Gender, Organizational Justice Perceptions, and Union Organizing

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Abstract The authors examine the relationship between gender and organizational justice perceptions and the implications of this relationship for organizing women. They employ a survey study design to confirm expectations associated with the anecdotal literature on this topic, namely that women place greater value on interactional justice than on distributive or procedural justice. Results indicate that gender leads to valuing interactional justice more highly only in interaction with race. Specifically, in contrast to white women and both white and black men, black women give greater weight to being treated with dignity and respect than to the other two organizational justice dimensions.

Key words women · unions · organizing · organizational justice

Introduction

In recent years labor relations experts have emphasized how the fate of the labor movement in the developing world is increasingly linked to successfully organizing women (Briskin & McDermott, 1993; Hallock, 1997). Taking this proposition to heart, we first offer a brief introductory review of the current state of knowledge regarding optimal approaches to organizing women. We then turn to the focus of this current study, namely the examination of the empirically unexplored assumption, common among organizers and labor relations analysts, that women are especially concerned with being treated respectfully by their supervisors. Some have argued that this concern takes precedence even over being paid

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fairly. Grounding such claims in an organizational justice framework and drawing on expectation states and emotions in the workplace literatures, we hypothesize that women will value interactional justice more than men. Our second hypothesis posits that black women will value interactional justice at higher levels than either white women or men.

What We Know About Organizing Women

The relationship between women and unions has assumed historically unprecedented strategic and practical importance in the twenty-first century. Economic changes have moved the question of better integrating women into the labor movement to center stage. A globalized economy and economic restructuring have lead to a contraction of the industrial and manufacturing sector. This decline in the traditional base of union power has occurred simultaneously with the growth of the service sector where jobs are often characterized by contingent work arrangements. Business units are also typically smaller, presenting an especially difficult challenge to union organizing efforts. Further, under the guise of gaining greater flexibility to accommodate an intensively competitive external environment, companies have adopted practices like contracting out and offshore production, while also increasing their attacks on basic labor rights through the use of union busting firms.

Briskin and McDermott (1993) have applied the term "feminization of labor" to the impact that the above trends have had on the content of work in modern industrial economies. That is, a larger share of the work performed over the last quarter century in America and Western Europe resembles traditional women's work because it is highly insecure, offers low wages and few benefits, and provides not even the crudest due process protections. Not surprisingly, a parallel trend has been an increasing representation of women in the labor forces of industrializing countries. As a consequence, the fates of unions and women workers have become increasingly interdependent. There have been some important successes in organizing women in private service sector jobs within the last decade. Indeed, whether through conventional certification elections or voluntary recognition campaigns, both pubic and private sector organizing victories in recent years have been concentrated in bargaining units with heavy representations of female workers (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Victories have been especially dramatic in healthcare, hotels, food services, building services, home care, and light manufacturing (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). Yet, clearly there remains considerable room for expanding union membership among women workers. In 2005 11.3% of female employees were union members, compared to 13.5% of male employees (U. S. Department of Labor, 2006).[1] Women also made up 43.4% of union membership, while accounting for 48% of the overall workforce (U. S. Department of Labor, 2006).

For women, the gains of union membership are considerable. Union members in the U. S. had a 28% wage premium in comparison to nonunion workers in 2004, but the wage premium for union women was 34% compared to nonunion women (AFL-CIO, 2004; see also Spalter-Roth, Hartmann, & Collins, 1994). Further, unions can play an important role in helping women to address inequities in the workplace and the "double burden" generated by traditional social roles (e.g., seeking flex time; on-site child care facilities). Further, participation in union organizing campaigns and in local union affairs has often provided

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[1] The membership and labor force participation figures derive from Current Population Survey data and are based on the sole or principal job of full and part-time workers in both the private and public sector.

important transforming experiences for women workers who have been socialized to be self-effacing and diffident in their interactions with others. Case histories have repeatedly identified women who have been personally empowered through union work (Baker, 1993; Coulter, 1993).

Both unions and women can obviously benefit where larger numbers of women are brought into the labor movement. In contrast to longstanding myths, survey data have in recent years indicated stronger interest in being unionized among women than among men (Farber, 1989; Leigh & Hills, 1987; Schur & Kruse, 1992). This recognition has fostered an increasingly animated discussion on the optimal approaches to organizing women. While some still argue that the best practices for organizing women and men are one and the same (see Crain, 1994), there is increasing evidence that gender matters in an organizing campaign. Admittedly, declining somewhat in recent years, (Blau, Simpson, & Anderson, 1996), occupational segregation—wherein women and men are heavily concentrated in different jobs often in different industries—makes the issue of targeting campaigns by gender even more relevant.

One example of targeting pertains to the structure of a union organizing campaign. Bronfenbrenner and Juravich (1995) have demonstrated that worker-centered campaigns have been especially successful in organizing women workers. This organizing model incorporates a substantial amount of rank and file participation and flexible timeframes adaptable to protracted and repeated personal contacts with all potential bargaining unit members. This is in contrast with the conventional model of organizing that evolved in the post-World War II era within male-dominated mass production manufacturing industries. This model placed emphasis on an elite core of staff organizers and relatively small numbers of rank and file activists who mobilized as quickly as possible to determine the existing levels of pro- and anti-union sentiment and made quick strategic decisions to continue or end the campaign based on their assessment. At the core of the conventional model is an assumption that the workers targeted for a campaign are already familiar with unions because they work in an occupation or market sector marked by high levels of unionization. Clearly this is not the case within many of the occupations and market sectors where women work. Indeed, a recent multi-country study conducted by the International Labour Organization found that the barrier to organizing women that was most frequently cited by union staff, feminist researchers and nonprofit women's rights advocates was women's lack of familiarity with unions (International Labour Organization, 2001).

Another topic that has garnered attention is the gender of union organizers. Union personnel express decidedly mixed views on this subject. Women more often maintain that women workers respond better to women organizers, while men more often express the view that matching organizers and rank and file by gender has little independent value (Crain, 1994). Of course, personal bias arguably accounts for these alternative perspectives. The male doubters should take heed, moreover, of recent empirical studies confirming that women workers generally have a more positive attitude towards unions when women are strongly represented among local leaders and paid professional staff. Further, women seem to respond more positively to having same-sex leadership than do men (Mellor, 1994).

Unfortunately female representation in union leadership roles remains woefully inadequate. Although some improvements have occurred especially since the ascendancy of John Sweeney to head the AFL-CIO in 1995, women still remain both underrepresented and confined to less influential positions across the union leadership population (Izraeli, 1985; Melcher, Eichstedt, & Ericksen, 1992). Recruiting and retaining female organizers is

made particularly difficult because of the long hours and extensive travel requirements associated with the job. Women who must juggle work and family roles find it particularly difficult to fulfill these requirements over long periods of time (Crain, 1994; Needleman, 1993). At a conference of experienced organizers convened in 2004, the toll that travel takes on personal lives was a recurrent theme, especially when they have children. The organizers reported feeling guilt over lack of involvement in their children's daily lives and doubts regarding their parenting abilities. "It got difficult after I had a child," reported one woman, "Soccer practice, husband to feed ...the women I organize have the life I want... (Berger Marks Foundation, 2004)." The historic prevalence of men among union organizers has also contributed to the evolution of an occupational culture that simultaneously glorifies and reinforces masculine modes of behavior. Frequent visits to bars to plan campaign strategy have long been the modus operandi of male organizers (with sometimes serious long-term consequences to their physical and mental health). Women often feel uncomfortable in such settings (Cuneo, 1993; Stinson & Richmond, 1993).

Unions have been more successful in addressing women's issues at the bargaining table and in legislative arenas (for an overview, see Cook, Lorwin, & Daniels, 1992). Child care and family leave policies have been quite successfully integrated into collective bargaining contracts. For example, the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUE) has secured a Dependent Care Reimbursement Account that allows General Electric employees to set aside up to $5,000 a year for child care and related dependent care expenses on a pre-tax basis (AFL-CIO, 2006a). The American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees has negotiated 2 weeks paid maternity or paternity leave for numerous state and municipal employees (AFL-CIO, 2006b). Specific procedures for addressing incidents of sexual harassment have become virtually boilerplate contract language at the present time (see, for example, the BNA Plus Model Contract Language webpage: http://www.bna.com/products/labor/cbnc.htm). Less successful have been efforts to diminish the gender pay gap through pay equity or comparable worth approaches promoted either directly through collective bargaining or indirectly through modifying state civil service policies (Hallock, 2001). Indeed, the movement to pay incumbents in female-dominated jobs at levels commensurate to comparably skilled male-dominated jobs lost steam in the 1980s. However, as recently as 1998, clerical workers in the Sachem School District of New York won a contract that initiated a process of closing the pay gap between them and school custodians (National Committee on Pay Equity, 2006). Clearly the union's ability to demonstrate that they have addressed such concerns demonstrates the value of union membership for women (Creese, 1996). Moreover, educating women workers about what is achievable through unionization furthers and extends discontent with present circumstances in their workplace.

More recently, because the economic changes described above have opened up new points of vulnerability among women workers in particular, efforts to address issues like contingent work and temporary work relationships have become decidedly gendered. Analysts have pointed out the importance of winning over women workers by coming up with creative solutions to these realities. For example, nonstandard work arrangements often mean that workers are less identified with particular employers and more with a set of skills or an occupation. Under these circumstances, occupational approaches to union representation take on added importance, as does organizing workers around issues of access to jobs, training, work standards, portable benefits, and wage standards (Cobble, 1991, 1993; Gerson, 1993). Although addressing these issues fully requires substantial changes in labor law in the United States, recent successes in organizing home health care

workers and experiments conducted by SEIU and 9 to 5: The Association of Working Women point the way to the future (Needleman, 1996; Ness, 1999).

It seems then that there is a growing body of data to confirm that approaches to organizing men and women, especially in sex-segregated facilities, should differ in some fundamental ways. One area that we believe has been woefully neglected, however, is organizational justice (defined below). As we see it, there is no more than a hint in the literature on organizing that suggests that women and men may have distinctively different views on organizational justice and that these differences require alternative organizing agendas and ways of framing discussions about the benefits of unionization. Our purpose in the rest of this paper is to more clearly specify what has only been alluded to in the literature to this point. Specifically, we test the proposition that men and women differ significantly in their views on organizational justice.

Organizational Justice

Researchers have broadly defined organizational justice as "people's perceptions of fairness in organizational settings" (Greenberg, 1996). As such the concept is relevant to the process of organizing because securing fair treatment for union members at the workplace is perhaps the most important goal of unionization. Researchers have demonstrated that workers feel more positive about their union to the extent that they perceive it to have altered the organizational environment and organizational rewards systems to be fairer (Mellor, Barnes-Farrel, & Stanton, 1999). Organizational justice is also relevant to the process of union organizing because it has been shown to impact both on employee satisfaction and organizational commitment. Research has also confirmed high levels of employee dissatisfaction and low levels of organizational commitment as antecedents of willingness to join unions (e. g., Hamner & Smith, 1978; Schriesheim, 1978).

Distinctive dimensions of organizational justice have been identified in the literature. These are: (1) distributive justice; (2) procedural justice; (3) interactional justice (Greenberg, 1996). Distributive justice refers to the perceived fairness of reward allocation within an organization, such as their current pay and benefit levels. Procedural justice refers to the formal level of the decision-making process associated with these and related outcomes, including the provision of some system of employee complaint or appeal regarding the consequences of first-stage decision-making. Finally, the most recent dimension of organizational justice to be distinguished in the literature is interactional justice. This organizational justice dimension has been called the "social side of justice" and focuses on the quality of informal interpersonal interactions in the workplace, especially between supervisors and subordinates. The expectation associated with interactional justice is for subordinates to be treated with honesty, courtesy, respect, and politeness (Bies & Moag, 1986; Fuller & Hester, 2001).

These dimensions of organizational justice constitute broad classification domains that subsume complex subsets of social norms and rules determining perceptions of fair treatment within these domains. With regard to distributive justice, numerous studies have demonstrated that individuals differ in terms of how they define fair allocation outcomes (for a review, see Dornstein, 1991). Some believe in an equity norm in arguing that individuals should be rewarded based on their individual level of productivity. Others support an equality standard in which all individuals in the same job should receive the same levels of compensation. Yet others prefer a need standard in which individuals are

rewarded based on personal circumstances. While these have been identified as the major distributive justice norms, however, they can also be further adapted to accommodate other more particularized rules for reward allocation. Pay equity, for example, is arguably an approach to compensation that represents an adaptation of the equality norm (where women's jobs have generalized skills and competencies requirements equal to men's jobs, the pay levels for the women's and men's jobs will be equal).

Similarly, while due process falls within the procedural justice category, it is a specific particularized form of procedural justice. Interestingly, given the nature of most grievance procedures, it is also the specific procedural justice standard that has consistently been shown to correlate most closely with perceptions of fairness (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Tyler, 1988). Pivotal in generating these perceptions are features such as offering employees or their representatives the opportunity to present their complaints before a neutral third party and granting final authority for resolving the complaint with this outside neutral.

This discussion of specific norms and rules within the organizational justice dimensions makes it clear that individuals vary with regard to how their perceptions of organizational justice are determined. Multiple sources of variation have been identified ranging from personality attributes to group membership (for a review, see Greenberg, 1996). Gender is plausibly one possible source of such variation and certainly the anecdotal literature on organizing women has implicitly conceded this point. A fairly consistent message is that women value distributive justice less than men, while they value interactional justice more than men. Hallock (1997), for example, has observed that one of the most frequent themes coming out of recent campaigns among women workers "is the call for dignity and respect". "Women often believe", she further notes, "their work is invisible and undervalued. For women seeking to improve their workplace, demands for dignity, respect, and participation go hand-in-hand". Here the implication seems to be that because women's work is so often low-status, interactional justice, being treated with dignity and respect, assumes comparatively greater importance for them.

Crain (1994) has also implicitly suggested that women and men may differ in the value placed on organizational justice dimensions. Based on her survey of union organizers, she criticized those who "are narrowly focused on 'bread and butter' economic issues, such as wages and benefits, rather than on social issues such as dignity, discrimination, or voice which are likely to appeal to pink-collar and service workers". She argues further that organizers make the mistake of overemphasizing "bread and butter" issues with women workers because "the target population has historically been conceived of as largely male" in their minds.

Interestingly, while there is no clear empirical data to date to support the anecdotal claims, some recent extensions of organizational justice research have elaborated complementary conceptual frameworks. Analyzing the relationship between differences in socialization by gender and gender-based variation in normative beliefs (Chodorow, 1978; Gilligan, 1982), Lee, Pillutla, and Law (2000) argued that women and men should differ in their relative valuation of different dimensions of organizational justice. Specifically, because traditional socialization processes were designed to prepare women for caretaker roles within the family, women place maintaining relationships and an ethic of mutual obligations front and center in their moral system. In a nutshell, the interpersonal domain is prioritized. Alternatively, men more commonly operate from within a normative system that emphasizes abstract, rule-based moral judgments. This distinction formed the basis for propositions that women would value interpersonal justice more than men, while men

would value distributive and procedural justice more. As further justification of their propositions, Lee and her co-authors cited previous research that had found that men did indeed value distributive justice more than women (Brockner & Adsit, 1986; Greenberg & McCarty, 1990; Sweeney & McFarlin, 1997). The authors did not, however, translate the full set of their propositions to confirmable hypotheses. In the end, their data confirmed only that gender would moderate the relationship between procedural justice and perceptions that an organization has fulfilled its stated promises and commitments to employees (contract fulfillment).

Expectation states theorists also remind us that discrimination based on traditional role stereotypes operates such that women are comparatively more likely to exert informal influence in the workplace through the operation of interpersonal relationships (Carli, 1999). This referent power is in contrast to power derived through formal position in an organizational hierarchy (legitimate power) or through the possession of specialized knowledge or skills (expert power). This concentrated dependency on the interpersonal domain arguably conditions a woman to be much more sensitive to interactions that constitute a behavioral manifestation that her social influence over a superior is minimal or nonexistent. In this vein, Williams, Pitre, and Zainuba (2002) have argued that perceived interactional fairness serves as an indicator that a supervisor considers employees valuable and important as individuals.

Further, the literature on emotions in the workplace posits an ironic twist in the equation. Discrimination creates a double bind for women. While they may more often find that referent power is the only avenue through which they can exercise influence and gain status, however modest, in the workplace, they are more likely to suffer from abusive and disrespectful treatment on the part of their superiors. To some extent, this pattern is linked to the type of jobs to which women are more often confined due to the operation of occupational segregation in the economy. Feminist sociologists examining the role of emotions in the workplace have noted that low-status workers more often endure outbursts of anger and other negative emotional displays from superiors than do workers in other types of jobs in the economy (Crawford, Kippas, Onyx, Gault, & Benton, 1992; Kemper, 1978; Hochschild, 1983; Thoits, 1989). Beyond the effects of occupational segregation, women are often singled out for mistreatment and harassment that targets their gender identity even when employed in the same jobs as men. Forrest (2000) in a study of manufacturing workers in Canada points out that managers would often delight in humiliating women workers by monitoring and making fun of their necessarily more frequent bathroom use and "pushing their buttons" until the women begin to cry. The women also report that supervisors talk differently to their male subordinates than to their female subordinates, adopting a tone of greater respect with the former while being dismissive with the latter.

In summary, based on the implications of previous organizational justice, expectation state, and emotions in the workplace streams of research, we hypothesize:

H1   Women will value interactional justice more highly than men.

What women in general experience in the workplace is presumably magnified for women of color. For one thing, they are more often confined to jobs at the bottom of the occupational hierarchy. Apart from the issue of occupational segregation, however, the dual, sometimes, overlapping burdens of gender and racial discrimination may operate to amplify the potential for poor quality interactions with superiors. Certainly the potential for

racial discrimination operating as a factor for many black women workers is suggested by the fact that they are still more likely to be supervised by whites than by blacks (Smith & Elliott, 2002). Given this dual burden, we hypothesize that:

H2   Black women will be the most likely to value interactional justice in the workplace.

The Study

Sample

We conducted a study to examine gender differences in views of organizational justice. We collected 290 questionnaires from individuals employed both in public and private sector organizations. We selected part of the sample from among unionized workers attending labor education classes provided for local affiliates of the Communications Workers of America (9%) and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (16.6%). The response rate on surveys in these classes was 100%. There was also a 100% response rate in a private sector non-union hospital where the co-authors personally administered the survey to a random sample of employees identified by the Director of Human Resources (34.1%). The response rate was lower in two non-union private sector organizations where human resources administrators distributed surveys to all non-supervisory personnel. One of these firms filled medical prescriptions (16.2%); the other was a computer data processing firm (24.1%).

The gender breakdown of our sample was 70% ($N=203$) female and 30% ($N=87$) male. The average age of respondents was 40.5 years (SD=10.7 years). Eighty-one percent ($N=228$) were white, while 19% ($N=52$) were members of minority groups. At 10.7% ($N=31$) Blacks comprised the largest portion of the racial minorities. Latin Americans at 1.7% ($N=2$) made up the second largest minority group. The distribution across broad occupational groups was 19.4% ($N=57$) service, 14.4% ($N=42$) clerical, 3.2% ($N=10$) manufacturing/ skilled trades, 59.2% ($N=169$) professional/technical, 3.9% ($N=12$) other occupational groups. Twenty-six percent ($N=74$) were union members; 74% ($N=216$) were not union members. The breakdown for income level was 18.4% ($N=51$) earning less than $25,000, 46.2% ($N=128$) earning between $25,000 and $49,999, 27.1% ($N=75$) between $50,000 and $74,999, 6.1% ($N=17$) between $75,000 and $99,999, and 2.2% ($N=6$) above $99,999. For education, 0.7% ($N=2$) had less than a high school education, 14.9% ($N=42$) had high school degrees, 34.8% ($N=98$) had completed some college courses, 33% ($N=93$) had college degrees, and 16.6% ($N=47$) had attended graduate school.[2]

Instruments and Measures

We developed a survey instrument that included questions covering basic demographic information, employee satisfaction, commitment to the union (where applicable) and organization, and attitudes towards organizational justice.

For the organizational justice items we employed a forced-choice technique similar to that used by Hackman and Oldham (1980). We adopted the forced-choice approach because this technique has been proven to increase reliability and validity, especially when individuals

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[2] Not all of the respondents answered the income and education questions.

are asked to prioritize among stimuli that are all highly desirable (Miller & Salkind, 2002). The anchors for the items were adapted from measurement tools commonly used by organizational justice researchers. Items covering distributive justice were drawn from the Distributive Justice Index (Price & Mueller, 1986). Procedural and interactional justice items were borrowed from indices developed by Moorman (1991) and since used repeatedly by other researchers (Lee *et al.*, 2000; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Skarlicki & Latham, 1996).

Respondents were asked to choose which of two job characteristics they would prefer. For example, respondents were asked if they would prefer a job in which the level of pay is fair or a job in which management treats them with dignity and respect. Respondents indicated the strength of their preference on a five-point scale (e.g., Strongly prefer A to strongly prefer B). Two items that measure different forms of organizational justice were placed in random order in the questionnaire. Reliability scores on the forced-choice items were as follows: distributive justice, alpha=0.66; procedural justice, alpha=0.71; interactional justice, alpha=0.64.

To create the variables that measure the relative priority of each form of justice, we took the mean of the eight items that measure a specific form of justice in comparison to the other two forms of justice. (Reverse scoring was necessary on some items so that a larger number reflected a higher priority.)

Our gender dummy variable was coded 1 = women or 2 = men.

Our control variables included the following:

(1) Age—a continuous variable developed from a question asking, "In what year were you born?"
(2) Race—a dummy variable coded 1 = white or 2 = minority.
(3) Union status—a dummy variable coded 1 = not a union member or 2 = union member.
(4) Occupational group—a categorical variable coded service (1), clerical (2), manufacturing/skilled trades (3), professional/technical (4), or other (5).
(5) Income—an ordinal variable coded $0–$25,000 (1), $25,000–$49,999 (2), $50,000–$74,999 (3), $75,000–$99,999 (4), and $100,000 and above (5).
(6) Education—an ordinal variable coded less than a high school degree (1), high school degree (2), some college (3), college graduate (4), and graduate education (5).

Results

Table 1 contains results from a simple MANOVA analysis. In this analysis the variables representing prioritization of the three organizational justice dimensions were dependent

Table 1 Manova analysis determinants of organizational justice preferences.

Variable		Distributive justice	Procedural justice	Interactional justice
Part A				
Gender	*F*-value	9.668	18.904	2.546
	Significance	0.002	0.000	0.112
Part B				
Gender	Female mean	3.099	2.650	3.251
	Male mean	2.835	3.049	3.116

N=290

variables and gender was the independent variable. We used multivariate analysis of variance because we assumed that priorities might be correlated across the three organizational justice dimensions. The table gives the mean scores for males and females, as well as associated F-values and significance levels.

The between-subjects results indicate that women scored significantly higher than men in the prioritization of distributive justice (mean$_{women}$=3.10, mean$_{men}$=2.84, F=9.67, $p<$ 0.01), but they scored significantly lower than men in the prioritization of procedural justice (mean$_{women}$=2.65, mean$_{men}$=3.05, F=18.90, $p<0.01$). There was no significant gender difference in the prioritization of interactional justice.

However in the presence of controls, the results differ markedly. We next conducted a MANCOVA analysis controlling for the effects of age, race, union status, occupational group, education, and income. Table 2 presents the results of this analysis. Gender no longer has significant effects. Instead, the union status variable has significant effects across all three justice measures. More detail derives from the marginal mean results. Specifically, union members gave lesser priority to distributive justice (marginal mean$_{union,}$=2.78, marginal mean$_{non-union}$=3.04, F=5.28, $p<0.05$) and to interactional justice (marginal mean$_{union,}$=2.90, marginal mean$_{non-union}$=3.34, F=20.27, $p<0.001$) than did nonunion members. However, union members give greater priority to procedural justice (marginal mean$_{union,}$=3.31, marginal mean$_{non-union}$=2.62, F=43.726, $p<0.001$) than did non-union respondents.

One final effort was made to confirm the existence of gender effects. We conducted a third MANCOVA analysis that included a series of interaction terms combining gender

Table 2 Mancova analysis determinants of organizational justice references.

Variable		Distributive justice	Procedural justice	Interactional justice
Part A				
Gender	F-value	2.760	2.879	0.001
	Significance	0.098	0.091	0.974
Race	F-value	0.836	0.204	2.043
	Significance	0.361	0.652	0.154
Occupational group	F-value	0.325	1.424	1.120
	Significance	0.861	0.348	0.227
Union status	F-value	5.279	43.726	20.265
	Significance	0.022	0.000	0.000
Age	F-value	0.238	0.264	1.098
	Significance	0.626	0.608	0.296
Income	F-value	1.360	0.483	3.795
	Significance	0.245	0.488	0.053
Education	F-value	0.175	0.030	0.384
	Significance	0.676	0.862	0.536
Part B[a]				
Gender	Female mean[b]	2.973	2.846	3.181
	Male mean	2.833	3.094	3.074
Union status	Non-member mean	3.035	2.623	3.342
	Union member mean	2.782	3.314	2.904

N=256

[a]Besides our target variable gender, marginal means are indicated for variables that had either significant main effects or were significant in interaction with other variables.

[b]These are marginal means that represent the mean value controlling for other variables.

with race, occupational group, and union status respectively. Table 3 reports these results. Again, the main effects of union status were significant. The main effects of gender remained insignificant. However, while no effects were noted for the other dimensions, the interaction of gender and race had significant effects on the value given to interactional

Table 3 Mancova analysis determinants of organizational justice references.

Variable		Distributive justice	Procedural justice	Interactional justice
Part A				
Gender	*F*-value	0.934	1.124	0.010
	Significance	0.335	0.290	0.920
Race	*F*-value	0.387	0.191	1.249
	Significance	0.535	0.662	0.265
Occupational group	*F*-value	0.463	1.263	1.182
	Significance	0.763	0.285	0.320
Union status	*F*-value	3.874	40.621	21.662
	Significance	0.050	0.000	0.000
Age	*F*-value	0.501	0.128	1.266
	Significance	0.480	0.721	0.262
Income	*F*-value	0.049	0.493	0.951
	Significance	0.825	0.483	0.330
Education	*F*-value	0.136	0.006	0.222
	Significance	0.713	0.937	0.638
Gender[b] race	*F*-value	3.421	0.143	5.524
	Significance	0.066	0.706	0.020
Gender[b] occupational group	*F*-value	0.239	0.172	0.323
	Significance	0.869	0.916	0.809
Gender[b] union status	*F*-value	0.240	0.999	0.290
	Significance	0.624	0.319	0.591
Gender[b] age	*F*-value	0.002	0.020	0.010
	Significance	0.963	0.887	0.920
Gender[b] income	*F*-value	1.728	0.297	0.658
	Significance	0.190	0.418	0.586
Gender[b] education	*F*-value	0.064	0.192	0.531
	Significance	0.801	0.662	0.467
Part B[a]				
Gender	Female mean*	2.930	2.824	3.247
	Male mean	2.811	3.107	3.082
Race	White mean	2.931	2.938	3.131
	Minority mean	2.833	2.936	3.231
Gender[b] race	White female mean	3.105	2.810	3.085
	Minority female mean	2.790	2.835	3.376
	White male mean	2.733	3.084	3.193
	Minority male mean	2.920	3.139	3.139
Union status	Non-member mean	2.974	2.640	3.387
	Union member mean	2.778	3.277	2.945

N=256

[a]Besides our target variable gender, marginal means are indicated for variables that had either significant main effects or were significant in interaction with other variables.

[b]These are marginal means that represent the mean value controlling for other variables.

justice. Further, marginal mean results for the interaction suggest that minority women valued interactional justice more highly (marginal mean $_{minority \ women,}$=3.38, marginal mean $_{white \ women}$=3.09, marginal mean $_{minority \ men}$=3.14, marginal mean $_{white \ men, \ 3.19}$; F= 5.52, $p<0.05$) than did either white women, minority men, or white men.

The marginal mean results also suggest some useful within-subject comparisons. For minority women, the 3.38 marginal mean value on interactional justice exceeds the marginal means for distributive justice (2.79) and for procedural justice (2.84). Thus, not only do minority women seem to value interactional justice more highly compared to white women and males, but they also seem to value interactional justice over either of the other two organizational justice dimensions.

To confirm this within-subject observation, we created three new variables. The first variable represented the difference obtained when scores on the interactional justice scale were subtracted from the distributive justice scale. The second variable represented the difference between scores on the interactional justice and procedural justice scales, and the third represented the difference between the distributive justice and procedural justice scale scores. We then regressed these mean differences on the same control and interaction terms that were used in Table 3. Based on the marginal means and standard error results from these regressions, we calculated whether marginal mean differences were significant. These results (not shown) indicated that the marginal mean differences between interactional justice and, respectively, distributive and procedural justice were significant for minority women only. Further, the absolute value of the differences confirmed that interactional justice was valued more highly than either distributive or procedural justice by minority women.

Discussion

The results of this study indicated that absent controls, significant differences exist in the valuation of organizational justice by gender. Women were more concerned than men with distributive justice and less concerned than men with procedural justice. However, these results disappeared once controls were added in a second MANCOVA analysis. Most importantly, in the presence of controls, the interactional justice variable was not significant. Thus Hypothesis 1 was not confirmed.

Because only the union member variable was significant and because the gender effects on organizational justice variables contrasted sharply with the earlier results, we conjecture that union membership may occasion a reprioritization of organizational justice perceptions among women. It is possible that had our sample excluded unionists, the gender results obtained in the first MANCOVA would have been replicated even in the face of additional controls. As the major empirical goal of this present effort was to shed light on the impact that organizational justice preferences have on organizing campaigns, this reprioritization possibility is certainly deserving of further study.

In a third MANCOVA analysis, the interaction combining race and gender was significant even in the presence of the union member variable. This result offers direct and strong evidence that meaningful differences in attitudes towards organizational justice are created by the interaction of race and gender. This result also seems to apply to both nonunion and union minority women. Minority women appear to value interactional justice more than either distributive or procedural justice. They also appear to value interactional justice more than either white women or males. Thus, Hypothesis 2 has been confirmed.

In effect, this study adds nuance to the anecdotal evidence regarding how best to organize women: minority women, rather than women in general, may be the most responsive to organizing campaigns that emphasize improving how they are treated in the workplace. This result suggests that using titles like "Unite for Dignity" for organizing campaigns would have a particular emotional resonance for black women workers. This precise title was given to a recent joint effort by UNITE and SEIU to organize Florida's predominately black female nursing home workers (Benz, 2005). At a more in-depth level and corresponding to a multi-faceted organizing strategy that emphasized educating legislators and the public about the contributions that nursing home workers make to the wider society, activists in the campaign have reported how "Unite for Dignity" helped the women themselves better understand the "vital and crucial" nature of their work (Benz, 2005). In turn, the psychological literature (Bernick, 1981; Chatterjee, 1960) suggests that an improved self-image potentially impacts workplace interactions. Previously abusive supervisors find subordinates who were formerly "easy targets" now capable of "standing up for themselves" and newly insistent on being treated with the dignity and respect.

This is not to say that the other two dimensions of organizational justice should be ignored. It is worth reiterating that before entering controls into the analysis, the results indicated that women valued distributive justice more than men. Further, the results with controls opened up the possibility that unorganized women differ from already organized women in their organizational justice attitudes with the former category of women effectively valuing distributive justice more than the latter category. In the meantime, unions should better articulate the links between improvements in how one is treated by supervisors in the workplace and the other two organizational justice domains. For example, with regard to procedural justice, we interpret the data here to suggest that minority women might be more readily convinced of the usefulness of unions to the extent that they recognize the relationship between union due process mechanisms like grievance procedures and being accorded respectful treatment. Examples can be given of how successful grievances have been filed in the relevant industry or occupation when supervisors treat their subordinates in an abusive manner, e. g. using obscene language; public reprimands. Such grievances can be more easily upheld where unions include contract language like that negotiated on behalf of SEIU Local 1's janitorial workers in Chicago: "Employees and management representatives will be treated with respect and dignity by all parties to this agreement."

At the same time, as anyone with any experience of unions comes to know, there are real limits to how much formal grievance procedures are likely to constrain behavior that is often subtle in form, difficult to measure by mutually agreed upon criterion, and therefore difficult to substantiate. Consequently, in private sector workplaces where minority female workforces predominate, union organizers might propose that a first contract include provisions that supervisors be trained in conflict management and non-authoritarian approaches to managing people. Also, recent studies have demonstrated that being treated with dignity and respect correlates with supervisors being willing to consider an employee's viewpoint when making decisions (e.g. Moorman, 1991). This finding dovetails nicely with recent evidence from clerical worker organizing campaigns that working women want to participate more in organizational decision making. Indeed, when organizing minority women, being able to fashion practicable contract proposals that extend employee participation may be especially useful.

In communicating with minority women workers, it also behooves unions to reaffirm the link that sociologists have long recognized between pay and status in our society (e.g.,

Ridgeway, Boyle, & Kuipers, 1998). Improving wage levels of low-wage, low-status service sector workers obviously does not alter the fact that they hold jobs that will probably remain in the lower ranks of occupational hierarchies in the near future (despite modest pay equity successes), but union workers typically are among the highest paid within an occupation—which plausibly boosts their perceived status among other employees, family members, and even neighbors.

The question is how best to communicate these psychological interconnections without sounding too much like an academic. Feminist researchers have recognized the pedagogical value of women's stories, particularly stories about women's working lives (e.g., Geiger, 1986; Kaminski, 2003). Therefore, we believe that telling relevant stories of how women have been personally transformed by their engagement with unions would be a good approach.

This discussion has reaffirmed the need for further empirical research on this topic. Further research can redress obvious limitations in this study. One of the most obvious is the potential for response bias generated by recruiting some survey respondents through their Human Resources Departments. This recruitment approach may have increased the likelihood that respondents answered questions about organizational justice to effectively downplay any evidence of discontent with their organization and its practices. Alternatively, our survey approached organizational justice through a forced-choice format that elicited abstract normative preferences, rather than from through a measurement approach that emphasized critical assessment of firm-specific practices. For this reason, we believe that the impact of response bias should be minimal.

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