



## The mediating and moderating role of burnout and emotional intelligence in the relationship between organizational justice and work misbehavior<sup>☆</sup>



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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

Received 4 February 2017

Accepted 5 May 2017

Available online 24 June 2017

#### Keywords:

Emotional intelligence

Organizational justice

Work misbehavior

Burnout

Moderation

Individual differences

### ABSTRACT

The current research (Figure 1) examined the antecedents of work misbehaviors (WMBs) by means of organizational justice perceptions (as a predictor), experienced burnout (as a mediator), and emotional intelligence (as a buffer). A heterogeneous sample of 243 employees was acquired in order to assess correlative associations between the variables, a mediation effect, and two moderation effects. In order to test the mediation effect further and the model fit, structural equation modelling (SEM) was employed. Theoretical and practical implications are discussed.

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## El papel mediador y moderador del *burnout* y de la inteligencia emocional en la relación entre la justicia organizacional y el mal comportamiento en el trabajo

### RESUMEN

Esta investigación (figura 1) analiza los antecedentes del mal comportamiento en el trabajo a través de la percepción de la justicia organizacional (como predictor), el *burnout* (como mediador) y la inteligencia emocional (como amortiguador). Se utilizó una muestra heterogénea compuesta por 243 empleados para evaluar las asociaciones correlativas entre las variables, un efecto mediador y dos efectos moderadores. Con el fin de confirmar el efecto de mediación y el ajuste del modelo se utilizó el modelado de ecuaciones estructurales. Se comentan las implicaciones teóricas y prácticas.

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#### Palabras clave:

Inteligencia emocional

Justicia organizacional

Mal comportamiento en el trabajo

*Burnout*

Moderación

Diferencias individuales

Research of human motivation aims to discover the processes by which personal endogenous forces (internal psychological forces, such as drives and beliefs), in conjunction with exogenous forces (external or environmental forces, such as changes in the stability of rewards), determine the direction, intensity, and persistence of a specific behavior (Tziner, Fein, & Oren, 2012; see also Staw & Cohen-Charash, 2005).

Past research indicates various factors that may predict counterproductive work behaviors. These include *individual differences*, such as employees' personal traits and abilities (e.g., Berry, Ones, & Sackett, 2007; Dalal, 2005; Dilchert, Ones, Davis, & Rostow, 2007; Salgado, 2002), *job experiences* (e.g., Hollinger & Clark, 1982; Kulas, McInerney, DeMuth, & Jadwinski, 2007), and *work stressors*, such as difficult work conditions, harsh supervision, role ambiguity, or role and interpersonal conflicts (Brock-Lee & Spector, 2006; Chen & Spector, 1992; Diefendorff & Mehta, 2007; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; Spector & Fox, 2005). By way of illustration, dissatisfied employees are more likely to engage in theft behaviors (Kulas et al., 2007) and abusive supervision is prone to influence employees'

<sup>☆</sup> An earlier version of this paper was presented at a SIOP symposium.

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propensity to engage in negative employee behavior intended not only to harm the abuser but also to cause damage to the organization (Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007; see also Chen & Spector, 1992).

In the present work, we focused on destructive/dysfunctional organizational behaviors that constitute harm to organizational functioning. More specifically, we sought to ascertain the extent to which employees' interpretations of work environment characteristics (perceptions of organizational justice) and their experiences (burnout) associate with their misbehavior. In essence, this paper aims to investigate some of the motivational roots of such misbehaviors.

### Work Misbehavior (WMB)

In recent years, workplace misbehaviors (Berry et al., 2007; Bodankin & Tziner, 2009; Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Dilchert et al., 2007; Levy & Tziner, 2011) and counterproductive work behaviors (Cohen-Charash & Mueller, 2007; Ho, 2012; Levine, 2010) have gained much research attention, since they have been shown to have important economical, sociological, and psychological implications (Aubé, Rousseau, Mama, & Morin, 2009; Bodankin & Tziner, 2009). Such dysfunctional behaviors include theft, sabotage, withdrawal, harassment, and more (Bennett & Robinson, 2000; Gruys & Sackett, 2003; Robinson & Bennett, 1995; Spector et al., 2006). Such behaviors almost invariably violate important organizational norms and harm organizations in several ways associated with the organization's goals, employees, procedures, productivity, and profitability (Aubé et al., 2009; Dalal, 2005; Lanyon & Goodstein, 2004; Pearson, Andersson, & Porath, 2005; Robinson, 2008; Spector & Fox, 2005; Spector et al., 2006; Vardi & Weitz, 2004). These behaviors are directed against the organization itself or its members, workers and management alike, and hence, are generally costly to both individuals and organizations (Bennett & Robinson, 2003).

### Organizational Justice

Perceptions of the degree to which an organization provides its employees with appropriate, fair and respectful treatment, adequate and accurate information, and resources and rewards are conceptualized as perceptions of organizational justice (see Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Bell, Wiechmann, & Ryan, 2006; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001; Cropanzano, Prehar, & Chen, 2002; Tyler & Bies, 1990; Tziner & Chernyak-Hai, 2012). Employees establish their perceptions of organizational justice through (a) overall impressions that are a consequence of random organizational occurrences and (b) personal evaluations based on specific "organizational components," such as leaders and co-workers (Hollensbe, Khazanchi, & Masterson, 2008). Perceptions of organizational justice are typically broken down into perceptions of (a) *distributive* justice, (b) *procedural* justice, and (c) *interactional* justice (for further reading, see Colquitt et al., 2001; Cropanzano et al., 2002; Folger & Cropanzano, 1998; Kernan & Hanges, 2002; Moorman, 1991; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). Notably, in the present study we were interested in the association of an *overall* perception of justice with work misbehavior.

### Organizational Justice and WMB

According to the equity theory (Adams, 1965) and the social exchange theory (SET; Blau, 1964), when employees nurture perceptions of injustice, they act to rectify the situation in an attempt to create balance. Such behaviors include reducing their inputs in order to balance the input-outcome comparison (Greenberg & Scott, 1996), developing negative feelings toward the organization,

experiencing less motivation, and manifesting distrust (toward the workplace and/or the manager), and even acting against the organization (Dailey & Kirk, 1992; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997). The association between organizational justice and/or fairness and WMBs has been upheld in previous studies (e.g., Chernyak-Hai & Tziner, 2014; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001). As such, the first hypothesis is:

H1. Organizational justice is negatively associated with WMB.

### Burnout

Work burnout is described along three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, experienced distance from others (depersonalization), and feelings of diminished personal accomplishment (Jackson & Maslach, 1982). Burnout might lead employees to inferior job performance and sacrificing different aspects of personal life (Maslach, 2011). Work burnout has different negative outcomes for employees, such as absenteeism (Ahola et al., 2008), turnover (Shimizu, Feng, & Nagata, 2005), poorer job performance (Taris, 2006), working less safely (Nahrgang, Morgeson, & Hofmann, 2011), and even depressive symptoms and decreased life dissatisfaction (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012).

### Organizational Justice and Burnout

Various studies have highlighted the negative effects of perceived injustice on burnout (e.g., Brotheridge, 2003; Buunk & Schaufeli, 1993; Liljegren & Ekberg, 2009; Moliner, Martinez-Tur, Peiro, Ramos, & Cropanzano, 2005; Son, Kim, & Kim, 2014), but was not investigated even in a meta-analysis about justice (see Colquitt et al., 2001). However, not all dimensions of burnout and/or organizational justice were examined in these studies, and it further appears that the theoretical rationalization for linking the two constructs was vague. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the scant research concerning the linkage between organizational justice and burnout, the conservation of resources theory (COR; Hobfoll, 1989) may provide a reasonable explanation. The theory maintains that one aspires to obtain and conserve resources, both personal (e.g., expertise, self-esteem) and social (e.g., intimacy, tenure). An individual would experience psychological stress should there be (a) a risk of losing resources, (b) actual loss, or (c) a small return on a large initial investment of resources. Resources can be physical objects, personal characteristics (e.g., personality, endurance), situations (e.g., marriage, work), or energies (e.g., time, money), all of which are quantifiable and may be used to achieve goals or other resources. These resources have both instrumental and symbolic importance, the latter because individuals tend to use resources to define their identity; therefore, loss of resources might be threatening. In such a case, threatened individuals may act to minimize their loss of resources. Those with particularly weak strategies to deal with stress will also tend to develop maladaptive coping mechanisms. These include exchanging one resource for another (e.g., remarriage after divorce), investment in or use of other resources (e.g., investing reserve energy or additional time), changing the focus of attention (viewing a certain threat as a challenge), and reevaluating resources. Notably, however, the possible overload experienced in investing in additional resources could result in even greater stress and, ultimately, burnout (Tepper, 2001; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). This also corresponds with the six 'work mismatches' of Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter (2001), specifically the fairness one (for further reading see Maslach et al., 2001).

H2. Organizational justice is negatively associated with burnout.

## Organizational Justice, Burnout, and WMB

Chernyak-Hai and Tziner (2014) have shown that the relationship between justice and WMB existed only when moderated by the degree of leader-member exchange. The current study will treat this justice-WMB association from a different angle.

As per H2, perception of injustice can threaten employees' resources and give them a feeling of inappropriate rewards for an investment of personal resources, frustrate them, and even wear them out, which eventually translate into burnout. As noted, if employees experience burnout and imbalance (due to injustice, in this instance), they will likely aspire to regain and maintain balance (Adams, 1965) whereby, following the SET logic (Blau, 1964), work misbehaviors seem a reasonable measure for achieving that balance ('quid pro quo'). That is to say, a sense of organizational injustice could lead the employee to (a) increased burnout and (b) performing WMBs. At the same time, burnout itself might lead the employee to perform WMBs, as a way to attain control and balance. This reasoning produced the next hypotheses:

H3. Burnout is positively associated with WMB.

H4. Burnout mediates the relationship between organizational justice and WMB.

## Buffering Hypotheses – Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Wechsler (1955) defined intelligence as "the aggregate or global capacity of the individual to act purposefully, to think rationally, and to deal effectively with one's environment" (p. 7). He suggested that intelligence was more complex than merely measuring IQ, including 'non-intellective' factors such as emotions and motivation. Indeed, emotions are thought by some to be of extreme importance in understanding organizations and leadership (Ashkanasy & Dasborough, 2003).

Researchers define emotional intelligence (EI) as the ability to recognize/monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to differentiate between different feelings, and to use emotional information to guide thinking, behavior, and performance (Boyatzis, 2009; Goleman, 1995; Joseph & Newman, 2010; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Briefly, EI includes (1) self-awareness, (2) self-management, (3) self-control, (4) adaptability and flexibility, (5) achievement orientation, and (6) a positive point of view (Boyatzis, 2009).

People with high EI generally cope better in life and control their emotions more effectively. Specifically, when functioning efficiently, EI is helpful in any number of life skills that include adaptation to complex social situations, tension management, and success in interpersonal life, family, school, and work (Bar-On, 1997, 2000; Fitness, 2001; Flury & Ickes, 2001; Goleman, 1998; Liptak, 2005); commitment to one's career (Carson & Carson, 1998); and mental health (Ioannis & Ioannis, 2005; Shabani & Damavandi, 2011). Individuals with high EI believe that they connect to their emotions and that they can regulate and channel them in a way that produces healthy mental welfare; they do actually enjoy higher levels of subjective happiness (Petrides & Furnham, 2003).

## Emotional Intelligence, Organizational Justice, Burnout, and WMB

Studies have also unearthed the interaction between personal traits, organizational stressors, and WMBs (e.g., Bowling & Eschleman, 2010; Fox, Spector, & Miles, 2001; Penney & Spector, 2002, 2005). For instance, researchers have demonstrated that

emotional intelligence is an important personal factor in the success and productivity of organizations (e.g., Joseph, Newman, & MacCann, 2010; Zeidner, Matthews, & Roberts, 2009). Regulation of the emotions helps employees to maintain 'positive affect' – a positive outlook that influences work behaviors favorably (George, 1991; Joseph & Newman, 2010) – and to restrain 'negative affect' (Cheung & Tang, 2012). Individuals with high EI experience less stress at work and more control, satisfaction, and commitment to work (Petrides & Furnham, 2006; Singh & Woods, 2008); they are less prone to experience emotional exhaustion and burnout and more likely to perform their jobs successfully (Huang, Chan, Lam, & Nan, 2010). Consequently, high EI employees are less likely to turn to work misbehaviors in the face of injustice or burnout. They have the skills and abilities to regulate their emotions and the tools to cope with such adversities: they can create balance by means of self-control and self-regulation. Regarding WMB, Chernyak-Hai and Tziner (2014) indicated that organizational justice is *not always directly linked* to WMB. Therefore, we may assume that other mechanisms, such as self-control mechanisms, regulate the employees' behavior in these cases. We therefore hypothesized that:

H5. EI moderates the relationship between organizational justice and burnout.

H6. EI moderates the relationship between burnout and WMB.

## Method

### Participants

The data of the present study was collected from 243 participants in Israel from various organizations (including high-tech, communication, industry, telemarketing, and more), of which 51.9% were female and 48.1% male, aged 20–60 ( $M=32.67$ ,  $SD=8.87$ ). In terms of education, 0.8% of the participants indicated partial high school education, 16.9% full high school education, 50% had a BA degree and 16.5% had an MA or higher degree. Most were employed in various organizations with seniority of 0–48 years ( $M=6.70$ ,  $SD=8.17$ ), of which 47.7% held managerial positions and 52.3% non-managerial positions. Respondents' rate was above 80%.

### Procedure and Measures

The electronic version of the research questionnaire was sent to workers in various organizations in Israel, utilizing both email and Facebook platforms in order to achieve fast distribution. Those wishing to participate replied that they did and were included in the total sample. The aim of the sampling was to address working individuals that fit the research model (i.e., job-related factors).

Worthy of note, also, is that all the instruments in this study were translated from English into Hebrew using the back-translation method.

*Emotional intelligence* was measured by using the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire-Short Form (TEIQue-SF; Petrides & Furnham, 2003), which includes 30 Likert-type items between 1 (*very little*) and 6 (*very much*). Half of the items are reverse-scored. In previous studies, the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's  $\alpha$ ) of the questionnaire ranged between .82 and .89 (Cooper & Petrides, 2010; Pérez, Petrides, & Furnham, 2005; Petrides & Furnham, 2006). In the current study, the measure had good reliability ( $\alpha = .85$ ,  $M=4.47$ ,  $SD=0.45$ ; it ranges between 3.17 and 5.40).

*Organizational justice* was measured by the Justice Scale (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993), which includes 20 Likert-type items between 1 (*completely disagree*) and 6 (*completely agree*). The mean reliability

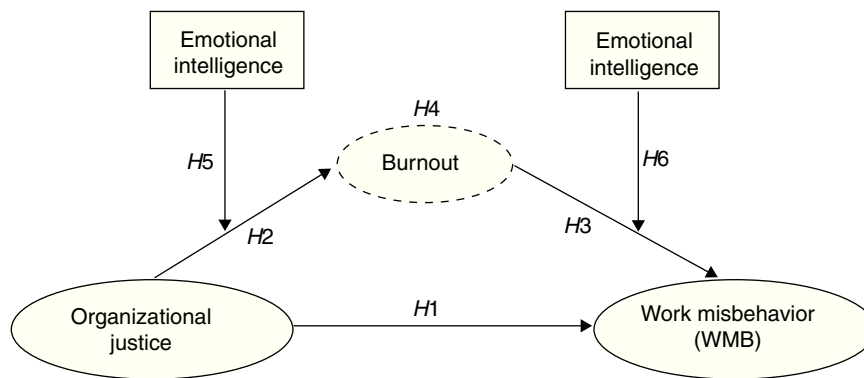


Figure 1. Theoretical Model.

coefficient of the questionnaire was .84 (Niehoff & Moorman, 1993). In the current study, the measure had good reliability ( $\alpha = .96$ ,  $M = 3.92$ ,  $SD = 1.09$ ; it ranges between 1.00 and 5.84).

Burnout was measured with the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The questionnaire consists of 22 Likert-type items between 1 (*a few times a year*) and 6 (*every day*); for instance, “I feel emotionally drained by my job”. The original ‘personal accomplishment’ dimension was assessed positively (reverse-scored); however, in order to obtain the most reliable results, we have rewritten this dimension in a negative fashion (Bresó, Salanova, & Schaufeli, 2007), and therefore it actually assesses low personal accomplishment. In another study, Cronbach’s alpha of the burnout measures ranged from .71 to .90 (Sabbah, Sabbah, Sabbah, Akoum, & Droubi, 2012). In the current study, the measure had good reliability ( $\alpha = .95$ ,  $M = 2.34$ ,  $SD = 0.96$ ; it ranges between 1.00 and 5.70).

Work Misbehavior was measured by the Interpersonal and Organizational Deviance Scale (IODS; Bennett & Robinson, 2000), which includes 19 Likert-type items between 1 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*); for instance, “I deliberately worked slower than I could”. The mean reliability coefficient of the questionnaire was .80 (Bennett & Robinson, 2000). In the current study, the measure had good reliability ( $\alpha = .88$ ,  $M = 1.55$ ,  $SD = 0.54$ ; it ranges between 1.00 and 3.71).

**Results**

We observe that the variables are noticeably inter-correlated. Therefore, we employed Harman’s Single-Factor Test in order to check for common-method bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, & Podsakoff, 2003), and the single-factor explained only 21.11% of the variance, and thus is not problematic (see Podsakoff et al., 2003). Moreover, in order to evaluate the fit of the total model, SEM analysis was employed using AMOS software package (v. 22) (see Table 1).

Table 1 shows the model fits the data in absolute sense with each fit index (Byrne, 2010). Notable are the RMSEA which is under .08 and the *p*-close is non-significant, and the  $\chi^2$  that is non-significant (albeit the sample size), which rendered the model with absolute fit (see Byrne, 2010).

Table 1 Fit Indices Summary.

$\chi^2(df)$	$\chi^2/df$	SRMR	CFI	NFI	GFI	RMSEA (90% CI)
10.48 (5)	2.10	.03	.98	.97	.99	.07 (.00-.13)**

\* *p* = .063,  
\*\* *p* = .256

Table 2 Pearson Correlation Matrix and Reliability Coefficients (in parenthesis on the diagonal).

	1	2	3	4
EI	(.85)			
Burnout	-.54	(.95)		
OJ	.45	-.58	(.96)	
WMB	-.44	.31	-.29	(.88)

Note. EI = emotional intelligence; OJ = organizational justice; WMB = work misbehaviors. *N* = 234. All correlations were significant at *p* < .001. Significance levels were 1-tailed.

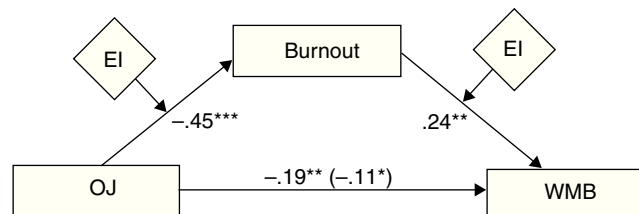


Figure 2. Standardized Regression Coefficients of the Structural Model. Notes. EI = emotional intelligence; OJ = organizational justice; WMB = work misbehaviors; The indirect effect is shown in parenthesis. \* *p* < .05, \*\* *p* < .01, \*\*\* *p* < .001.

Consequently, in order to capture the net connections, as well as to examine the hypotheses deriving from the overall study’s model, we proceeded with a correlational matrix and structural equations analysis (see Table 2 and Figure 2).

As can be seen in Figure 2, OJ is negatively related with burnout (*H1* supported) and WMB (*H2* supported), while burnout is positively related with WMB (*H3* supported). However, as per *H4* (justice-burnout-WMB mediation), when burnout is added to the model with justice altogether, the relationship between OJ and WMB drops from  $-.19$  to  $-.11$ , implying a partial mediation effect,  $F(2, 240) = 18.02$ ,  $p = .000$ ,  $R^2 = .13$ . This effect is statistically significant, as demonstrated: (1) Sobel’s  $Z = 2.83$ ,  $p = .004$ ; (2) bootstrapping CI (CL = 95%) with 5,000 re-samples =  $(-.20) - (-.03)$ ,  $p = .011$  (see: Preacher & Hayes, 2008). These results indicate that burnout is a partial mediator between OJ and WMB in our model.

Furthermore, two significant interactions were found, implying two moderation effects. The first one (*H5*) is a moderation of EI on the relationship between OJ and burnout,  $F(3, 239) = 69.82, p = .000, R^2 = .47$  ( $\beta_{\text{int}} = .12, p = .010$ ). This means, EI *diminishes* the relationship between OJ and burnout, so that at low EI levels this association is stronger ( $\beta = -.57$ ), as opposed to mean level of EI ( $\beta = -.45$ ) and high level of EI ( $\beta = -.33$ ).

The second moderation effect (*H6*) is that of EI on the relationship between job burnout and WMB  $F(3, 239) = 7.07, p = .000, R^2 = .08$  ( $\beta_{\text{int}} = .24, p = .003$ ). This means, EI *enhances* the relationship between burnout and WMB, so that at low EI levels this association is noticeably weaker ( $\beta = .03$ ), in comparison to the mean level of EI ( $\beta = .24$ ), and the high level of EI ( $\beta = .45$ ). This finding is seemingly opposite to the logic of the literature reviews (see discussion section for further elaboration).

## Discussion

The present research proposed to investigate the relationships between organizational justice, and burnout and WMB, as moderated by an individual's personality disposition (emotional intelligence).

Our first hypothesis was supported, which indicates a significant negative relationship between organizational justice and WMB. A negative relationship was also found between perceptions of organizational justice and burnout, supporting our second hypothesis. This finding is congruent with the research of Maslach et al. (2001), which found that a sense of unfairness could eventually lead to burnout. In addition, referencing the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 1989), depletion of resources over time can be a stressor that eventually leads to burnout (Tepper, 2001; Wright & Cropanzano, 1998). This supports the notion that there could be a direct, logical, and proven link between organizational justice and burnout. Practically, the organization should be aware of the importance of organizational justice perceptions among its employees, their implications to hastening the burnout process (at all levels of the organization), and the impact on its operations (see Maslach & Jackson, 1984; Van Dierendonck, Schaufeli, & Buunk, 2001).

Our third hypothesis was also supported: a significant positive relationship was found between burnout and WMB. Specifically, the more employees feel burnt-out, the more they report WMBs. This finding is also congruent with the theoretical background, namely, when employees feel emotional imbalance, they try actively to create a sense of balance (Hobfoll, 1989) and to reduce negative feelings by exercising coping strategies, including counterproductive behaviors (Krischer, Penney, & Hunter, 2010). Practically speaking, the organization must not ignore, and even deal proactively with, any aspect of employees' burnout. Burnout not only affects employees' mental and physical health, welfare, and performance (Maslach & Jackson, 1984; Van Dierendonck et al., 2001), but is also associated with WMBs, which are detrimental to the organization's welfare, economy, customer relations, and productivity.

Regarding our fourth (mediation) hypothesis, our findings show that the original relationship between organizational justice and WMB is only partially (in)direct. That is to say, perceptions of organizational injustice create or enhance burnout, which in turn increases WMBs. That suggests that both justice and burnout associate at the same time with WMB, albeit in opposite relationships. Practically, organizations should notice and consider employees' perceptions of justice because of these deleterious effects and the consequent damage to the organization.

We further hypothesized that EI would moderate the relationship between perceptions of organizational justice and burnout (*H5*). The findings indicate that EI moderates (and diminishes) the relationship between perceptions of organizational justice and

burnout. This shows that EI may mitigate the impact of injustice on creating burnout, as expected from the literature review.

The final hypothesis was that EI would moderate the relationship between burnout and WMB (*H6*). The findings indicate that EI indeed moderates – but *enhances* – the relationship between perceptions of burnout and WMB. This unusual finding indicates a negative effect of a widely accepted positive variable.

We regard our *H1*, *H2* and *H3* as replication variants of previous studies, but the findings of particular interest are related to the mediation effect (*H4*) and moderation effects of EI (*H5* and *H6*). Emotionally intelligent employees may relish the aptitude and resources they possess in order to overcome experienced burnout (Hobfoll, 1989), as per *H5*. However, with respect to *H6*, it seems that EI also sensitizes their perception of burnout in such a way that they would be more inclined to misbehave as a reaction to burnout. Perhaps dealing with burnout through WMBs is the “intelligent” solution, suggesting intriguing integrated relationships between *H5* and *H6*. This implies that EI, which is almost unambiguously deemed a positive trait throughout the literature, also has some interesting negative effects. In this respect, most of the literature has stressed that employees' intentions to harm the organizational environment, in one way or another, are malevolent in nature. However, there are also studies indicating that, paradoxically, in some circumstances, organizational misbehavior may stem from good intentions and be a function of the said employees' pursuit of organizational goals (Umphress & Bingham, 2011; Vardi & Wiener, 1996; Warren, 2003). For instance, Salgado (2002) found that employees rated highly on the personality factor “conscientiousness” are also likely to display deviant behaviors (as well as more frequent employee turnover). Our finding and these latter studies shine new light on *H6*: they indicate that employees with high EI may understand injustice or negative affectivity<sup>1</sup> differently from others, which, in turn, leads them to respond in a different or unique manner to these phenomena.

## Limitations

One of the limitations of this research is the use of the self-report WMB questionnaire, which includes items of a judgmental nature about the employee's conduct at work. The questionnaire acts “as a critic”, thus making it hard for the examinee to report negative behaviors (including towards others). Items such as “taken property from work without permission” or “fabricated a receipt in order to get remuneration for work expenses” make it difficult to answer honestly. People usually find it hard to admit behaviors such as theft or disparagement of others, even to themselves or under promise of anonymity. Empiric support can be found in Chernyak-Hai and Tziner's (2014) study, which revealed a low average WMB ( $M = 2.64$  on a scale of 1–6), similar to our current results ( $M = 1.55$  on a scale of 1–6).

Using a self-reported measure of WMB might be considered a limitation of this study. If so, this drawback could be remedied in future studies by complementing self-reporting measures with others-reported measures of WMB (e.g., peers, managers), the latter being considered relatively objective. However, because work misbehaviors are difficult to be observed, the interrater reliability of others-reported measures of WMB is typically low (Berry, Carpenter, & Barratt, 2012). Thus, the correlations between self-reported and other-reported WMB measures will typically be low. Moreover, adding other-reported WMB measures to self-reported

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that neither the literature nor the current study has treated the EI mechanism that deals with venting negative affectivity. This is largely because control of emotions does not necessarily attenuate the negative emotions that cause burnout. This could be a direction for further research.

WMB measures does not increase the explained variance significantly (for reference see a recent meta-analysis by Berry et al., 2012). This leads us to the conclusion that the use of a self-report WMB measure may not be construed such a serious limitation of this study.

The fact that the respondents completed the questionnaires online, without the presence of the researchers, could have created lack of commitment and less reliable answers. Furthermore, the full research questionnaire was long (96 items) and tedious. It is therefore possible that the interviewees were less focused at the end, and consequently less honest in their answers, and even more so because the WMB items, which are difficult in themselves, were the last items in the questionnaire.

## Recommendations

Since this research focused on environmental (organizational justice) as well as personality (EI) variables, we can say that the personality variable had a greater and more interesting impact than the environmental variable. Therefore, we recommend that researchers study further the effects of various personality traits (i.e., The Big Five model) and organizational variables on WMBs in order to provide a wider picture of this work-related behavioral phenomenon. Specifically, because we have demonstrated that the impact of EI on WMBs can be both positive and negative, the effect of EI at various levels and in different contexts provides an intriguing opening for further research. Such investigation would contribute to the long-standing debate on the effects of environmental and internal factors on work behaviors (Staw & Cohen-Charash, 2005).

We have seen that organizational justice affected WMB indirectly, by means of another variable, burnout, as a partial mediator and/or EI as a moderator. This is congruent with Chernyak-Hai and Tziner's (2014) study, which found that the relationship between organizational justice and WMB existed only through the complete mediation of LMX (leader-member exchange) between them. This could lead to the idea that researchers examine organizational justice in a number of different constellations to discover whether it could be a direct predictor of other organizational or behavioral variables.

## Conflict of Interest

The authors of this article declare no conflict of interest.

## Acknowledgements

We wish to express our gratitude to one of the anonymous reviewers of the paper for offering us this explanation.

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