, but she can be selfish at

Table 2  
*Trait Descriptions to Manipulate Employee Conscientiousness and Agreeableness in Study 2*

Condition	Trait description
High conscientiousness	[Employee name] is exceptionally responsible, systematic and thorough. [Employee pronoun] loves to do things according to a plan and always follows them through.
Low conscientiousness	[Employee name] is generally responsible and systematic, although [Employee pronoun] can be negligent and careless on occasion. While [Employee name] is capable of doing things according to a plan, [Employee pronoun] tends to do them haphazardly and sometimes fails to follow things through.
High agreeableness	[Employee name] is remarkably warm and cooperative. [Employee pronoun] has a good word for everyone, always loves to help others, and sympathizes with others' feelings
Low agreeableness	[Employee name] is often warm and cooperative, but [Employee pronoun] can be selfish at times. Every now and then, [Employee name] may offer to help others, but [Employee pronoun] typically shows no interest in other people's problems, and even occasionally holds a grudge.

times.”)<sup>3</sup> The same descriptions (see Table 2) were embedded into each scenario.

### Measures.

**Experiment A measures.** We assessed supervisor perceived employee effort and liking as well as intentions to adhere to procedural and distributive justice rules in Experiment A. We adapted a five-item scale ( $\alpha = .96$ ) from Flynn and Schaumberg (2012) to measure *perceived effort* and a four-item scale ( $\alpha = .92$ ) based on Wayne and Ferris (1990) to measure *liking* of the focal employee. Sample items were “When there is a job to be done, Tracy would devote her energy to get it done” (perceived effort) and “Supervising Tracy would be a pleasure” (liking).

*Intentions to adhere to procedural justice rules* were measured with three items ( $\alpha = .82$ ) adapted from Colquitt (2001) that were applicable to this bonus allocation scenario: “If possible, I would allow Tracy to . . . (a) express her views and feelings about the bonus assignment decision; (b) have influence over the bonus assignment decision; and (c) object to the bonus assignment decision I made.” These items were rated on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). We assessed *intentions to adhere to distributive justice rules* with the amount of bonus allocated to Tracy. Consistent with distributive justice research, this operationalization followed the equity rule (Colquitt, 2001), which “dictates that rewards and resources be distributed in accordance with recipients' contributions” (p. 94, Leventhal, 1976). Respondents were asked to indicate any dollar amount from \$0 to \$1,500 as the bonus they would assign to Tracy, and higher amounts of bonus would reflect greater distributive justice rule adherence intentions.

**Experiment B measures.** We measured supervisor *perceived employee effort* ( $\alpha = .94$ ) and *liking* ( $\alpha = .91$ ) with the same scales as in Experiment A. To operationalize *intentions to adhere to interpersonal and informational justice rules*, we followed the justice principles summarized by Colquitt (2001) to write eight pairs of statements (four pairs per dimension; see Appendix C) that varied on either interpersonal or informational justice rule adherence and presented them as bipolar items on a scale ranging from 1 to 9. To ensure these statements indeed differ on the intended interpersonal/informational justice dimensions, we obtained sorting data from 11 doctoral students in organizational psychology or human resources who had prior exposure to the organizational justice literature. These subject matter experts independently sorted each item into either the interpersonal or the informational dimension (98% agreement) and indicated which bipolar end represented higher justice rule adherence

(99% agreement). Based on the high agreement rates, these items allowed us to assess respondents' intentions to adhere to interpersonal and informational justice rules.

**Experiment C measures.** We adapted the 20-item organizational justice measure from Colquitt (2001) to assess respondents' intentions to adhere to justice rules *for each employee* on the following four dimensions: distributive (4 items,  $\alpha = .93$ ), procedural (7 items,  $\alpha = .87$ ), interpersonal (4 items,  $\alpha = .93$ ), and informational (5 items,  $\alpha = .83$ ). Responses were made on a five-point scale, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

## Results

For the between-subjects Experiments A and B, we first conducted MANOVA to examine whether perceived effort, liking, and intentions to adhere to justice rules differed as a result of conscientiousness, agreeableness, and their interaction, and followed up significant results with ANOVAs. Further, we utilized bootstrapping to estimate the mediating roles of perceived effort and liking, creating 10,000 bootstrapped samples to obtain 95% confidence intervals (CI) for indirect effects (see MacKinnon, Lockwood, & Williams, 2004). For completeness of results, we also presented the first and final regression models per Baron and Kenny (1986).

For the within-subjects Experiment C, we first conducted repeated measures MANOVA to evaluate whether, within the same participant, supervisor justice rule compliance intentions differed across two levels of conscientiousness or agreeableness. We then conducted follow-up tests to discern significant multivariate effects.

**Findings for Experiment A.** A Conscientiousness  $\times$  Agreeableness factorial MANOVA on perceived effort, liking, procedural and distributive justice rule compliance intentions revealed significant multivariate main effects for conscientiousness and agreeableness,

<sup>3</sup> It is worth noting that the current description for low conscientiousness portrayed a level of conscientiousness considerably *higher* than this trait's conceptual low end. The same was true for the current description for low agreeableness. In an earlier study (IRB#: 10-02-16; Study title: Personality and supervisor adherence to justice, approved by the IRB at West Texas A&M University), we described employees using the conceptual high/low contrasts (e.g., “responsible, hardworking” vs. “irresponsible, lazy”; “warm, cooperative” vs. “cold, selfish”) and found supportive results (available from the first author). Because of the concern that respondents could infer performance discrepancy between two employees on polar ends of conscientiousness or agreeableness, we adopted our current manipulations to mitigate perceived performance discrepancy.



Wilk's  $\lambda = .57$  and  $.55$ ,  $ps < .001$ , and a nonsignificant nonhypothesized interaction, Wilk's  $\lambda = .98$ ,  $p > .10$ . Follow-up analyses (see Table 3) indicated that employee conscientiousness had expected impact on perceived effort ( $\eta^2 = .39$ ,  $p < .001$ ), procedural justice rule compliance intentions ( $\eta^2 = .03$ ,  $p < .01$ ), and bonus distribution intentions ( $\eta^2 = .06$ ,  $p < .001$ ), whereas employee agreeableness had hypothesized influence on liking of employee ( $\eta^2 = .41$ ,  $p < .001$ ), procedural justice rule compliance intentions ( $\eta^2 = .05$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and bonus distribution intentions ( $\eta^2 = .03$ ,  $p < .01$ ).

When predicting procedural justice rule compliance intentions, perceived effort mediated the effect of conscientiousness (indirect effect =  $.37$ , 95% CI [ $.15$ ,  $.60$ ]), whereas liking partially mediated the effect of agreeableness (indirect effect =  $.62$ , 95% CI [ $.40$ ,  $.88$ ]). When predicting bonus distribution intentions (in \$100 units), the effects of conscientiousness through perceived effort (indirect effects of  $1.34$ , 95% CI [ $.63$ ,  $2.16$ ]) and agreeableness through liking were both significant (indirect effects of  $0.68$ , 95% CI [ $0.03$ ,  $1.36$ ]). Together with the finding that the previously positive effects of conscientiousness and agreeableness (Model 1, Table 4) were accounted for by the mediators<sup>4</sup> (Model 2, Table 4), these results indicated that perceived effort and liking mediated the effects of employee personality on procedural and distributive justice rule compliance intentions.

**Findings for Experiment B.** A factorial MANOVA on perceived effort, liking, and interpersonal and informational justice rule compliance intentions indicated significant main effects for both conscientiousness and agreeableness, Wilk's  $\lambda$ s =  $.79$  and  $.71$ ,  $ps < .001$  and a nonsignificant interaction term, Wilk's  $\lambda$ s =  $.98$ ,  $p > .10$ . Subsequent analyses (see Table 5) showed that high employee conscientiousness resulted in stronger perceived effort ( $\eta^2 = .18$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and greater interpersonal ( $\eta^2 = .02$ ,  $p < .05$ ) and informational

Table 4  
Regression Results for Experiment A in Study 2

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
DV = Procedural justice rule compliance intentions						
Conscientiousness	.38**	.13	.17**	-.24	.15	-.11
Agreeableness	.47***	.13	.22***	-.31*	.15	-.14*
Effort				.27**	.08	.27**
Liking				.48***	.09	.45***
$\Delta R^2$		.07***			.21***	
DV = Distributive justice rule compliance intentions (\$100)						
Conscientiousness	1.34***	.32	.24***	-.28	.39	-.05
Agreeableness	.94**	.32	.17**	-.30	.39	-.05
Effort				1.00***	.22	.38***
Liking				.53*	.24	.19*
$\Delta R^2$		.08***			.14***	

Note.  $N = 288$ .

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

justice rule compliance intentions ( $\eta^2 = .03$ ,  $p < .01$ ), whereas high employee agreeableness led to stronger liking of employee ( $\eta^2 = .28$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and greater interpersonal ( $\eta^2 = .04$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and informational justice rule compliance intentions ( $\eta^2 = .03$ ,  $p < .01$ ), compared to their respective low-level counterparts.

As expected, perceived effort mediated the effect of conscientiousness (indirect effect =  $.22$ , 95% CI [ $.07$ ,  $.41$ ]), whereas liking significantly mediated the effect of agreeableness (indirect effect =  $.36$ , 95% CI [ $.13$ ,  $.62$ ]) on interpersonal justice rule compliance intentions. Similarly, when predicting informational justice rule compliance intentions, both the conscientiousness–effort pathway (indirect effects of  $.22$ , 95% CI [ $.06$ ,  $.41$ ]) and the agreeableness–liking pathway (indirect effects of  $.27$ , 95% CI [ $.05$ ,  $.52$ ]) were significant. In addition, controlling for perceived effort and liking, conscientiousness and agreeableness no longer had significant effects on either outcome (Model 2, Table 6). This pattern of results led to the conclusion that perceived effort and liking mediated the effects of employee personality manipulations on justice rule compliance intentions.

**Findings for Experiment C.** We first examined whether respondents' intentions to comply with justice rules differed depended on the two employees' contrasting levels of conscientiousness. A repeated measures MANOVA revealed a significant multivariate effect, Wilk's  $\lambda$ s =  $.75$ ,  $p < .001$ . Follow-up univariate tests (see Table 7) revealed that, compared with their responses to the lower conscientiousness employee, participants were more likely to indicate greater intentions to comply with distributive ( $\eta^2 = .08$ ,  $p < .001$ ), procedural ( $\eta^2 = .15$ ,  $p < .001$ ), interpersonal ( $\eta^2 = .12$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and informational ( $\eta^2 = .05$ ,  $p < .01$ ) justice rules in response to the higher conscientiousness employee.

In the agreeableness condition, a repeated measures MANOVA also indicated a significant multivariate effect, Wilk's  $\lambda$ s =  $.76$ ,

<sup>4</sup> The negative direct effect of agreeableness on procedural justice compliance intentions, although significant, accounted for only 1% of variance in the outcome and was thus practically insignificant. Because the negative direct effect did not appear in Experiment B, we suspect this was a case of statistical suppression (Bobko, 2001) that is not replicable.

Table 3  
Descriptive Statistics and Between-Subjects ANOVA Tests for Experiment A in Study 2

Employee agreeableness	Employee conscientiousness				ANOVA $F(\eta^2)$		
	Low C		High C		C	A	C × A
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>			
DV = Effort							
Low A	2.63	.85	4.06	.71	207.49***	36.86***	.63
High A	3.28	.93	4.55	.64	(.39)	(.07)	(.00)
DV = Liking							
Low A	2.74	.68	3.14	.82	36.61***	221.05***	2.06
High A	3.91	.73	4.56	.70	(.07)	(.41)	(.00)
DV = Procedural justice rule compliance intentions							
Low A	2.70	.94	2.98	1.05	9.20**	14.32***	.73
High A	3.07	1.06	3.56	1.18	(.03)	(.05)	(.00)
DV = Distributive justice rule compliance intentions (\$100)							
Low A	8.66	2.57	9.75	2.71	17.90***	8.92**	.60
High A	9.36	2.98	10.94	2.41	(.06)	(.03)	(.00)

Note.  $N = 288$  ( $ns$  ranging from 70 to 75 for each cell). For each of C, A, and C × A,  $df_{\text{between}} = 1$ ;  $df_{\text{error}} = 284$ . C = Conscientiousness manipulation. A = Agreeableness manipulation.  
\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Table 5**  
*Descriptive Statistics and Between-Subjects ANOVA Tests for Experiment B in Study 2*

Employee agreeableness	Employee conscientiousness				ANOVA $F(\eta^2)$		
	Low C		High C		C	A	C × A
	M	SD	M	SD			
DV = Effort							
Low A	2.64	.84	3.48	.82	69.77***	27.12***	.30
High A	3.19	.80	3.92	.73	(.18)	(.07)	(.00)
DV = Liking							
Low A	3.05	.84	3.19	.72	6.53*	112.26***	.78
High A	3.89	.71	4.19	.65	(.02)	(.28)	(.00)
DV = Interpersonal justice rule compliance intentions							
Low A	6.61	1.48	7.26	1.24	6.54*	11.50***	2.46
High A	7.39	1.35	7.55	1.22	(.02)	(.04)	(.01)
DV = Informational justice rule compliance intentions							
Low A	6.37	1.53	7.08	1.34	10.58**	10.62**	1.52
High A	7.08	1.23	7.39	1.18	(.03)	(.03)	(.01)

Note.  $N = 286$  ( $ns$  ranging from 71 to 72 for each cell). For each of C, A, and C × A,  $df_{\text{between}} = 1$ ;  $df_{\text{error}} = 282$ . C = Conscientiousness manipulation. A = Agreeableness manipulation.  
\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

$p < .001$ . Specifically, when dealing with the employee with higher agreeableness, respondents indicated a greater intention to adhere to justice rules, compared to the employee with lower agreeableness, with significant difference on the distributive ( $\eta^2 = .06, p < .01$ ), procedural ( $\eta^2 = .23, p < .001$ ), interpersonal ( $\eta^2 = .10, p < .001$ ), and informational ( $\eta^2 = .10, p < .001$ ) justice dimensions (see Table 7).

**Summary of Study 2.** The results across the three experiments consistently supported our expectation that conscientiousness and

**Table 6**  
*Regression Results for Experiment B in Study 2*

Variable	Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	$\beta$
DV = Interpersonal justice rule compliance intentions						
Conscientiousness	.40*	.16	.15*	.09	.17	.03
Agreeableness	.53***	.16	.20***	.04	.18	.01
Effort				.28**	.11	.19**
Liking				.39**	.12	.25**
$\Delta R^2$		.06***			.11***	
DV = Informational justice rule compliance intentions						
Conscientiousness	.51**	.16	.19**	.23	.17	.08
Agreeableness	.51**	.16	.19**	.10	.18	.04
Effort				.28*	.11	.19*
Liking				.30*	.12	.19*
$\Delta R^2$		.07***			.08***	

Note.  $N = 286$ .  
\*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Table 7**  
*Descriptive Statistics and Within-Subjects ANOVA Tests for Experiment C in Study 2*

Variable	Employee conscientiousness manipulation			Employee agreeableness manipulation		
	Low C	High C	ANOVA $F(\eta^2)$	Low A	High A	ANOVA $F(\eta^2)$
DV = Distributive justice rule compliance intentions						
M	4.47	4.65	13.55***	4.75	4.84	8.42**
SD	.70	.60	(.08)	.48	.37	(.06)
DV = Procedural justice rule compliance intentions						
M	4.21	4.47	25.47***	4.39	4.65	42.60***
SD	.64	.58	(.15)	.54	.41	(.23)
DV = Interpersonal justice rule compliance intentions						
M	4.57	4.72	20.37***	4.78	4.88	14.92***
SD	.65	.55	(.12)	.42	.32	(.10)
DV = Informational justice rule compliance intention						
M	4.34	4.44	7.10**	4.52	4.64	14.94***
SD	.66	.67	(.05)	.49	.44	(.10)

Note.  $N = 147$  for conscientiousness condition,  $df_{\text{between}} = 1$ ;  $df_{\text{error}} = 146$ ;  $N = 143$  for agreeableness condition,  $df_{\text{between}} = 1$ ;  $df_{\text{error}} = 142$ ; participants were randomly assigned into either the conscientiousness or the agreeableness condition. C = Conscientiousness manipulation. A = Agreeableness manipulation.  
\*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

agreeableness can influence intentions to comply with justice rules for individuals in a fictitious supervisory position: Higher levels of employee conscientiousness or agreeableness resulted in greater intent of justice rule compliance. In addition, perceived effort and liking mediated the positive effects of employee conscientiousness and agreeableness on justice rule compliance intentions.

Study 2 was limited in two regards. First, the use of an experimental design, albeit offering strong internal validity, may be lacking in external validity. As fictitious supervisors, participants did not have a working relationship with the employee described in the experimental materials, and the decisions they made would have no real-world consequences. Second, by design, Study 2 could not include the final outcome of our theoretical model, employee justice perceptions. To address these limitations, we used a field survey study to examine the entire theoretical model in Figure 1. Specifically, we modeled employee-supervisor dyadic data to evaluate whether the relationship between employee personality and justice perceptions would be mediated by supervisor-rated effort, liking, and supervisor-reported adherence to justice rules.

### Study 3: A Field Investigation

#### Method

**Participants and procedures.** This study was approved by the IRB at Shanghai Behavioral Science Society (IRB #: SBSS-Survey-16-06; Study title: Employee justice investigation). Participants for this study consisted of employees and their immediate supervisors from various organizations in China, recruited with one of the two following methods. First, two members of our research team collected questionnaires in person from employee-

supervisor dyads from several companies that offered support for the study. Specifically, using company rosters provided by upper management, the researchers identified all supervisors and randomly selected one employee for each supervisor as potential respondents. Second, a class of Executive MBA students was asked to distribute dyadic questionnaires in their organizations. Each student was instructed to invite up to three supervisors and to randomly select one subordinate per supervisor for the employee survey. Although the names of each potential respondent and his or her corresponding supervisor/subordinate were written on a separate cover sheet to ensure clarity of instructions, the actual questionnaires contained only response codes that linked the dyadic data. Completed questionnaires were returned in sealed envelopes to the research teams to ensure confidentiality of responses. Overall, 204 (68%) matching employee-supervisor dyads were collected out of 300 pairs of surveys distributed.

The employees were on average 31 years old ( $SD = 6$ ), with 52% males. The supervisors were on average 36 years old ( $SD = 6$ ), with 53% males. Because of slight variations in the survey questionnaires' design, approximately 70% of respondents reported their work tenure ( $M = 7$ ,  $SD = 4$  for employees;  $M = 14$ ,  $SD = 7$  for supervisors), whereas the remaining 30% reported their organizational tenure ( $M = 5$ ,  $SD = 5$  for employees;  $M = 9$ ,  $SD = 10$  for supervisors). Respondents' occupations varied. Sample job titles were accountant, software engineer, IT technician, and office assistant.

**Measures.** We followed Brislin's (1970) recommendations to translate all measures to Chinese. Respondents indicated agreement with each survey item on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*), with the exception of personality items noted below.

**Employee personality.** *Conscientiousness* ( $\alpha = .77$ ) and *agreeableness* ( $\alpha = .77$ ) were assessed with 10-item scales from the IPIP (Goldberg et al., 2006). Employees indicated whether each statement was an accurate description of themselves, using a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*very inaccurate*) to 7 (*very accurate*). Sample items included "Pay attention to details" for conscientiousness and "Make people feel at ease" for agreeableness.

**Supervisor-rated effort and liking.** Supervisor responded to a five-item scale on employee *effort* ( $\alpha = .89$ ) and a four-item scale

( $\alpha = .86$ ) of their *liking* of the focal employee that were used in Study 2 (Experiments A and B).

**Supervisor-rated justice rule adherence.** We adapted the same 20-item organizational justice measure used in Study 2 (Experiment C) to assess supervisor self-reported adherence to justice rules on *distributive* ( $\alpha = .76$ ), *procedural* ( $\alpha = .72$ ), *interpersonal* ( $\alpha = .76$ ), and *informational* ( $\alpha = .72$ ). Each supervisor was asked to reference his or her interactions with the respective focal employee when responding to the items.

**Employee justice perceptions.** We adapted the same 20-item organizational justice measure used in Study 2 (Experiment C) to measure employee perceptions of supervisory justice behavior on *distributive* ( $\alpha = .91$ ), *procedural* ( $\alpha = .88$ ), *interpersonal* ( $\alpha = .91$ ), and *informational* ( $\alpha = .92$ ). Each employee was instructed to think of his or her supervisor's behaviors toward him/her when responding to the justice scales.

## Results

The means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the observed variables were presented in Table 8. We assessed the study hypotheses with structural equation modeling (SEM) using MPlus 6.11 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010). Following the two-step SEM procedure recommended by Kline (2005), we first evaluated the measurement model with a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) before testing the study hypotheses on the structural model. Because of our modest sample size relative to the large number of parameters to be estimated in SEM, we created item parcels for each construct. Specifically, we followed the item-to-construct balance approach (Little, Cunningham, Shahar, & Widaman, 2002) recommended by Williams, Vandenberg, and Edwards (2009) and created two item parcels for each construct measured by less than six items and three item parcels for each construct measured by more than six items.

The 12-factor model for CFA yielded a good fit to the data,  $\chi^2 = 451.44$ ,  $df = 284$ , CFI = .95, TLI = .94, RMSEA = .054. We also estimated two nested competing models: (a) a nine-factor model that collapsed the four supervisor self-rated justice rule adherence dimensions into a single latent construct ( $\chi^2 = 648.28$ ,  $df = 314$ , CFI = .90, TLI = .88, RMSEA = .072); and (b) a nine-factor

Table 8  
Means, Standard Deviations, Reliability Coefficients, and Inter-Correlations for Study 3

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1. Conscientiousness	.77											
2. Agreeableness	.14	.77										
3. Effort	.37	.14	.89									
4. Liking	.29	.33	.47	.86								
5. Supervisor distributive	.23	.31	.36	.37	.76							
6. Supervisor procedural	.23	.28	.35	.30	.55	.72						
7. Supervisor interpersonal	.18	.20	.39	.38	.40	.39	.76					
8. Supervisor informational	.29	.19	.52	.43	.41	.39	.57	.72				
9. Employee distributive	.14	.23	.36	.24	.31	.27	.26	.26	.91			
10. Employee procedural	.24	.36	.37	.32	.34	.41	.25	.29	.70	.88		
11. Employee interpersonal	.12	.16	.34	.19	.26	.25	.31	.26	.63	.63	.91	
12. Employee informational	.17	.18	.41	.27	.31	.31	.36	.35	.75	.69	.71	.92
<i>M</i>	6.04	5.51	5.78	5.80	5.96	5.68	6.24	5.89	5.63	5.60	6.09	5.73
<i>SD</i>	.56	.67	.85	.95	.69	.65	.61	.67	1.08	.92	.88	1.05

Note.  $N = 204$ . When  $r \geq .14$ ,  $p < .05$ ; when  $r \geq .19$ ,  $p < .01$ ; when  $r \geq .23$ ,  $p < .001$ . Supervisor = Supervisor-rated justice rule adherence; Employee = Employee perceived justice. Cronbach's  $\alpha$  presented along the diagonal.

model that collapsed the four employee justice perception dimensions into a single latent construct ( $\chi^2 = 759.53$ ,  $df = 314$ ,  $CFI = .87$ ,  $TLI = .84$ ,  $RMSEA = .083$ ). These alternative models provided significantly worse fit to the data,  $\Delta\chi^2(30) = 196.84$  and  $308.09$ , respectively,  $ps < .001$ . These results allowed us to proceed to test the hypothesized structural model presented in Figure 1 ( $\chi^2 = 672.98$ ,  $df = 329$ ,  $CFI = .90$ ,  $TLI = .89$ ,  $RMSEA = .072$ ). However, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer, employee conscientiousness and agreeableness may influence supervisors' perceptions of employees simultaneously. We tested this possibility in a revised model by adding paths from conscientiousness to liking and from agreeableness to perceived effort. This revised model indeed provided better fit to the data,  $\chi^2 = 654.45$ ,  $df = 327$ ,  $CFI = .91$ ,  $TLI = .89$ ,  $RMSEA = .070$ ;  $\Delta\chi^2(2) = 18.53$ ,  $p < .001$ , with both additional paths being significant (see Table 9). Given the improved model fit, we proceeded to examine the predicted paths in this revised model. Unstandardized estimates and standard errors were reported in Table 9, while standardized effects were presented in Figure 2. To assess the significance of the indirect effects, we obtained 95% confidence intervals from 10,000 bootstrapped samples (MacKinnon et al., 2004). We reported the confidence intervals for total indirect effects stemming from conscientiousness and agreeableness in Table 9. As the total indirect effects combined both hypothesized (e.g., conscientiousness through perceived effort to outcomes) and nonhypothesized (e.g., conscientiousness through liking to outcomes) effects, we presented specific hypothesized indirect effects separately in Table 10.

**Conscientiousness to supervisor justice: Hypotheses 1–3.**

We predicted that employee conscientiousness would be related to supervisor ratings of effort (Hypothesis 1), which in turn would be related to supervisor distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice rule adherence (Hypotheses 2a-2d). Consistent with Hypothesis 1, conscientiousness predicted perceived effort ( $b = .60$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Supporting Hypotheses 2a through 2d, perceived effort predicted supervisor-rated distributive ( $b = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ), procedural ( $b = .25$ ,  $p < .01$ ), interpersonal ( $b = .23$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and informational ( $b = .39$ ,  $p < .001$ ) justice rule adherence.

Hypotheses 3a–3d predicted that the relationships between conscientiousness and supervisor adherence to distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice rules would be mediated by perceived effort. Results of the bootstrapping analysis (see Table 10) indicated that the indirect effects of conscientiousness on supervisor-rated adherence to procedural ( $b = .15$ ), interpersonal ( $b = .14$ ), and informational ( $b = .23$ ) justice rules had positive lower bounds of 95% confidence interval. Thus, these indirect effects were significant, supporting Hypotheses 3b, 3c, and 3d. Contrary to Hypothesis 3a, the indirect effect of conscientiousness on supervisor-rated adherence to distributive justice rules ( $b = .15$ ) had a negative lower bound of 95% confidence interval. Thus, Hypothesis 3a was not supported.

**Agreeableness to supervisor justice: Hypotheses 4–6.** We hypothesized that employee agreeableness would be related to supervisor liking of the employee (Hypothesis 4), which in turn would positively predict supervisor distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice rule adherence (Hypotheses 5a-5d). Supporting Hypothesis 4, agreeableness positively predicted liking ( $b = .58$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Supporting Hypotheses 5a through 5d, liking posi-

Table 9  
Unstandardized Estimates and Bootstrapped Confidence Intervals From Study 3

Predictor	Supervisors' evaluation		Supervisor self-rated justice rule adherence				Employee perceptions of justice from supervisor			
	Effort	Liking	Distributive	Procedural	Interpersonal	Informational	Distributive	Procedural	Interpersonal	Informational
Employee conscientiousness	.60 (.12)***	.51 (.14)***	[.14, .47]	[.13, .46]	[.12, .41]	[.18, .54]	[.04, .22]	[.05, .26]	[.02, .17]	[.06, .35]
Employee agreeableness	.18 (.09)*	.58 (.11)***	[.07, .38]	[.05, .37]	[.04, .29]	[.05, .31]	[.02, .20]	[.02, .22]	[.01, .13]	[.03, .20]
Employee effort rated by the supervisor			.25 (.08)**	.25 (.07)**	.23 (.06)**	.39 (.07)***				
Interpersonal liking rated by the supervisor			.26 (.07)***	.22 (.07)**	.20 (.06)**	.19 (.06)**				
Supervisor distributive justice rule compliance							.35 (.09)***			
Supervisor procedural justice rule compliance								.50 (.10)***		
Supervisor interpersonal justice rule compliance									.31 (.10)**	
Supervisor informational justice rule compliance										.51 (.12)***

Note.  $N = 204$ . Unstandardized effects reported, with standard errors in parentheses. Bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals for total indirect effects presented in brackets. \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

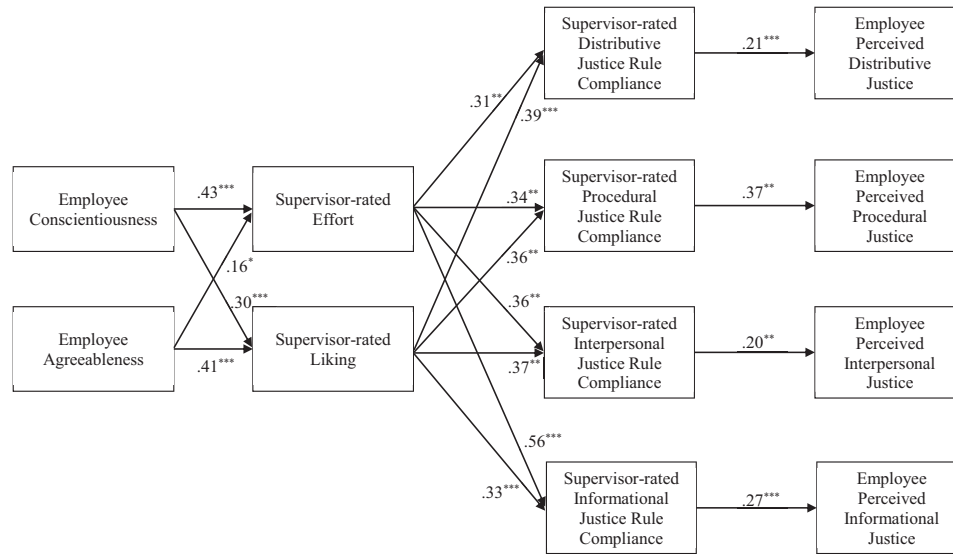


Figure 2. Standardized effects from the revised model (Study 3).  $N = 204$ . \*  $p < .05$ . \*\*  $p < .01$ . \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

tively predicted supervisor-rated distributive ( $b = .26$ ,  $p < .001$ ), procedural ( $b = .22$ ,  $p < .01$ ), interpersonal ( $b = .20$ ,  $p < .001$ ), and informational justice ( $b = .19$ ,  $p < .001$ ) rule compliance.

Hypotheses 6a–6d predicted that the relationships between employee agreeableness and supervisor adherence to distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice rules would be mediated by interpersonal liking. Results of the bootstrapping analyses revealed that the indirect effects of agreeableness on supervisor-rated adherence to justice rules on all four dimensions had positive lower bounds for 95% CI,  $bs = .15$ ,  $.13$ , and  $.11$ , respectively. Therefore, we found support for Hypotheses 6a through 6d.

**Supervisor-reported justice to subordinate-reported justice: Hypotheses 7–9.** The final step in our model tested the relationship between supervisor-rated justice rule compliance and employee justice judgments. All four parts of Hypothesis 7 were supported: (a) distributive justice:  $b = .35$ ,  $p < .001$ ; (b) procedural justice:  $b = .50$ ,  $p < .001$ ; (c) interpersonal justice:  $b = .31$ ,  $p < .01$ ; and (d) informational justice:  $b = .51$ ,  $p < .001$ .

Hypotheses 8a–8d predicted that employee conscientiousness would be indirectly related to employee perceptions of distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice, and the effects would be mediated first through supervisory rating of employee effort and then through supervisor justice rule compliance. As expected, these indirect effect estimates for conscientiousness on distributive ( $b = .05$ ), procedural ( $b = .08$ ), interpersonal ( $b = .04$ ), and informational justice ( $b = .12$ ) were all positive, with positive lower bounds for 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals. Therefore, Hypotheses 8a–8d were fully supported.

Finally, Hypotheses 9a–9d predicted that employee agreeableness would be indirectly related to their distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice perceptions via two mediators, first through interpersonal liking rated by the supervisor and then through supervisor-rated justice rule compliance. The indirect effect estimates for agreeableness on distributive ( $b = .05$ ), procedural ( $b = .07$ ), interpersonal ( $b = .04$ ), and informational justice ( $b = .06$ ) were all positive and significant, as indicated by

their 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals. Thus, Hypotheses 9a–9d received support in the current data.<sup>5</sup>

#### Investigating alternative mechanisms and reverse causality.

We conducted analyses to assess two potential alternative roles of employee personality in employee justice perceptions. First, an employee's personality might be related to how he or she responds to the supervisor's justice behavior. It seems plausible that conscientiousness and agreeableness may predispose employees to reacting more favorably when supervisors adhere to, as opposed to violate, justice rules, resulting in more effortful work behavior and warmer interpersonal interactions with the supervisor. We tested a series of moderated regression, with supervisor self-assessed justice rule adherence as predictor, conscientiousness or agreeableness as moderator, and perceived effort or liking as outcome. None of the interactions was significant, explaining less than 1% of the variance in the outcomes. Second, one may argue that the same supervisor justice rule adherence could be perceived differently by employees higher/lower in conscientiousness and agreeableness. We conducted four moderated regression analyses, with supervisor-rated justice rule adherence on each justice dimension as predictor, both conscientiousness and agreeableness as moderators, and the corresponding employee justice perceptions as outcome. Again, none of the interactions explained more than 1% of variance in the outcomes.

We also evaluated two alternative models to mitigate concerns over reverse causality. First, employees' personality might be related to their justice perceptions, which may be related to super-

<sup>5</sup> Following the recommendation of an anonymous reviewer, we also considered supervisor justice rule compliance and employee justice perceptions as second-order constructs, each indicated by four first-order constructs (distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice, Li, Cropanzano, & Bagger, 2013). The alternative model fit the data reasonably well,  $\chi^2 = 599.30$ ,  $df = 334$ , CFI = .92, TLI = .91, RMSEA = .062. All hypothesized paths in our model were statistically significant. Detailed results can be obtained upon request from the first author.

Table 10  
*Specific Indirect Effects and Bootstrapped 95% Confidence Intervals From Study 3*

Predictor	Supervisor-rated justice rule adherence				Employee perceptions of justice from supervisor			
	Distributive	Procedural	Interpersonal	Informational	Distributive	Procedural	Interpersonal	Informational
Employee conscientiousness through effort	.15 [-.02, .36]	.15 [.01, .39]	.14 [.03, .34]	.23 [.11, .45]	.05 [.001, .16]	.08 [.01, .22]	.04 [.01, .15]	.12 [.04, .28]
Employee agreeableness through liking	.15 [.03, .39]	.13 [.01, .38]	.11 [.01, .27]	.11 [.01, .25]	.05 [.01, .22]	.07 [.003, .23]	.04 [.004, .13]	.06 [.01, .17]

Note. Unstandardized indirect effects presented first, with 95% bootstrapped confidence intervals presented in brackets.

visors' evaluations of their effort and likability and subsequently to supervisors' self-rated adherence to justice rules. This alternative model yielded unacceptable fit to the data,  $\chi^2 = 1002.02$ ,  $df = 319$ , CFI = .80, TLI = .77, RMSEA = .10. Second, employee personality might be related to supervisor-rated justice rule compliance, which may be further related to employees' justice perceptions and subsequently to supervisors' ratings of effort and liking. This model also failed to fit the data,  $\chi^2 = 830.16$ ,  $df = 316$ , CFI = .85, TLI = .82, RMSEA = .09. These alternative models allowed us to be relatively assured of our proposed theoretical sequence.

**Summary of Study 3.** The field data provided substantial support for the hypothesized model. The only exception was the nonsignificant indirect effect of employee conscientiousness on supervisor self-assessed adherence to distributive justice rules. Scott, Garza, Conlon, and Kim (2014) argued that managers have less discretion when it comes to either following or violating distributive justice rules, compared with other types of justice rules. They reasoned that distributive justice rules are typically under the purview of the broader HR management system, occurring in formal exchange contexts, and highly observable. In the present context, it is possible that the lack of discretion over distributive justice rules may have reduced the indirect effect of employee conscientiousness on supervisor self-assessed adherence to these rules.

One important limitation is our operationalization of the supervisor adherence to justice rule construct. Specifically, we asked supervisors to rate the extent to which they followed justice rules rather than the actual supervisor behavior. We did so for practical reasons. If we were to ask the employees to rate the extent to which their supervisors comply with justice rules, this resulting measure would have overlapped with employees' evaluations of how justly they have been treated by their supervisor. However, asking supervisors to rate their compliance with justice rules raises the question of whether supervisors are capable of making such assessments in an objective fashion. This is evidenced by the somewhat modest correlations between the four dimensions of supervisor-rated justice rule compliance and corresponding employee justice perceptions in the present study. Fortunately, we found corroborating results in the experimental study (Study 2) that used a different operationalization of supervisor adherence to justice rules. These convergent findings gave us confidence in the validity of the findings in this study.

### General Discussion

The results of our study are a theoretical departure from most organizational justice research. When individual difference vari-

ables have previously been considered, they have generally been viewed as shaping the recipient's response to justice rule violations (e.g., Colquitt, Scott, Judge, & Shaw, 2006). Although this area of study is of demonstrable import, a more complete understanding requires an alternative view of justice from the actor's perspective, leading us to ask what makes an authority figure behave more or less justly. As the subordinate is more than a passive receiver in their interactions with the supervisor, the actor-focused model raises the possibility that the subordinate's personality could influence the extent to which the supervisor treats him/her justly. This possibility is further buttressed by research on personality, which observes that people differentially produce and shape situations (Buss, 1987, 2009).

By testing a model that links employees' personality to their justice perceptions mediated through supervisor rule adherence, we attend to the admonition that "to understand organizational fairness completely, one must consider both actors of fair behavior and the target of the behavior" (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009, p. 220). Our meta-analysis (Study 1) showed that employees' conscientiousness and agreeableness were generally related to their justice perceptions. The three experiments (Study 2) established the causality between employee personality and supervisor intentions to comply with justice rules, showing that respondents in the role of a fictitious supervisor indicated greater intentions to follow various justice rules when their employees were higher in conscientiousness or agreeableness. Finally, a field survey (Study 3) tested the entire model, suggesting that the relationship between employees' personality and their justice perceptions were mediated consecutively by supervisor cognition/affect and their self-assessed compliance with justice rules. In all, we not only demonstrated that employees' personality was related to their justice judgments but also explained how these relations emerged.

An additional contribution of our study is to combine the stereotype content model (e.g., Cuddy et al., 2011) with the actor-focused model of justice (Scott et al., 2009) as our theoretical framework. This allows us to investigate two complementary mechanisms through which personality is related to justice judgments: A cognitive route that reflects supervisors' evaluation of employees' effort and an affective route that reflects supervisors' interpersonal liking of employees. Consistent with our predictions regarding the cognitive process, employees higher in conscientiousness believed that they were treated more justly because their supervisors viewed them as giving higher levels of effort, which prompted the supervisors to indicate their greater levels of justice rule adherence. Consistent with our predictions regarding the affective process, employees higher in agreeableness believed that they were treated more justly because their supervisors developed

a stronger liking toward them, which prompted the supervisors to indicate their greater levels of justice rule adherence. Although past research has shown that higher levels of conscientiousness and agreeableness are considered a valuable asset for organizations, the extent to which employees benefit from these desirable traits is not altogether clear. Our results suggest that employees higher in conscientiousness and agreeableness create an environment in which their personality may be related to more just treatment from their supervisors. Therefore, our study adds to a small body of literature that addresses the criticism that the justice literature is overly reactive and insufficiently proactive, failing to determine why leaders choose to act either justly or unjustly (Cornelis et al., 2013).

### Practical Implications

The present findings have significant practical implications on supervisors' treatment of their employees. Taken together, our research suggests that employee personality is related to the level of supervisory compliance with justice rules. In light of these results, one might ask: Should employees with lower conscientiousness and agreeableness be treated with less justice? From one vantage point, the answer appears to be yes, and some may even contend that employees with low conscientiousness and agreeableness deserve to be treated with injustice. Following justice rules may consume valuable regulatory resources (Johnson et al., 2014), so it would seem wise for supervisors to exhibit more just behaviors toward employees with higher conscientiousness and agreeableness, who are more likely to bring about valuable outcomes. This position is consistent with social exchange theory (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) whereby supervisors use just treatment as a highly valued resource (see Koopman, Matta, Scott, & Conlon, 2015) to build social exchange relationships with employees high in conscientiousness and agreeableness. Moreover, Scott and colleagues (2009, p. 760) suggested that managers may be motivated to violate justice rules in a retributive manner to "rectify what they perceive to be offensive, norm-violating behavior." As employees with lower conscientiousness or agreeableness tend to exhibit behaviors detrimental to the workplace, supervisors might find it justifiable to treat these employees with less justice.

However, there is a competing perspective. The notion that employees lower on conscientiousness and agreeableness bring upon themselves lower justice risks victim stigmatization and misattribution of blames. Scott and colleagues (2009) noted that supervisors may sometimes exaggerate the role employees play in provoking unjust treatment and may assign more weight to negative information than to positive information (see DeNisi, Cafferty, & Meglino, 1984; Kahneman & Tversky, 1979), resulting in severe justice rule violations toward individuals who may not deserve such treatments. As we showed in Study 2, participants in a fictitious supervisory role intended to follow justice rules to varying degrees on two targets with *different* personality yet *equivalent* performance ratings. This finding may raise concerns about whether it is inherently unfair for supervisors to adopt different levels of justice rule compliance on the basis of employees' personality as such practices appear to violate the central tenets of justice (treat employees consistently and without bias, Cornelis, Van Hiel, & De Cremer, 2015). It is beyond the scope of the present paper to produce a verdict on these two competing argu-

ments, but we urge that supervisors should become cognizant of the possibility that their subordinates' personality may influence their own justice behaviors. With past research indicating that supervisory training can help bring about a more just workplace (e.g., Skarlicki & Latham, 1996, 1997), our study suggests that recognizing and counteracting supervisory tendencies to react to employee personality can be a potential focus for training interventions.

Our findings also have implications for the subordinate or the recipient of justice. As effort and liking served as intervening mechanisms for the relationships between employee personality and supervisor justice rule compliance, it is conceivable that employees may attempt to elicit more just treatment by increasing their effort at work and fostering better interpersonal relationships with their supervisors. Alternatively, employees wishing to change the way they are treated by supervisors may identify work situations where supervisors' evaluation of their effort and supervisors' liking may be more or less closely tied to their conscientiousness and agreeableness. For highly conscientious and agreeable employees, this may involve finding work situations (e.g., highly autonomous; Barrick & Mount, 1993) that allow them to manifest their personality. For employees with low conscientiousness or agreeableness, this might entail work situations (e.g., telecommuting, Bailey & Kurland, 2002) where their general behavioral tendencies are less readily recognizable by their supervisors.

### Future Research

The possibility that employee personality may shape supervisory behavior opens up a number of avenues for future research inquiries. First, when investigating future relationships between workplace justice and employee individual differences, it would be useful to consider the three types of person-situation interactions described by Buss (1987, 2009). In addition to *evocation*, which we explored here, workers may also *select* and *manipulate* their work environments. As an example of selection, it is worth reflecting on the fact that the Big Five personality traits are associated with vocational preferences (e.g., Mount, Barrick, Scullen, & Rounds, 2005). Schminke, Ambrose, and Cropanzano (2000) showed that different organizational structural forms are associated with different levels of justice perceptions. To the extent that different occupations/industries are often associated with different organizational structural forms (and by extension, justice perceptions), personality-driven job choices could impact future just/unjust treatment. Manipulation can also be a rich area for justice researchers to explore. For instance, Korsgaard and her colleagues (1998) showed that assertive behavior can increase interactional justice. Given that extraversion includes the behavioral tendencies to be assertive (DeYoung, Quilty, & Peterson, 2007), ambitious (Huang, Ryan, Zabel, & Palmer, 2014), and interpersonally dominant (Hough et al., 2015), justice researchers may begin to unpack whether and how extraverts negotiate and influence their work environment and relationships to achieve more just treatment.

Second, we highlight the need to attend to potential moderating variables on the relationship between personality and justice perceptions, especially given the wide credibility intervals observed in Study 1. Initial search for moderators may turn to job-related variables grounded in the personality literature, such as autonomy

(Barrick & Mount, 1993) and situational strength (Meyer, Dalal, & Bonaccio, 2009), both affecting the degree to which personality is manifested in trait-relevant behaviors. In-depth understanding of the actor-focused model, however, should involve *when* employee conscientiousness and agreeableness result in just treatments. For instance, some supervisors may not have the decision-making latitude to be distributively unjust to an unconscientious employee (Scott et al., 2009). More interesting insight is available by modeling supervisor-employee personality similarity as an antecedent to justice behavior. Such similarity is inherently an interaction between employee and supervisor personality, which may take on complex forms. Although similarity can be expected to generally lead to liking (e.g., Strauss, Barrick, & Connerley, 2001), complementarity can be particularly relevant to certain traits (e.g., extraversion; Grant, Gino, & Hofmann, 2011).

Third, in Study 2c, we showed that individuals placed in a hypothetical supervisory position intended to differentially adhere to justice rules for subordinates with high versus low conscientiousness or agreeableness. However, we hasten to note that such within-supervisor effects can be more complex depending on the dispersion of employee personality within workgroups (see DeRue, Hollenbeck, Ilgen, & Feltz, 2010). For instance, a conscientious employee may stand out within a workgroup of unconscientious employees, leading the supervisor to treat him/her with exceptionally high levels of just behavior.

## Limitations

Several limitations of our paper should be noted. First, the studies included in our meta-analysis, as well as our field survey, relied on employees to report both personality and justice perceptions, making common-method bias a potential concern. Although individuals are arguably most privy to their own personality and to how fairly they have been treated, justice researchers may turn to alternative sources (e.g., peers) for personality assessment (e.g., Shaffer, Li, & Bagger, 2015) in future studies of the personality-justice relation.

Second, although our theoretical model received an initial comprehensive test in Study 3, it awaits future examination because of three unique aspects of the study: (a) operationalization of supervisor justice compliance; (b) between-subjects design; and (c) cultural context. Regarding operationalization of supervisor justice compliance, we relied on supervisors' self-report instead of *the actual justice rule compliance behavior* conceptualized in our model. Although supervisors might have unique perspectives and access to justice rule compliance information that is difficult to discern from other sources, it is also possible that they self-servingly inflate justice rule compliance. As for the between-subjects design, we should acknowledge it does not provide direct evidence for supervisors' differential justice rule adherence, which should involve a within-subjects design. In term of culture, Study 3 was conducted in China, where traditional Chinese values may influence organizational justice phenomena (Xie, Schaubroeck, & Lam, 2008). Future studies may closely evaluate our model by (a) using third-party observers to assess supervisor justice behavior (e.g., Huang, Ryan, & Mujtaba, 2015; Scott et al., 2014), (b) involving a within-subjects design where multiple subordinates are nested within each supervisor, and (c) examining the model across several cultural contexts.

Third, Studies 2 and 3 revealed significant nonhypothesized linkages from conscientiousness to liking and from agreeableness to effort. These effects, although weaker than their hypothesized counterparts, may temper one's conclusion about the theorized conscientiousness-cognition and agreeableness-affect pathways. However, we submit that halo error (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977) or common method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) in effort and liking ratings may have contributed to these nonhypothesized effects. Thus, we call for a stronger measurement design in follow-up research to assess whether these nonhypothesized effects are substantive in nature.

Fourth, we operationalized distributive justice somewhat narrowly by following the equity rule, as seen in the bonus allocation in Study 2a, the distributive justice measure used in Study 3, and most of the primary studies included in the meta-analysis in Study 1. Although the equity rule is the most widely used distributive justice rule (Colquitt et al., 2001), other rules such as equality, needs, entitlement, and self-interest (Rupp et al., 2017) may also impact distributive justice perceptions. Cropanzano and colleagues (2015) noted that empirical research tends to consider one rule at the exclusion of other rules. Therefore, an extension of our research is to test our model with other distributive justice rules or different combinations of these rules.

Finally, despite the conceptual overlap between conscientiousness and competence, competence may also be influenced by other attributes such as intelligence and creativity (Cuddy et al., 2008, 2011). It is thus possible that other employee characteristics such as general mental ability and creativity can also affect the way in which employees are treated by their supervisors.

## Conclusion

In closing, our study offers critical insights into the role that employee personality plays in influencing their justice perceptions and how supervisors' evaluations of the employee and adherence to justice rule may mediate these effects. By integrating the justice actor's perspective with the receiver's perspective in the present study, we expand the justice and personality literatures and present exciting opportunities for future research.

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(Appendices follow)

**Appendix A**  
**Primary Studies Included in the Meta-Analysis**

Year	Author	Uncorrected effect size	Sample size	Justice reliability	Personality reliability
Conscientiousness – Distributive Justice					
2010	Chang et al.	.28	1662	.76	.71
1996	Dawson (student)	.20	276	.91	.86
1996	Dawson (transit)	.10	91	.91	.86
1996	Dawson (teacher)	-.22	22	.91	.86
2013	Deery et al.	-.05	227	.76	.77
2012	Deosthali	.12	205	.84	.79
2010	Du et al.	.26	574	.73	.77
2010	Kirby et al.	-.04	299	.78	.75
2009	Krings et al.	.17	110	.69	.81
2010	Lewis et al.	.19	471	.92	.80
2011	Li et al.	.08	180	.94	.71
2011	Menard et al.	.01	284	.86	.64
2008	Moon et al.	.07	253	.90	.89
2006	Nowakowski	.18	225	.88	.81
2011	O'Neill et al.	.18	464	.90	.69
2012	Patel et al.	.30	458	.90	.81
2004	Raja	.16	383	.91	.72
2004	Robinson	.31	194	.94	.91
2012	Russell et al.	.09	520	.86	.80
2009	Shi et al.	.05	498	.93	.83
2009	Taylor	.16	191	.94	.83
2007	Tepper et al.	.00	342	.95	.76
2009	Tolentino	-.04	224	.94	.80
2011	Wilkin	.04	160	.96	.73
Agreeableness – Distributive Justice					
2010	Chang et al.	.25	1662	.76	.65
1996	Dawson (student)	.15	276	.91	.76
1996	Dawson (transit)	.05	91	.91	.76
1996	Dawson (teacher)	.39	22	.91	.76
2009	Holtz et al.	.15	306	.94	.80
2009	Krings et al.	.05	110	.69	.70
2010	Lewis et al.	.14	471	.92	.72
2011	Li et al.	.22	180	.94	.79
2011	Menard et al.	.20	284	.86	.55
2011	O'Neill et al.	.14	464	.90	.56
2004	Raja	.08	383	.91	.70
2009	Shi et al.	.09	498	.93	.79
1999	Skarlicki et al.	-.10	133	.86	.79
2007	Tepper et al.	.12	342	.95	.70
2009	Tolentino	.09	224	.94	.81
2011	Wilkin	-.01	160	.96	.79
Conscientiousness – Procedural Justice					
2004	Bauer et al.	-.04	135	.99	.84
2010	Chang et al.	.27	1662	.80	.71
1996	Dawson (student)	.19	276	.97	.86
1996	Dawson (transit)	-.05	91	.97	.86
1996	Dawson (teacher)	-.32	22	.97	.86
2013	Deery et al.	-.08	227	.83	.77
2012	Deosthali	.11	205	.91	.79
2010	Du et al.	.04	574	.76	.77
2010	Fleming	.16	128	.97	.78
2002	Haaland	.14	238	.88	.74
2005	Holtz et al.	.05	345	.91	.84

(Appendices continue)

## Appendix A (continued)

Year	Author	Uncorrected effect size	Sample size	Justice reliability	Personality reliability
2008	Holtz et al.	-.17	203	.78	.81
2000	Hunthausen	.15	214	.80	.80
2009	Krings et al.	.14	110	.96	.81
2010	Lewis et al.	.25	471	.78	.80
2012	Liu et al.	.16	369	.77	.81
2013	McCarthy et al.	.26	161	.76	.88
2011	Menard et al.	.07	284	.88	.64
2008	Moon et al.	.30	253	.92	.89
2006	Nowakowski	.24	225	.68	.81
2011	O'Neill et al.	.25	464	.89	.69
2012	Patel et al.	.21	458	.92	.81
2004	Raja	.10	383	.80	.72
2004	Robinson	.20	194	.89	.91
2009	Shi et al.	.08	498	.95	.83
2009	Taylor	.13	191	.78	.83
2007	Tepper et al.	.04	342	.88	.76
2009	Tolentino	.12	224	.90	.80
2006	Truxillo et al.	.06	105	.72	.76
2011	Wilkin	-.07	160	.94	.73
2005	Wrenn	-.01	200	.90	.80
Agreeableness – Procedural Justice					
2010	Chang et al.	.30	1662	.80	.65
1996	Dawson (student)	.15	276	.97	.76
1996	Dawson (transit)	.13	91	.97	.76
1996	Dawson (teacher)	.11	22	.97	.76
2010	Fleming	.18	128	.97	.71
2002	Haaland	.12	238	.88	.73
2005	Holtz et al.	.05	345	.91	.75
2009	Holtz et al.	.09	306	.89	.80
2008	Holtz et al.	-.02	203	.78	.83
2000	Hunthausen	.06	214	.80	.72
2009	Krings et al.	.27	110	.96	.70
2010	Lewis et al.	.18	471	.78	.72
2011	Menard et al.	.19	284	.88	.55
2011	O'Neill et al.	.18	464	.89	.56
2004	Raja	.05	383	.80	.70
2009	Shi et al.	.09	498	.95	.79
1999	Skarlicki et al.	.39	133	.88	.79
2007	Tepper et al.	.14	342	.88	.70
2009	Tolentino	.29	224	.90	.81
2006	Truxillo et al.	.09	105	.72	.69
2011	Wilkin	-.02	160	.94	.79
2005	Wrenn	.06	200	.90	.85
Conscientiousness – Interpersonal Justice					
2013	Chen et al.	-.19	204	.93	.83
2014	Chuang et al. (Study 1)	-.05	690	.97	.84
2014	Chuang et al. (Study 2)	.09	417	.91	.83
2002	Haaland	.05	238	.84	.74
2008	Holtz et al.	-.04	203	.91	.81
2008	Jacobson	-.06	311	.86	.71
2010	Lewis et al.	.20	471	.79	.80
2006	Nowakowski	.18	225	.91	.81
2011	O'Neill et al.	.19	464	.90	.69
2012	Patel et al.	.37	458	.89	.81
2004	Robinson	.13	194	.93	.91
2009	Shi et al.	.19	498	.89	.83
2009	Taylor	.22	191	.93	.83
2009	Tolentino	.27	224	.93	.80

(Appendices continue)

Appendix A (*continued*)

Year	Author	Uncorrected effect size	Sample size	Justice reliability	Personality reliability
2009	Volpone et al.	.26	691	.96	.80
2009	Yang et al.	.07	231	.80	.71
Agreeableness – Interpersonal Justice					
2013	Chen et al.	-.03	204	.93	.79
2002	Haaland	.21	238	.84	.73
2009	Holtz et al.	.16	306	.88	.80
2008	Holtz et al.	-.01	203	.91	.83
2010	Lewis et al.	.12	471	.79	.72
2011	O’Neill et al.	.11	464	.90	.56
2009	Shi et al.	.23	498	.89	.79
2009	Tolentino	.11	224	.93	.81
2009	Volpone et al.	.15	691	.96	.72
2009	Yang et al.	.19	231	.80	.64
Conscientiousness – Informational Justice					
2008	Holtz et al.	-.07	203	.84	.81
2010	Lewis et al.	.20	471	.79	.80
2011	O’Neill et al.	.20	464	.90	.69
2012	Patel et al.	.28	458	.89	.81
2004	Robinson	.19	194	.91	.91
2009	Shi et al.	.12	498	.87	.83
2009	Taylor	.11	191	.96	.83
Agreeableness – Informational Justice					
2009	Holtz et al.	.11	306	.87	.80
2008	Holtz et al.	-.02	203	.84	.83
2010	Lewis et al.	.13	471	.79	.72
2011	O’Neill et al.	.11	464	.90	.56
2009	Shi et al.	.14	498	.87	.79

## Appendix B

## Scenario for Study 2, Experiment A

Imagine you are a store manager of a grocery chain.

You have been told that the store budget has been cut by 10% as a result of the economic downturn impacting the parent company. The budget cut strains your ability to assign bonuses to your employees. For the past few years, employee bonuses in your department have been determined by the number of points they receive in their performance evaluation. That is, the more points they received, the higher their bonuses. For example, those who received 15 points earned a bonus of \$1,500 whereas those who received 10 points earned a bonus of \$1,000. Unfortunately for this year, if you were to assign the bonus based on the same scheme, you would need to dip into the store’s general fund, which is usually reserved to cover unexpected expenses. This could leave the store vulnerable when other budget needs arise.

Now you will need to decide on the bonus to assign to each employee. One of the employees is Tracy whom you have worked with for three years. [insert personality manipulations].

Please see the datasheet below containing Tracy’s past performance evaluations and bonuses.

Employee: Tracy	Performance evaluation	Bonus
2014	12	\$1,200
2015	12	\$1,200
2016	12	

(Appendices continue)



## Appendix C

### Scenario for Study 2, Experiment B

Imagine you are a manager in an organization that needs to lay off some of its employees. You need to tell one of your employees, Jim, that he is being laid off.

Sales in your organization have declined this year, following the loss of several large accounts to competitors. To offset declining revenues, management has decided to put a freeze on purchases of new equipment and to lay off 5% of the organization's nonmanagerial workforce. The layoffs will be made according to three criteria: (a) the performance of specific divisions, (b) employee seniority, and (c) employee performance evaluations. Layoffs will be effective on July 1. Laid-off employees will be offered 2 weeks of job search assistance through an external agency and a severance package of 2 months' pay.

Your division has been one of the hardest hits by both declining revenues and higher-than-anticipated costs. One problem is that as manager of your division, you hired several new people in anticipation of ongoing sales growth, which never materialized. As a result, you need to lay off 10% of the staff in your division (as compared with 5% for the company as a whole).

The first employee you have to lay off is Jim. Jim has been with the organization for 22 months, which makes him one of the more recent hires. On his first semiannual performance review, Jim was criticized for failing to prepare acceptable paperwork on several occasions because of his unfamiliarity with the company's soft-

ware. However, Jim's second performance review indicated improvement over time. In Jim's last review, he was commended for his reasonable performance.

On the personal side, you have known Jim as someone who is [insert personality manipulations].

You are aware that Jim's work performance may have suffered because he is also back at school part-time. Jim and his wife are expecting their first child in August and have recently put a down payment on a house. You also know that the job market for Jim's skill set is not very strong.

You agree that reducing costs—and headcount—in underperforming divisions is the only way to stay in business and get back on track. Unfortunately, because of Jim's low level of seniority and mixed performance reviews, he will be the first layoff in your department. There is less than a 50% chance that you will be able to rehire Jim in the future or that other opportunities will become available for him in the organization.

Next, please indicate the probability of you using the following statements when you communicate the news to Jim using a scale of 1–9. The higher of the rating, the more likely you will use the explanations in Column B. The lower of the rating, the more likely you will use the explanation in Column A. Please choose 5 if you have no preferences between Column A and Column B.

	Column A	Column B
1	Jim, the reason I call this meeting is to inform you that your position has been eliminated. We don't have another position available to you. This decision is final. Your last day of employment will be on July 1st.	Jim, I want to share this with you in person because I know it will be difficult for you. Regretfully your position has been eliminated as of July 1st. We unfortunately don't have another position that matches your skill profile.
2	Jim, in an effort to reduce costs, we are restructuring our business, and that will result in the elimination of a number of positions in our company. Unfortunately, your position has been eliminated, and I'm afraid we're going to have to lay you off.	Jim, the company is experiencing some financial difficulties. We have lost a number of clients and our overall revenue has declined by 10%. To overcome these challenges, the company has decided to freeze hiring and to lay off 5% of the workforce. Unfortunately you are one of those whose positions have been eliminated.
3	You are chosen because of your lower level of performance. A decision is made at the company level that the layoff will start with those who have the lowest performance. Given your performance level, you will be the first one to be let go.	This decision is made based on three factors, including the performance of our department, your organizational tenure, and your work performance. Our department has been hit the hardest in this downturn. Combining this with your tenure and performance results in you being the first to be laid off.
4	The company has a set of formal procedure to deal with this type of situations. You can go to the HR department to find out more information about your health, unemployment, and retirement benefits. We offer you a severance pay equivalent to two months of your current salary.	I looked into the company's procedure for dealing with this type of situations, just to give you a heads up about next steps. First, you will speak to Jenny, our HR representative. She will explain the detailed procedure regarding health and unemployment benefits. I understand that finance is probably your most important concern at this time due to your family situation. We offer you a severance pay equivalent to two months of your current salary. Jenny will also provide you detailed information such as when you will receive your last check and your options with your 401K.

*(Appendices continue)*

Appendix C (*continued*)

	Column A	Column B
5	It is natural that people will get upset and angry when they lose their job. In today's economy, organizational longevity is a thing of the past. Lots of employees get laid off every day in today's business world. You will have to accept this as a new reality.	I know that this is difficult for you. I can certainly understand why you feel this way. As you go through this process, you may need support to deal with the emotion and begin thinking about how to go forward.
6	Jim, there is nothing personal against you. It really comes down to a business decision. The same decision would have been made to anyone in the same situation as you are in right now.	Jim, I respect your hard work and services in the last 22 months. I will miss working with you. This is not something we decided in a hurry. We spent many hours reviewing all options but unfortunately had to make this tough decision.
7	The company offers you free job search assistance through an outside agency. You can find out more about what services they provide and how to contact them through our HR department.	The company has retained the service of an outside agency to help you with your job search process. You can utilize their assistance free of charge. Considering you have a baby on the way, I know you probably want to get started on the job search as soon as you can. Here's the business card for John, our liaison at the agency. You may set up an appointment with him directly.
8	At this point, we have covered the last day of your employment and the resources available to you to assist you through this process. Thank you for your time.	I know this is difficult news. Please take your time as the information sinks in. Before I let you go, I want to see how you are doing. Are you holding up OK?

*Note.* Interpersonal justice: items 1, 5, 6, and 8. Informational justice: items 2, 3, 4, 7. Column B represents higher justice rule compliance than Column A.

## Appendix D

### Scenario for Study 2, Experiment C

Imagine yourself in the role of Director for Fashion Design. After your company's recent acquisition of a small independent studio, two of its fashion designers, Michael and Daniel, will be joining your team under your supervision. Although you have not met them yet, you have heard about them from their former boss Steve, who happens to be a friend of yours.

According to Steve, both Michael and Daniel performed their jobs equally well and received identical performance evaluations.

However, they have distinct interpersonal styles. Michael is [INSERT MANIPULATION A], whereas Daniel is [INSERT MANIPULATION B].

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