



# The Self in Procedural Fairness

Constantine Sedikides<sup>1\*</sup>, Claire M. Hart<sup>1</sup> and David De Cremer<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Southampton

<sup>2</sup> Tilburg University

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## Abstract

Procedural fairness (whether the organizational decision-making process is perceived as fair) has profound psychological effects on organizational members. A vital reason for these effects is that organizational procedures communicate information which is relevant to the self. Specifically, this information is relevant to different types of self (individual, collective, relational) and, more importantly, to different motives within each type of self. As such, procedures satisfy the motives of uncertainty reduction and self-enhancement (individual self), the motives of reputation and status (collective self), and the motives of belongingness and respect (relational self). We provide illustrative evidence in support of our conceptual map, discuss complexities, and offer suggestions for future research.

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In the late 1970s, there was a paradigmatic shift in social justice research. Until then, empirical efforts had focused on distributive justice (Adams, 1965; Walster, Walster, & Berscheid, 1978). This referred to the consequences of the decisions that an authority made, with the authority being managerial, educational, political, legal, familial, or, generally, a group leader. The consequences (e.g., bonus, salary raise, promotion, task assignment, course grade, legal regulations, resource allocation) could be regarded as either fair or unfair by members of the group or organization. Theory and research by Thibaut and Walker (1975), Deutsch (1979), Leventhal (1980), and Tyler and Caine (1981) changed that empirical focus. Their work gave rise to the concept of procedural justice or procedural fairness.

## Procedural Fairness

Procedural fairness refers to perceptions of the way in which decisions are made in an organization. Do authorities use fair procedures when they make decisions on how to allocate various outcomes? Do organizational members perceive these procedures as fair, regardless of whether they were favored or disadvantaged by the outcomes? In other words, do members care about *how* decisions were made, irrespective of what the decisions

were? More specifically, do members' perceptions of procedural fairness change the way members feel, think, and behave?

Procedural fairness or unfairness has been typically operationalized by means of decision-making rules such as voice (Folger, 1997) or accuracy (i.e., whether information relevant to the decision-making process is used in a correct and valid manner; Van den Bos, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1997). In the case of voice (i.e., procedural fairness), participants are led to believe that the manager has taken their views seriously into account, and thus their input will shape the organizational decision-making process. In the case of no-voice (i.e., procedural unfairness), participants are led to believe that the manager has not paid attention to their views (i.e., implicit no-voice) or even rejected their views (i.e., explicit no-voice; Van den Bos, 1999), and thus their input will be irrelevant to organizational decisions. Paralleling this pattern, in the case of accuracy (i.e., procedural fairness), participants learn that the manager assessed accurately or validly their potential; that is, the manager considered carefully all of their qualifications when making the decision to hire them or not. In the case of inaccuracy (i.e., procedural unfairness), participants learn that the manager assessed inaccurately or invalidly their potential; that is, the manager capriciously considered only a small subset of their qualifications in the hiring decision. Other and less frequent operationalizations of procedural fairness or unfairness involve the implementation of two additional fairness criteria. One is consistency and refers to whether organizational rules are applied consistently across time and employees. The other criterion is correctability and refers to whether organizational members have the right to appeal against decisions that they find objectionable (Leventhal, 1980; see also Hart, Sedikides, & De Cremer, 2007).

Perceptions of procedural fairness have profound psychological consequences. For example, such perceptions influence members' emotions and transient mood (Van den Bos, 2001), impressions of and compliance with authorities (Lind & Tyler, 1988), authority trust and legitimacy (Korsgaard, Schweiger, & Sapienza, 1995), as well as intrinsic motivation and creativity (Tyler & Blader, 2000). In addition, procedural fairness perceptions influence job satisfaction and well-being (Schmitt & Dörfel, 1999), organizational citizenship (Moorman, 1991), workplace aggression (Neuman & Baron, 2005), revenge (De Cremer, 2006), and employee theft (Greenberg, 1990). Importantly, perceptions of procedural fairness have psychological consequences above and beyond concerns for distributive justice (i.e., concerns for material gain or outcomes; Güth, Schmittberger, & Schwarze, 1982; Tyler, 1984).

In all, then, members are more satisfied, think higher of the organization and of authorities, and are more likely to remain attached to their organization when they regard procedures as fair than unfair. Clearly, procedural fairness is important. But why so?

## The Role of Self in Procedural Fairness

Why do these psychological consequences occur? What drives these effects? Why do people care so much about procedural fairness?

In their pioneering work, Thibaut and Walker (1975) reasoned that procedural fairness effects are impactful because they are linked to equitability of resource distribution. Fairness of procedures has implications for fairness of outcome allocation. To be specific, fair procedures are likely to result in fair decisions or outcomes. It is for instrumental reasons, then, that people care so much about procedural fairness.

In the last 15 years, though, researchers have emphasized another reason why procedural fairness matters. This has to do with the interpersonal implications of procedures. Procedures – regardless of whether they involve voice, accuracy, consistency, or correctability – are conceptualized as social interactions (Skitka, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2003). Interpersonal treatment can vary in perceived quality; it can be seen as fair or unfair. Procedures, then, matter because of their powerful interpersonal component and interpersonal consequences.

What exactly are these consequences and, more specifically, for whom? We argue, along with other researchers, that these consequences directly implicate the self (Clayton & Opatow, 2003; De Cremer & Tyler, 2005a; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Skitka, 2003; Tyler & Blader, 2000; Tyler & Lind, 1992; Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). On the face of it, perhaps this argument will appear somewhat reductionistic. However, we contend that the argument is based on solid rationale and parallels developments in the field of social psychology.

One rationale for our thesis is that the self is fundamentally social (Andersen, Chen, & Miranda, 2002; Forgas, Williams, & Wheeler, 2001; Sedikides, Gregg, & Hart, 2007a). Social interactions are the medium through which important others shape the opinion persons have of themselves (Hoelter, 1984) and the way persons evaluate or feel about themselves (Leary, 2006). The self, then, is embedded in social interactions or procedures.

In addition, the self is embedded in justice concerns (Clayton & Opatow, 2003; Skitka, 2003). For example, people think spontaneously about justice when they imagine that an event has happened to them (e.g., earning less money than a colleague for the same job) rather than to someone else (e.g., a third person earning less money than a colleague for the same job) (Ham & van den Bos, 2008). Also, heightened accessibility of the self (e.g., I, me, myself) predicts stronger retaliatory reactions against the source of unfair treatment (e.g., manager; Brebels, De Cremer, & Sedikides, forthcoming). Moreover, heightened accessibility of the self predicts strivings to restore equity in the case of an undeserving overpayment (Reis & Burns, 1982), and it also predicts less cheating (Vallacher & Solodky, 1979) and less stealing (Beaman, Klentz, Diener, & Svanum, 1979).

The use of the 'self' construct to address why procedures matter accords with the social cognition perspective in social psychology. This perspective emphasizes the search for constructs that are at the heart of (i.e., mediate or moderate) social psychological phenomena (Fiske & Taylor, 2008). We argue that the 'self' is such a construct.

Recent advances, however, indicate that the self is not necessarily a unitary construct. At the very least, increased conceptual and empirical clarity will likely be attained, if the construct is trichotomized in terms of individual, relational, and collective self. We note that these three types of self are partially autonomous but highly interactive. We will elaborate on this distinction below.

### **Individual, Collective, and Relational Self**

The self-concept consists of three fundamental self-representations. These are the individual self, collective self, and relational self (Sedikides & Brewer, 2001). Stated otherwise, people rely alternately on their unique qualities, group memberships, or dyadic relationships in seeking or achieving identity (i.e., self-interpretation).

In particular, the *individual self* contains the unique constellation of characteristics that differentiate the person from other persons in his or her own group. This form of self-definition is achieved through social comparison processes, that is, by comparing oneself with ingroup members (Libby & Eibach, 2007; Sedikides & Gaertner, 2001). The *collective self* consists of characteristics that the person shares with members of the group with which he or she identifies (i.e., the ingroup). These characteristics differentiate the group member from members of other (typically antagonistic) groups (Abrams, Frings, & Randsley de Moura, 2005; Hogg & Abrams, 1988). The collective self is based on bonds with ingroup members – bonds that are derived from common (and often symbolic) identification with the ingroup. These bonds do not require close relationships among group members, and they are often impersonal. This self-definition is achieved, at a minimum, through assimilation with intragroup processes (Gaertner, Iuzzini, Witt, & Orina, 2006), although it can also be achieved through intergroup comparisons. Finally, the *relational self* contains those characteristics that the person shares with important relationships partners and define the person's role in the relationship. The relational self is based on attachment bonds (e.g., teacher–student, manager–employee, friend–friend, parent–child). This self-definition is achieved through the process of reflected appraisal, that is, seeing the self in the way that a significant other does (Carmichael, Tsai, Smith, Caprariello, & Reis, 2007; Chen, Boucher, & Tapias, 2006; Tice & Baumeister, 2001).

Procedures convey symbolic messages that have self-relevant implications for members. These implications will differ, depending on whether they refer to the individual, relational, or collective self. More specifically, these

implications will differ, depending on whether they satisfy *motives* that pertain to each type of self.

Recent advances in the area of the self have emphasized the motivational nature of this construct. The self is not merely a cognitive representation. It is also a construct imbued in motivation (Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999; Chen et al., 2006; Sedikides & Gregg, 2003). Satisfaction of self-motives is often achieved through social interaction, or, as the case might be, organizational procedures. Our general thesis is that fair (*vis a vis* unfair) procedures satisfy self-motives. Next, we turn to an illustrative discussion of which motives are relevant to which type of self.

### **Implications of Procedural Fairness for the Individual Self**

Unfair procedures threaten the individual self by increasing uncertainty and decreasing self-esteem or the integrity of the self-system. Alternatively, procedural fairness impacts on the individual self by satisfying two key motives: uncertainty reduction and self-enhancement.

#### *Uncertainty reduction*

Self-uncertainty is an aversive state (Hogg, 2001). It is associated with unpleasant feelings and with the perception that life lacks purpose, control, and meaning. Also, self-uncertainty is disruptive, as it blocks the ability to make decisions and to act upon them (McGregor, 2003). People, then, will be motivated to reduce their uncertainty level. They can do so by relying on aspects of their social environment, such as variations in organizational procedures.

Indeed, research has demonstrated that people use information about procedures to reduce their uncertainty (Sedikides, De Cremer, Hart, & Brebels, forthcoming). This use is manifested in terms of the sensitivity or disproportionate weight given to fairness information. When in a state of uncertainty (*vs.* certainty), people rate fair procedures more favorably and rate unfair procedures more unfavorably (Van den Bos & Lind, 2002). In a similar vein, self-uncertain (*vs.* self-certain) people manifest relatively intense affective and behavioral responses to variations in procedural fairness. For example, they express more positive affect and are more willing to cooperate for the benefit of the group when they regard procedures as fair, whereas they express more negative affect and are less willing to cooperate when they regard procedures as unfair (De Cremer & Sedikides, 2005).

#### *Self-enhancement*

The motive for self-enhancement refers to maintaining or boosting the positivity of one's self-concept, while avoiding or curtailing its negativity (Alicke & Govorun, 2005; Sedikides & Gregg, 2003). This motive is also

crucial in human functioning, as it predicts psychological health and resilient coping with adversity (Sedikides & Gregg, 2008; Sedikides et al., 2007a). Procedural fairness can satisfy the self-enhancement motive through its effects on self-esteem and self-affirmation.

*Self-esteem.* Perceived violations of procedural fairness have implications for self-esteem. For example, participants experience a drop in self-esteem level when an authority implements an unfair (rather than fair) procedure (Koper, Van Knippenberg, Bouhuijs, Vermunt, & Wilke, 1993; Shroth & Shah, 2000).

The plot thickens, however, when a researcher considers self-esteem not as a dependent variable but as a moderator. How does self-esteem moderate responses to procedural fairness? Brockner et al. (1998) reported that participants high (rather than low) in trait self-esteem were influenced more strongly by procedural fairness. This finding was replicated by Wiesenfeld, Swann, Brockner, and Bartel (2007). In contrast, Van den Bos (2001, Experiment 1) reported that participants low (rather than high) in state self-esteem reacted more strongly to variations in procedural fairness. In a conceptual replication, Vermunt, van Knippenberg, van Knippenberg, and Blaauw (2001) found that participants low (rather than high) in state social self-esteem used information about organizational procedures to a greater extent than organizational rewards in their judgments of fairness of distributed outcomes. Finally, De Cremer (2003) showed that participants low (rather than high) in state social self-esteem were more sensitive to variations in procedural fairness. In all, it is not clear whether procedural fairness impacts more strongly on low as opposed to high self-esteem people. A reason for this empirical discrepancy may be that different researchers have implemented different assessments of self-esteem (e.g., trait vs. state; global vs. social). Clearly, future research will do well to address this discrepancy.

*Self-affirmation.* Self-affirmation theory (Steele, 1988; see also: Sherman & Cohen, 2006) proposes that people are motivated to maintain self-integrity. They do so by perceiving themselves as moral, competent, and well-adjusted. These global perceptions of self-adequacy can shield against threats to specific domains of self-functioning. Alternatively, perceptions of self-adequacy in one psychological domain can make up for threat (e.g., negative feedback) in another. For example, affirming the self in one domain (e.g., values) can ward off threat in another domain (e.g., incompetence). Thus, self-affirmation lessens the impact of self-threat. Self-affirmation serves a self-defensive or self-protective function.

In a recent line of research, we (Sedikides, Hart, & De Cremer, 2007b) advocated that procedural fairness has self-affirmatory potential. Procedural fairness serves as a buffer against undesirable personal information: It

deflects the psychological impact of aversive events. Procedural fairness acts essentially as explicit (i.e., written) affirmation of one's own values or important attributes.

Two requirements needed to be met for an adequate testing of our hypothesis. The first requirement is the presence of an affirming opportunity. Participants ought to use this opportunity in order to defend themselves against threat. In our research, the affirming opportunity was procedural fairness. The second requirement is the presence of psychological threat. In our research (which was based on hypothetical vignettes), the threat was in the form of undesirable personal information from the perspective of a company employee (e.g., limited earning potential, increased commuting time). The dependent measures were attitudes toward the company, identification with the company, and commitment to the company.

The findings were consistent with our hypothesis. Despite the personally undesirable feedback (i.e., having their particularized earnings severely capped), participants in the procedural fairness condition were more favorable toward the company, identified more strongly with the company and were more committed to the company than participants in the procedural unfairness condition. In addition, these results were mediated by state self-esteem. Procedural fairness increased employee self-esteem which in turn was partially responsible for the more favorable attitudes, the higher identification, and the stronger commitment that employees expressed for their company. In all, the findings corroborated the self-affirmatory potential of procedural fairness.

### *On the interplay between self-uncertainty and self-enhancement*

We have argued that self-uncertain (vs. self-certain) persons rely on organizational procedures: They weigh disproportionately, are over-sensitive to, and overreact to information, about both fair and unfair procedures. Perhaps self-uncertain persons intensify responding to unfair procedures because they consider them personally threatening (Van den Bos et al., 2008). If so, self-enhancement, and in particular self-affirmation, would relax their responsiveness to variations in procedural fairness.

We addressed this issue empirically (De Cremer & Sedikides, 2005, Study 6). We operationalized self-uncertainty as self-uncertainty (i.e., the degree to which one has an ill-defined notion of selfhood; Campbell et al., 1996). After assessing self-uncertainty, we manipulated procedural fairness. Next, we manipulated self-affirmation. In the self-affirmation condition, participants spent a few minutes listing three positive self-attributes. In the control condition, participants spent a few minutes listing three features of their immediate physical environment. Finally, we assessed behavioral (i.e., cooperative) intentions. We hypothesized that a self-affirmation manipulation would be effective among self-uncertain but not among self-certain participants. Having just been self-affirmed,

self-uncertain participants would cease momentarily to rely on organizational fairness for self-validation and to perceive procedural unfairness as self-threatening. These participants would show a substantially attenuated reaction to variations in procedural fairness.

The results were consistent with the hypothesis. In the absence of self-affirmation, self-uncertain (compared to self-certain) participants responded more strongly to variations in procedural fairness: They were more eager to cooperate when procedures were fair, and they were less eager to cooperate when procedures were unfair. In the presence of self-affirmation, however, self-uncertain and self-certain persons did not differ in their responsiveness to variations in procedural fairness. Put somewhat differently, self-affirmation cancelled out the response extremity of self-uncertain participants.

### **Implications of Procedural Fairness for the Collective Self**

Unfair procedures threaten the collective self by decreasing reputation and status. Alternatively, procedural fairness impacts on the collective self by satisfying two key motives: the motive for reputation and the motive for status.

#### *Reputation*

Reputation refers to 'the beliefs or opinions that are generally held about someone' (*The New Oxford Dictionary of English*, 1998). As such, reputation is a judgment that emerges from the received treatment from others (Emler & Hopkins, 1990; Ferris, Blass, Douglas, Kolodinsky, & Treadway, 2003). This judgment is based on others' history of social interaction with the person and summarizes the impressions or behavioral expectations that others have of the person. Others can communicate this judgment to the person directly or indirectly (i.e., as gossip).

We (De Cremer & Sedikides, 2008) argued that, in organizational settings, information about one's reputation is provided by the enacting authority (e.g., manager, group leader) by means of fairness of treatment. Procedural fairness (e.g., opportunity for voice) signals a positive reputation, whereas procedural unfairness (e.g., lack of voice) signals a negative reputation. Moreover, variations in procedural fairness will have a stronger psychological impact on members who are highly concerned about their reputation. Stated otherwise, procedural unfairness will lead to a higher self-esteem reduction among positive-reputation members than negative-reputation members.

We carried out several studies to test this hypothesis. In Study 1, participants who were treated fairly (vs. unfairly) reported that the manager gave their reputation serious consideration. This effect was pronounced when fairly treated participants were identifiable to their fellow group members. Thus, Study 1 showed that procedures carry reputational implications.

Studies 2 and 3 moved away from treating reputation as a dependent variable to treating it as a moderator. These studies demonstrated that reputational concern moderates the impact of procedural fairness on self-esteem. Variations in procedural fairness were more strongly associated with the self-esteem of persons high rather than low in concern for reputation. Put otherwise, persons high in reputation concern experienced lower self-esteem when treated unfairly and higher self-esteem when treated fairly.

### *Status*

Status refers to a member's group standing or, more generally, to relative intragroup differences (Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler, & Schminke, 2001). Status plays a crucial role in organizational settings. In particular, procedural fairness information provides diagnostic cues about one's relative position in the group. By treating a member fairly or unfairly, the enacting authority in essence communicates the member's relative group standing (Tyler & Lind, 1992). Empirical evidence has been consistent with the argument that procedural fairness information has implication for members' recognition of their status in the group (Tyler, 1989; Tyler & Blader, 2002).

Additional research by Van Prooijen, Van den Bos, and Wilke (2002) and by Diekmann, Sondak, and Barsness (2007) has suggested a more nuanced relation between procedural fairness and status. Van Prooijen et al. hypothesized that, when status is accessible in members' minds, procedural fairness will have a stronger psychological impact. In Experiment 1, they manipulated the accessibility of the concept of status by asking participants in the experimental group to describe 'the thoughts and emotions that come to mind when you think of the concept of status' and 'a situation out of your own life in which status played a role' (p. 1356). In the control condition, participants wrote about 'watching TV' rather than status. The procedural fairness manipulation followed, with half of the participants treated fairly and half unfairly. In confirmation of the hypothesis, those participants who (a) had the concept of status accessible in their minds and (b) were in the procedural fairness condition thought that the experimenter trusted them more and treated them more courteously. The results were conceptually replicated in Experiment 2. Finally, in three field studies, Diekmann et al. demonstrated that procedural fairness had a stronger influence on the job satisfaction ratings of high-status than low-status employees.

### *On the interplay between reputation and status*

On the face of it, reputation and status appear to be homologous constructs. Surely, a member with a positive reputation must be high in group status,

and vice-versa. However, this may not necessarily be the case. It is possible for a member to have a positive global reputation regardless of whether this member occupies a relatively high or low standing in a specific group. For example, the reputation may be based on the member's conscientiousness, cooperativeness, and social skills rather than high achievement. A safe conclusion, then, is that reputation and status are overlapping but partially autonomous constructs.

Indeed, the empirical literature has produced enough inconsistencies to warrant an independent treatment of reputation. Research by Van Prooijen, Van den Bos, and Wilke (2005) is a case in point. Participants imagined their employee status as low, average, high, or unknown. (In the last condition, participants were given no information about their employee status). They then learned that organizational procedures were either fair or unfair. Subsequently, participants indicated how fair or appropriate they regarded the procedures, and how satisfied they were with the procedures. Participants whose status was known (rather than unknown) were affected more strongly by procedural treatment; that is, they regarded fair treatment as more fair or appropriate, and they were more satisfied with fair treatment. This finding suggests that intragroup status and reputation are convergent constructs: Participants had more to lose when their status (or reputation) was known than unknown. Interestingly, however, no differences emerged among low, average, and high status employees: These participants were equally affected by procedural treatment. This finding suggests that status and reputation are divergent constructs. Given this empirical discrepancy, more research is needed into the unique implications of procedural fairness for status and reputation.

### **Implications of Procedural Fairness for the Relational Self**

Unfair procedures threaten the relational self by decreasing belongingness and respect. Alternatively, procedural fairness impacts on the collective self by satisfying two key motives: the motive for belongingness and the motive for respect.

#### *Belongingness*

People are motivated to gain acceptance by others and avoid rejection from them (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Being excluded causes distress, pain, sadness, and anger (Williams, Forgas, & von Hippel, 2005), even when the excluding agency is despised (Gonsalkorale & Williams, 2007).

Procedural fairness satisfies the belongingness motive. Fair procedures are assumed to signal the symbolic message that one is accepted (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Thau, Aquino, & Poortvliet, 2007). Illustrative evidence for this assertion was provided by De Cremer and Blader (2006, Study 1). These investigators tested the idea that differences in the need to belong

moderate people's reactions (i.e., self-evaluations and emotions) to variations in procedural fairness. They first assessed participants' need to belong and then manipulated procedural fairness. As hypothesized, emotions and self-evaluations fluctuated as a function of procedure – that is, participants reported more negative affect (i.e., anger, disappointment) and more negative self-evaluations (i.e., incompetence, dissatisfaction with self) in the case of unfair than fair treatment. However, this pattern was pronounced among participants who were high in need to belong.

De Cremer and Blader (2006, Study 3) further hypothesized that persons high in need to belong would be more careful, vigilant, or systematic processors of procedural fairness information, given that such information would be directly relevant to their concerns for relational acceptance. Furthermore, compelling (as opposed to poor) reasons for why the manager instituted fair procedures would require more careful, vigilant, or systematic processing. First, De Cremer and Blader assessed the need to belong. Then they provided participants with either compelling or poor reasons for why the manager would give them the opportunity of voice in the organizational decision-making. The compelling reasons included 'the manager believes in democratic values indicating to people that they are important and valuable,' whereas the poor reasons included 'the manager once heard about giving voice opportunities and thought it was a fun idea' (p. 222). As hypothesized, participants' reactions (e.g., the extent to which participants judged procedures as fair and the manager as trustworthy) were influenced more strongly by compelling than poor reasons. This pattern, however, was more pronounced among participants who were high in need to belong.

### *Respect*

Respect has been defined as 'something to which we should presume every human being has a claim, namely full recognition as a person, with same basic moral worth as any other' (Hill, 2000, p. 59). Indeed, respect has been acknowledged not only as a relational-self motive (Frei & Shaver, 2002), but also as an interpersonal moral duty (Hill, 2000).

Receiving respect is regarded as an essential element of social justice. As Miller (2001) put it, 'justice and respect are powerfully and inseparably linked' (p. 545). Several empirical investigations illustrate the importance of the link between respect and justice. For example, research on interactional justice shows that people perceive a lack of respectful treatment as unfair (Bies, 2001). Also, people react strongly and negatively to perceptions of disrespect in legal or political settings (Tyler & Huo, 2002), as well as in organizational settings (Tyler & Blader, 2000). Finally, respectful versus disrespectful treatment by other group members (communicated via fair vs. unfair procedures) influences strongly people's emotions, self-worth, and behavior (De Cremer & Tyler, 2005b).

*On the interplay between belongingness and respect*

The relation between belongingness and respect was illustrated by De Cremer and Tyler (2005b). Participants were first classified as relatively high or low in need to belong. Subsequently, participants worked on a laboratory task and received feedback that either signalled respect or disrespect from other members of the group. Finally, participants indicated whether they wished to leave the group. Participants who were high (but now low) in need to belong expressed the intention to leave the group when they were disrespected rather than respected. This finding indicates interactive effects of belongingness and respect on human behavior.

Nevertheless, other findings present a more complicated picture of the relation between these two constructs. Simon and Stuermer (2005) tested whether respect is the result of acceptance by others. They manipulated the extent to which one was respected or disrespected by group members, and they also manipulated the extent to which one was accepted or rejected by group members. The dependent measures were willingness to cooperate with the group and identification with the group. Respected (compared to disrespected) were more willing to cooperate with the group and identified more strongly with the group. Accepted (compared to rejected) members identified more strongly with the ingroup, but were no more willing to cooperate with the group. More relevantly for the purposes of this article, the two factors did not interact on either dependent measure. In addition, acceptance did not mediate respect. This finding calls for additional research into the different ways in which belongingness and respect influence behavior in a justice context.

**Concluding Statements**

Procedural fairness, the extent to which people perceive that they are treated fairly or unfairly in a group or organizational setting, has remarkable effects on thinking, feeling, and behaving. A vital reason for these effects is the self: organizational procedures are important because they are relevant to the self. Not only is the self inherently social, but it is also embedded in justice concerns. In addition, organizational procedures communicate symbolic information that is useful to the self-system. This information can pertain to the individual self (identity derived from one's unique qualities), the collective self (identity derived from one's group memberships), or the relational self (identity derived from one's important relationships).

The implications of organizational procedures will differ, depending on which type of self they pertain. Unfair procedures present a different type of threat for each self. Such procedures threaten self-esteem and self-integrity (individual self), certainty and status (collective self), and belongingness and respect (relational self). Stated somewhat differently, fair procedures satisfy different motives for each type of self. We argued that (a) procedures involving

the individual self satisfy (at least) the motives of uncertainty reduction and self-enhancement; (b) procedures involving the collective self satisfy (at least) the motives of reputation and status; and (c) procedures involving the relational self satisfy (at least) the motives of belongingness and respect. This argument advocates the view that both self and responses to procedural fairness are imbued in motivation. Indeed, recent advances from neuroimaging techniques have provided evidence that perceived fairness is hedonically valued. For example, fair (compared to unfair) treatment leads to activation in reward brain regions (Tabibnia, Satpute, & Lieberman, 2008).

However, we did not intend to confound the implications of procedural fairness for motives within each type of self. As such, we acknowledged by presenting illustrative evidence that procedures may have distinct implications for the individual-self motives (uncertainty reduction versus self-enhancement), the collective-self motives (reputation versus status), and the relational-self motives (belongingness versus respect). An agenda for future research would be further to clarify the distinctiveness of these implications for each within-self motive.

Clarification of the unique implications of procedures for each type of self would be facilitated if a crucial dependent variable, self-esteem, were to be adapted in accordance with the type of self implemented in a given study. Thus, individual self-esteem (Rosenberg, 1965) would need to be measured in the case of the individual self, relational self-esteem would need to be measured in the case of the relational self (Chen et al., 2006), and collective self-esteem would need to be measured in the case of the collective self (Luhtanen & Crocker, 1992).

At the same time, though, we would like to acknowledge the potential for crossover of motives among different types of self. For example, by providing a sense of belongingness and respect, procedural fairness may also reduce uncertainty as well as enhance status. Alternatively, by increasing self-esteem and affirming the self, procedural fairness may elevate reputation while reducing uncertainty. Although forays into this research direction have been made (e.g., De Cremer & Tyler, 2005a,b; Van den Bos, 2007), additional research is needed.

In conclusion, we attempted to provide a conceptual map, accompanied by empirical illustration, on how procedures speak directly to (a) the three types of self – individual, collective, and relational, and (b) the different motives within each self – uncertainty reduction and self-enhancement for individual self; reputation and status for the collective self; belongingness and respect for the relational self. We hope that our analysis goes some way in adding clarity to the existing literature and in pointing to future research directions.

### **Short Biography**

Constantine Sedikides' research is on self and identity and their interplay with emotion and motivation, close relationships, and group processes. He

has authored or co-authored articles on these topics for *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Journal of Personality*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, and *Social Cognition*. Before coming to the University of Southampton, where he presently teaches, Sedikides taught at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. He holds a BA from the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece and a PhD from the Ohio State University.

David De Cremer's research is on social justice and social decision-making. His work has been published at *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, and *Leadership Quarterly*. He has edited two books and several journal special issues. He is the recipient of the 'Outstanding Social Psychology PhD-thesis award' (British Psychological Society, 2000), the 'Jos Jaspers Early Career Award for Outstanding contributions to social psychology' (European Association of Experimental Social Psychology, 2005), and the 'Comenius European Young Psychologist Award' (European Federation of Psychology, 2007). He has received fellowships from Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences (Stanford University), Center of Experimental Social Sciences (New York University), and Kennedy School of Government (Harvard University). Before coming to Tilburg University, he worked at Maastricht University. He holds a BA and MA from the University of Leuven and a PhD from the University of Southampton.

Claire Hart is a Research fellow in the Centre for Research on Self and Identity at the University of Southampton, UK. She obtained her PhD in Psychology from the University of Southampton, which focused on group processes and membership dynamics. Her current interests lie in the buffering role of procedural fairness in organisational settings, narcissists and how they maintain their positive self-views, and the prototypicality of modesty.

## Endnote

\* Correspondence address: Shackleton Building, Southampton, Hampshire SO17 1BJ, UK. Email: cs2@soton.ac.uk

Research by co-authors that is reported in this article was supported by Economic and Social Research Council grant # RES-000-23-1533.

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