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Perceived Organizational Support, Organizational Cynicism and Employee

Well-being

A thesis

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of the requirements for the degree

of

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Abstract

The present study examined how an employee's perception of their employing organization can impact his or her thoughts, feelings and behaviors. This study examined cognitive, affective and behavioral organizational cynicism in relation to perceived organizational support. Psychological strain, self-reported physical health and turnover intentions were investigated in relation to reduced POS and increased organizational cynicism.

An online questionnaire measuring perceived organizational support (POS), organizational cynicism, psychological strain, turnover intentions and self-reported physical health was administered to full-time American employees, who were not self-employed, via links posted to social media websites and also circulated through a manufacturing company's human resources headquarters. Two groups of participants responded, yielding a total sample of 161 participants. Group 1 consisted of participants from all industry types recruited using social media. Group 2 consisted of employees from the human resources headquarters of the manufacturing company. Groups differed significantly on almost all variables. This difference was controlled for in all analyses. Correlations and multiple regression analyses were used to test the hypotheses. All of the hypothesized correlational relationships were supported. Results of this study supported the notion that the multi-dimensional attitude of organizational cynicism is strongly and inversely related to POS. Contrary to predictions, affective and cognitive organizational cynicism did not mediate the majority of the hypothesized relationships between variables. This may have been due to the multicollinearity of the predictor variables. Significant mediation analyses results included: full mediation between POS and social dysfunction by cognitive organizational cynicism; partial mediation between anxiety/depression and self-

reported physical health by affective organizational cynicism; and, the partial mediation of affective organizational cynicism between POS and turnover intentions.

Future research may benefit from measuring the variables at different points in time in order to investigate causality between variables and also to avoid any statistical confounds such as multicollinearity. The identification of the high correlations between variables may encourage employers to actively attempt to address levels of POS within their organization thus resulting in benefits for employees.

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Chapter One:

Introduction

This study examines the concept of psychological strain in the workplace in relation to employees' perceptions of their employing organization and the multi-dimensional attitude organizational cynicism. Furthermore, turnover intentions and self-reported physical health of employees were examined.

According to the United States of America's Center for Disease Control and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the Federal agency responsible for conducting research and making recommendations for the prevention of work-related illness and injury, work organization and stress-related disorders are impacting a significant number of workers at the cost of both the employee and their organizations (Sauter et al., 1999). Between the period of 1989-2006, the General Social Survey, a biannual personal interview survey of U.S. households conducted by the National Opinion Research Center, found that 30-40% of respondents reported their work was "often" or "frequently" stressful (Smith, Marsden, Hout, Kim, & Davis, 2006). One study found that "one-fourth of employees view their job as the number one stressor in their lives" (Northwestern National Life, 1991).

According to the Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology (2004), research in the area of job stress posits that stress is an interaction of both the worker's individual characteristics and the working conditions. Individual differences do play a large role in the perception of stress in certain job conditions; not everyone will perceive stress from similar situations. Evidence does suggest that certain working conditions are *most* stressful to the majority of people. Therefore primary prevention strategies could be the best way to address job stress than addressing individual differences (Quick, 2004).

Another recent trend in the labor market is the increased rate of voluntary turnover of employees. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, as of 2013, American workers had been with their current employer for an average of 4.4 years, and only half that time for Millennials, or Gen Y employees. In 2000, the average tenure of employees was 3.5 years. However, the increase from an average of tenure of 3.5 years to 4.4 years has been attributed to the increasing age of the workforce (“Labor force statistics,” 2012). According to Leidner and Smith (2013) “30 percent of moves from one organization to another include demotions, whereas 4 percent of job changes include large promotions” (pg. 31). Therefore, one can conclude that there are reasons for increased turnover rates beyond promotions or monetary factors. According to research by Net Impact and Rutgers University (2012), younger workers are more concerned with finding happiness and fulfillment in their work lives than their older counterparts (Zukin & Szeltner, 2012). This study will investigate employees’ perceptions of their employer and their resulting attitudes, which may add to the body of research surrounding psychological strain and the intention to quit of employees.

Purpose of Present Study

The purpose of the present study is to investigate whether the multi-dimensional attitude organizational cynicism could explain the current trends of increased job strain and increased voluntary turnover in the American labor market. Furthermore, this study starts by investigating the possible source of the attitude organizational cynicism, which could be directly and inversely related to perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support (POS) has been found to have positive outcomes for employees and organizations, including reduced strain (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). While the positive outcomes of perceived organizational support have been highlighted in recent research, it would benefit academics, practitioners,

organizations and employees to understand the outcomes for employees if they do not perceive organizational support. Furthermore, negative outcomes, more specifically organizational cynicism, could occur if employees do not perceive support by their employers. This study investigates how POS and organizational cynicism are related to psychological strain and intention to quit. The consequence of psychological strain, self-reported physical health, will be also examined. The variable, self-reported physical health, has yet to be explored as an outcome of organizational cynicism. This information could be useful in order to better understand how the quality of employee’s perceptions of their organization could impact employees behaviorally, cognitively and affectively and how these attitudes could be related to turnover rates, psychological strain and ultimately impact employees’ self-reported physical health. Figure 1 pictures the theoretical framework that this study will investigate.

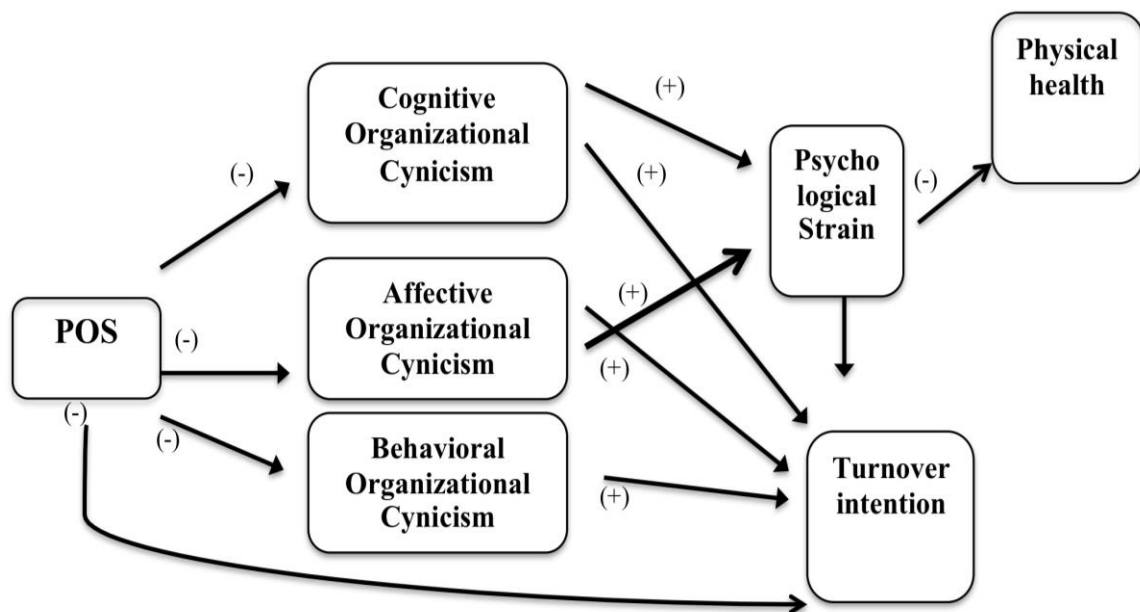


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework

Perceived Organizational Support

The employee-organization relationship is reciprocal. While the employee serves as a human resource to reach organizational objectives, the organization serves as a source of socioemotional resources to the employee (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986). Organizational support theory (OST) suggests that employees form a general perception of the extent to which they consider that their organization values and cares about their well-being, or perceived organizational support (POS) (Eisenberger et al., 1986). According to Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002), employees perceive organizational support due to three underlying processes. First, POS outcomes can be explained by the extent to which employee's socioemotional needs are fulfilled. Socioemotional resources range from addressing individuals' need for respect and caring to tangible benefits including wages/benefits. Furthermore, being valued positively by the organization helps to meet needs for approval, self-esteem and affiliation (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Secondly, POS has been found to be a result of the reciprocal nature of the employee-employer relationship; when an employee perceives organizational support (POS), he or she would feel an increased obligation to help the organization reach its objectives and increased affective commitment to the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Finally, POS could signal to employee's the organizations readiness to reward increased efforts on their behalf. Employees would expect that improved performance would be rewarded (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). These three processes can explain the organizational and individual outcomes that are associated with perceived organizational support.

Since the proposal of the concept of perceived organizational support, much research has been completed in the area including antecedents and consequences of POS at the individual

and organizational level. According to Baran, Shanock and Miller (2011) research surrounding POS has increased in recent years due to several factors. First, the outcomes of POS are highly relevant to organizations. Second, POS is relevant to different occupational contexts. Third, research has increased due to the development of a highly reliable instrument to measure POS. Finally; POS has a strong theoretical explanation rooted in OST (Baran, Shanock & Miller, 2011).

Consequences of POS

Consequences of POS include favorable outcomes for both the employee and employer. POS has been found to have a main effect on strains such as fatigue (Cropanzano et al. 1997), anxiety (Roblee, 1998; Venkatachalam, 1995) and headaches (Roblee, 1998). Other studies suggest that POS has a buffering effect on the stress-strain relationship due to the availability of material, socioemotional aids (George et al., 1993; Robblee, 1998). Furthermore, POS was strongly related to employee's job satisfaction, positive mood at work and desire to remain with the organization. Finally, POS has a significant relationship with job-related affect, job performance and desire to remain with the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). These findings support the hypothesized relationships between POS and the following variables: organizational cynicism, psychological strain, self-reported physical health and turnover intentions.

Organizational Cynicism

Employees seem to be increasingly cynical in the new millennium (Twenge, Zhang & Im, 2004). Organizational cynicism is the "belief that an organization lacks integrity, which, when coupled with a powerful emotional reaction, leads to disparaging and critical behavior" (Abraham, 2000, p. 269). Research surrounding the concept of cynicism may refer to different

types of cynicism that are distinctly different from organizational cynicism: personality cynicism, employee cynicism, occupational cynicism, societal cynicism and organizational change cynicism. Personality cynicism is the form of cynicism that is stable over time and an innate trait; this type of cynicism is characterized as a general mistrust of others (Barefoot, Dodge, Peterson, Dahlstrom & Williams, 1989; Greenglass & Julkunen, 1989). Employee cynicism is cynicism targeted toward big business, top management, and other entities in the workplace (Andersson & Bateman, 1997; Dean Jr, Brandes, & Dharwadkar, 1998). Occupational cynicism, or work cynicism, refers to cynicism perceived by those in certain particularly stressful occupations (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1993). Societal/institutional is cynicism directed at society for the breach of the social contract between the individual and society. Organizational change cynicism is pessimism about the success of future change efforts of the organization and is a reaction to failed change efforts in the past (Reichers, Wanous, & Austin, 1997). Change efforts include quality initiatives, right sizing, re-engineering and strategic management (Wanous, Reichers, & Austin, 1994).

These five other types of cynicism are distinctly different from organizational cynicism. This study investigates organizational cynicism as defined by Dean, Brandes and Dhardwadkar in following definition: “Organizational cynicism is a negative attitude toward one’s employing organization, comprising three dimensions: 1) a belief that the organization lacks integrity; 2) negative affect toward the organization; and 3) tendency to disparaging and critical behaviors toward the organization that are consistent with these beliefs and affect” (1998, pg. 345).

Cognitive organizational cynicism

The cognitive component of organizational cynicism refers to an employees’ belief that their “organizations betray a lack of such principles as fairness, honesty and sincerity...such

principles are often sacrificed to expediency...” (Dean et al. 1998, pg. 346). Furthermore, cynics may believe that choices made by the organization are self-interested. These cynical beliefs could be explained to occur as a result of reduced POS. If POS is inversely related to negative evaluations by employees of their employer; it is likely that these negative emotions are a result of the employee recognizing an imbalance in their effort versus output, or value by their employing organization.

Hypothesis 1a: POS will be negatively related to cognitive organizational cynicism.

Affective organizational cynicism

Organizational cynicism has been found to elicit negative perceptions that can be felt as well as thought. Dean, Brandes and Dharwadker (1998) stated that organizational cynicism consists of strong negative emotions towards one’s organization. Employees may report feeling ‘cynical, aggravated, tense, anxious or fed up’ when considering their employing organization.

Hypothesis 1b: POS will be negatively related to affective organizational cynicism.

Behavioral organizational cynicism

Along with emotional and cognitive responses to reduced POS, employees’ cynicism should manifest itself behaviorally (Dean et al. 1998). If employees do perceive support by their organization, then they should not demonstrate cynical behaviors. Dean et al. (1998) explain the behavioral component of organizational cynicism, or the tendency of individuals to engage in certain types of behaviors. When proposing this three-dimensional construct of organizational cynicism Dean et al. posited that critical behavior would include behaviors such as sarcastic humor, criticism of the organization and knowing looks and rolling eyes. While these actions are examples of cynicism, Dean et al. suggest that there are no behaviors that concretely define cynicism; the behavioral component of cynicism refers to behavioral tendencies of cynics. This

study will investigate behavioral cynicism as a component of organizational cynicism. Since Dean et al. clarify that there is only a tendency for certain behaviors, then requiring respondents to report certain behaviors that signal cynicism could be limiting the amount of people who report organizational cynicism. For example, a cynic may not admit to the tendency to engage in behavioral cynicism which may affect their reported level of cynicism. This study will use factor analysis to investigate whether or not the behavioral component of cynicism is a valid component of cynicism.

Hypothesis 1c: POS will be negatively related to behavioral organizational cynicism.

Chiaburu, Peng, Oh, Banks and Lomeli's (2013) meta-analysis on the current research regarding organizational cynicism using Dean et al.'s definition, revealed that perceived organizational support has a strong negative association with organizational cynicism, $r = -.56$. Further investigating this finding by examining POS and the relationship between the three components of organizational cynicism could be beneficial. Based on the previous research findings, POS should be negatively related to all three dimensions of organizational cynicism. In order to add to research in this area it would be beneficial to examine the relationship between perceived organizational support and three underlying components of organizational cynicism as defined by Dean et al. (1998): cognitive, affective and behavioral cynicism.

Psychological Strain

As research has revealed, psychological strain is a pressing issue in the workplace (Sauter et al., 1999). The annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII), a surveillance system of the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor Statistics, collects the number of different types of injuries and illnesses involving time away from work and the amount of time lost and the circumstances of the injuries and illnesses from private industry organizations. The

SOII found that anxiety, stress and neurotic disorders are associated with longer periods of lost workdays than all other types of injuries and illnesses. In 2001, the number of lost workdays for workers with these types of disorders was, on average, more than four times greater than the number of workdays lost for all nonfatal injuries or illnesses together (Sauter et al., 1999). One study found that “problems at work are more strongly associated with health complaints than are any other life stressor- more so than even financial problems or family problems” (St. Paul Fire and Marine Insurance Company, 1992).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined psychological stress as an individual's appraisal of the environmental demands as taxing or exceeding his or her resources to cope with the demands. This definition focuses on the interaction between the person and the environment and suggests that stress results from individuals' appraisals of the environment and his or her attempt to cope with issues that arise. This study focuses on psychological strain, which refers to the individual responses to stress. Banks, Whelpley, Oh and Shin (2012) proposed that a significant amount of strain could lead employees to feel that their social exchange with the organization is inequitable or unfavorable; that is, they feel that they are being exploited by their organization. However, this strain-emotion model could better be explained by a reciprocal relationship. This study suggests that it is the affective component, or felt cynicism, and cognitive cynicism that results in psychological strain. Feeling undervalued at work, resulting in negative job-related emotion, could be a source of strain for employees. Some researchers have found that POS has a main effect on strains such as fatigue (Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, 1997), anxiety and headaches (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Thus it is hypothesized that POS will be negatively related to psychological strain. Affective and cognitive organizational cynicism are hypothesized to mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain.

Hypothesis 2a: POS will be negatively related to psychological strain

Hypothesis 2b: Affective organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain.

Hypothesis 2c: Cognitive organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain.

Self-reported physical health

POS has been found to be positively related to employee physical health (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). Organizational cynicism has not compared to physical health outcomes of employees. Dupré and Day (2012) found that negative job-related emotion fully mediated the relationship between POS and employee physical health. This study proposes that affective organizational cynicism, or negative emotions directed at the organization, best explains the relationship between POS and physical health. Furthermore, this mediated model will be extended to include psychological strain. It is hypothesized that affective organization will mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain; psychological strain will then mediate the relationship between affective organizational cynicism and self-reported physical health. While, cognitive and behavioral organizational cynicism should co-occur with affective organizational cynicism, it is not hypothesized that the cognitive or behavioral components will be mediated to result in the reduced levels of physical health.

Self-reported physical health refers to overall somatic health, measured using general health indicators of quality of sleep, digestive problems, headaches and respiratory problems. According to NIOSH (2012), early warnings of job stress include headaches, sleep disturbances, short temper, difficulty in concentrating and low morale. These early warnings signs have been

linked to have much more serious outcomes in the long run. Job stress has also been found to increase the risk for development of musculoskeletal disorders. Stressful working conditions have also been linked to an increase risk in employee suicide, cancer, ulcers and impaired immune functioning.

Hypothesis 3a: Psychological strain will mediate the relationship between affective organizational commitment and employee physical health

Turnover intentions

Another important organizational outcome of perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism is the desire to remain with the organization. As described earlier, American employees today are more likely to switch jobs many times in their career, more so than Americans in the past. Turnover can be costly to the employer. This study focuses on turnover intention, since intention has been found to be the critical antecedent of the behavior of turnover.

Mobley (1977) proposed that the turnover process begins when an employee evaluates their job and working conditions. A positive evaluation of the work environment will reduce turnover intentions. This supports the findings that perceived organizational support has a direct effect on turnover intentions of employees (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). A negative evaluation of one's job and working environment could result in the intention to quit. Organizational cynicism has been found to be positively related to turnover intention (Chiaburu et al., 2013). This thesis proposes that all three components of organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions. However, cognitive and affective organizational cynicism should mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intentions for employees.

Hypothesis 4a: Perceived organizational support will be negatively related to turnover intentions

Hypothesis 4b: Cognitive organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions

Hypothesis 4c: Affective organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions

Hypothesis 4d: Behavioral organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions

Hypothesis 5a: Affective organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intention

Hypothesis 5b: Cognitive organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intention

In summary, this study aims to investigate the multi-dimensional attitude of organizational cynicism and its' relation to relevant organizational outcomes such as turnover intentions, employees' psychological strain and self-reported physical health. These variables will also be compared in relation to employees' perceptions of support by their employing organization.

Summary of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1a: POS will be negatively related to cognitive organizational cynicism.

Hypothesis 1b: POS will be negatively related to affective organizational cynicism.

Hypothesis 1c: POS will be negatively related to behavioral organizational cynicism.

Hypothesis 2a: POS will be negatively related to psychological strain.

Hypothesis 2b: Affective organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain.

Hypothesis 2c: Cognitive organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain.

Hypothesis 3a: Psychological strain will mediate the relationship between affective organizational commitment and employee physical health.

Hypothesis 4a: Perceived organizational support will be negatively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 4b: Cognitive organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 4c: Affective organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 4d: Behavioral organizational cynicism will be positively related to turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 5a: Affective organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 5b: Cognitive organizational cynicism will mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intentions.

Chapter Two:

Method

An online survey using Qualtrics software was distributed to full-time American employees. This questionnaire measured workplace attitudes, employee well-being, turnover intentions, demographic information (age, gender and ethnicity) and other relevant employee characteristics (tenure, industry type and position). Anyone was eligible to complete the survey as long as they were employed full-time in the United States of America. Participants were made aware of their rights before they began the survey: they could opt out at any time, their answers would remain anonymous and that they would be given access to the results of the study.

Participants

Participants consisted of full-time employees working in the United States. In total, 178 surveys were started and 160 were completed yielding a response rate of 89.89%. The majority, 146 (or 89.6%) respondents, was Caucasian/white and held a Bachelor's degree (n= 91; 55.8%). The sample was comprised of slightly more male respondents (n=87; 54.7%) respondents, than females (n=72; 45.3%). The respondents' ages ranged from 19-70 years old, with the mean age being 38.44 years (SD= 14.48 years). The respondents' average tenure at their employing organization was 7.10 years length; maximum tenure was 35.58 years and the minimum was .8 years. Table 1 presents what industry participants worked in. Participants reported their position descriptions most frequently as entry-level (n=36; 22.6%), senior management (n=26; 16.4%) or team leaders (n=23; 14.5%).

Procedure

Participants were recruited using two methods. First, I contacted the human resources

manager within a United States manufacturing company through a series of emails and phone conversations.

Table 1
Participants' Industry Types

Industry	n	%
Healthcare and Medical	10	6.29
Education and Training	11	6.92
Marketing and Advertising	8	5.03
Manufacturing	3	1.89
Hospitality and Tourism	6	3.77
Human Resources and Recruitment	71	44.65
Banking and Financial Services	7	4.40
Trades and Services (i.e. building, plumbing)	6	3.77
Engineering	4	2.52
Retail	4	2.52
Government	5	3.14
Science, Technology and Software	5	3.14
Military	2	1.26
Other	17	10.69

The manager agreed to send out my survey to their human resources corporate office, which consisted of approximately 150 full-time employees. The human resources manager circulated the survey link, along with a message encouraging employees to complete the survey. Two weeks later, another reminder email was sent out to complete the survey if employees had not done so. The survey link brought potential respondents to a webpage, which introduced the survey and outlined their rights as a participant (Appendix A). In total, 72 surveys were started and 68 completed, yielding a response rate of 94.45%.

For the second method of recruitment, I circulated my survey link on the social websites Facebook and LinkedIn and requested that only full-time workers currently working in the United States of America complete the survey (Appendix B). From these sites, 106 surveys were started and 92 completed, yielding a response rate of 86.79%.

Measures

Data were collected via an online self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire (Appendix C) measured the following variables: employee perceptions of organizational support, affective organizational cynicism, cognitive organizational cynicism, behavioral organizational cynicism, psychological strain, employee physical health and turnover intentions.

Perceived Organizational Support. Employees' perceptions of organizational support were measured using the 16-item shortened version of the Perceived Organizational Support Survey. This shortened version included the 16 highest loading factors from the original 36-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support (Eisenberger & Rhoades, 1984). Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with statements, ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*. Items included statements such as "My organization values my contribution to its well-being" and "My organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me" (reverse-coded).

Principal axis factoring was conducted on the 16 items with direct oblimin rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .95, well above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2(120) = 1804.74, p < .001$. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues. Two components had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 65.63% of the variance. The first component accounted for 56.47% of the total variance. The second possible component accounted for 9.16% of the total variance. Examination of the scree plot suggested that two components be retained (Appendix D). Table 2 presents the factor loadings after rotation.

The factor correlation matrix revealed that the two factors extracted were correlated at $r = .72$. The strong correlations found between the two components of POS suggest that only one factor be retained for further analyses. Therefore, a maximum likelihood factor analysis with

direct oblimin rotation was conducted with one factor selected to be extracted. Items loaded significantly onto the factor, ranging from .61 to .82. The Cronbach's alpha increased to .95 when all 16-items were included which further supports retaining only one factor for POS. These findings were similar to Worley, Fuqua and Hellman's findings of a Cronbach's alpha value .95 of the 16-item POS measure (2009).

Table 2
Factor Loadings for Perceived Organizational Support

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2
1. My organization values my contribution to its well-being.	.63	.25
2. If my organization could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary, it would do so. (R)	.59	.08
3. My organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me. (R)	.86	-.02
4. My organization strongly considers my goals and values.	.22	.58
5. My organization would ignore a complaint from me. (R)	.72	.10
6. My organization disregards my best interest when it makes decisions that affect me. (R)	.53	.15
7. Help is available from my organization when I have a problem.	.24	.53
8. Even if I did the best job possible, my organization would fail to notice. (R)	.91	-.13
9. My organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor.	-.03	.69
10. My organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.	.14	.68
11. If given the opportunity, my organization would take advantage of me. (R)	.81	-.03
12. My organization shows very little concern for me. (R)	.86	.04
13. My organization cares about my opinions.	-.13	.93
14. My organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	-.05	.87
15. My organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible.	.04	.72
16. My organization really cares about my well-being.	.14	.73
Eigenvalues	9.04	1.47
% of variance	56.47	9.16
Cronbach's alpha	.93	.83

Note. (R)=reverse scored item.

Organizational cynicism. Principal axis factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation was run on all 13 items included within the three dimensions of organizational cynicism. Three factors had Eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and accounted for 72.18% of the total variance. The scree plot suggested that three components be retained, which was expected since the affective, cognitive and behavioral components of organizational cynicism were expected to be separate from one another (Appendix E) Factors 1 and 2 were correlated at $r = .41$. Factors 1 and 3 were correlated at $r = .45$. Factors 2 and 3 were correlated at $r = .36$. For further analysis, separate factor analyses were run on each factor of organizational cynicism.

Affective organizational cynicism was measured using Brandes' (1997) nine-point, five-item semantic differential scale in which respondents were asked to rate how they felt about their employing organization. Principal axis factoring was conducted on the five items with direct oblimin rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, $KMO = .84$ well above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2 (10) = 580.59, p < .001$. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor of the data. One factor had an eigenvalue of 3.65, over Kaiser's criterion of 1, and explained 72.94% of the total variance. Examination of the scree plot (Appendix E) supported the decision to retain one factor. A reliability analysis yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .91.

Cognitive organizational cynicism was measured using Brandes' (1997) five-item, seven-point scale in which respondents rated their level of agreement from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree' to items regarding their thoughts about their organization. Principal axis factoring with a direct oblimin method of rotation was conducted on the five items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, $KMO = .78$, above the

acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2 (10) = 532.06$, $p < .001$. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each factor of the data. One eigenvalue was over Kaiser's criterion of 1 at a value of 3.36 and accounted for 67.26% of the total variance. Examination of the scree plot (Appendix F) supported the decision to retain one factor. A reliability analysis was run on the 5-items and yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .46. Upon deletion of item 4 "I see little similarity between what my organization says it will do and what it actually does" the Cronbach's alpha increased to an acceptable value of .86. Thus, item 4 was deleted for future analyses. The remaining four items loaded significantly onto the factor at a range of .63 to .90.

Behavioral organizational cynicism was measured using an adapted version of Brandes' (1999) seven-point, three-item scale. This scale was originally developed to measure behavioral cynicism towards top management. For this study, "top management" was replaced with "organization" in order to assess behavioral cynicism towards the organization. Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement from 'Strongly disagree' to 'Strongly agree.' A principal axis factor analysis was conducted on the three items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .55 ('mediocre' according to Field, 2009), above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2 (3) = 133.06$, $p < .001$. Factor loadings after principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation resulted in the deletion of item 2. Factors loaded significantly onto items 1 and 3, both at .85. However the factor did not load significantly onto item 2 (.27), supporting the decision to remove this item from further analysis. Item 2 stated: "I often talk to others about the way things are run at this organization." The ambiguous nature of this item combined with the significantly low factor loading supported the decision to remove this item for further analyses.

Furthermore, a reliability analysis was conducted on all three items. Once item 2 was removed Cronbach's alpha increased from .67 to .85.

Psychological Strain. Goldberg's (1978) 12-item General Health Questionnaire was used to measure psychological strain. Respondents were asked to report how many times over the past month they had, for example, "lost sleep over worry" or "were feeling reasonably happy all things considered." Respondents' answers were on a 4-point scale ranging from "not at all" to "much more than usual." Principal axis factor analysis was conducted on the 12-items with direct oblimin (oblique) rotation. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO=.80, above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2(66) = 747.54, p < .001$.

An initial analysis revealed that three factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 64.49% of the variance. Factor loadings are shown in Table 3.

Examination of the scree plot (Appendix G) was slightly ambiguous and could justify retaining two or three factors. As evidenced in the table, four factors load highly onto multiple items, suggesting overlap between the factors. Thus, a maximum likelihood factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation was run to see if a two-factor model would be a better fit. The new pattern matrix of factor loadings is included in Table 4.

Factor one, labeled 'anxiety/depression' accounted for 37.15% of the variance and factor two, 'social dysfunction' accounted for 16.98% of the variance, accounting for a total variance of 54.13%. Anxiety/depression and social dysfunction were correlated at a $r = .41$.

A reliability analysis was run for both factors yielding Cronbach's alpha of .82 and .82, respectively. For future analyses, anxiety/depression and social dysfunction were considered unique variables.

Table 3
Factor Loadings for Psychological Strain Measure with 3 Factors Retained

Item	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
1. Been able to concentrate on what you're doing? (R)	.57	.13	.04
2. Lost sleep over worry?	.27	.36	-.41
3. Felt you are playing a useful part in things? (R)	.49	.24	.53
4. Felt capable of making decisions about things? (R)	.63	.01	.47
5. Felt constantly under strain?	.24	.46	-.43
6. Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?	-.03	.61	-.13
7. Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? (R)	.76	.02	-.06
8. Been able to face up to your problems? (R)	.75	-.16	-.11
9. Been feeling unhappy or depressed?	.13	.66	-.06
10. Been losing confidence in yourself?	-.02	.85	.03
11. Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?	-.10	.71	.21
12. Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? (R)	.68	.05	.02
Eigenvalues	4.46	2.04	1.24
% of variance	37.15	16.98	10.36

Table 4
Factor Loadings for Psychological Strain Measure with 2 Factors Retained

Item	Anxiety/Depression	Social Dysfunction
1. Been able to concentrate on what you're doing? (R)	.13	.57
2. Lost sleep over worry?	.49	.13
3. Felt you are playing a useful part in things? (R)	.10	.58
4. Felt capable of making decisions about things? (R)	-.11	.71
5. Felt constantly under strain?	.56	.11
6. Felt you couldn't overcome your difficulties?	.67	-.09
7. Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities? (R)	.06	.72
8. Been able to face up to your problems? (R)	-.09	.69
9. Been feeling unhappy or depressed?	.69	.09
10. Been losing confidence in yourself?	.84	-.04
11. Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?	.65	-.06
12. Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered? (R)	.05	.69
Eigenvalues	4.46	2.04
% of variance	37.15	16.98
Cronbach's alpha	.82	.83

Self-reported Employee Physical Health.

Self-reported employee physical health was measured using the 14-item Physical Health Questionnaire (Schat, 2005). The measure was a list of symptoms in which participants described how often or how little they experienced the given symptoms, ranging from “Not at all” to “All of the time” on a 4-point scale. Examples of items include “how often have you had difficulty getting to sleep at night” and “Suffered from an upset stomach (indigestion)”? The 14 items were aggregated into one overall score as in previous research (Schat & Kelloway, 2003). No factor analysis was conducted because this measure is a list of symptoms in which the more

symptoms the respondent indicates represents a worse level of health. A reliability analysis on this measured yielded a Cronbach's alpha of .87.

Turnover intentions. Turnover intentions were measured using Bozeman and Perrewé's (2001) five-item, five-point Intention to Quit scale. Participants were asked to rate their level of agreement from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' with statements relating to their future employment intentions. Example items include "I am not thinking about quitting my job in the near future" and "I will probably look for a job in the near future." A rotated factor analysis (using principal axis factoring and direct oblimin rotation) analysis was conducted on the 5-item scale. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO=.82 ('great' according to Field, 2009). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant, $\chi^2(10)=546.46$, $p < .001$. An initial analysis was run to obtain eigenvalues for each component in the data. One factor had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and explained 71.22%. Examination of the scree plot supported retaining one factor (Appendix J). A reliability analysis for the five-items yielded a Cronbach's alpha value of .89.

Analysis

Control variables. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the scores on each measured variable between the scores of participants from varying organizations/industries (Group 1) and the scores of employees from the human resources headquarters of the manufacturing company (Group 2). Furthermore, an independent samples t-test was used to test for significant differences between gender and physical health. Results of the t-test are presented in the Chapter 3.

Correlations An inter-variable partial correlation analysis was run, while controlling for Group effects, to test the significance between all measured variables. Pearson's correlation coefficient, r , was analyzed for significance.

Multiple regression analysis was conducted to test for mediation effects between variables using Baron and Kenny's (1986) four-step method of analysis. Three separate regression analyses equations were performed:

- 1) Regress the mediator on the predictor variable.
- 2) Regress the criterion on the predictor variable
- 3) Regress the criterion variable onto the predictor and mediator variables simultaneously.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation occurs when the following conditions are met:

- 1) There is a significant relationship between the predictor and mediator variable in the first regression equation.
- 2) There is a significant relationship between the predictor and criterion variables in the second equation.
- 3) The relationship of the predictor variable with the criterion variable must be less in the third equation than in the second.
- 4) The mediator is significantly related to the criterion variable in the third equation.

According to Baron and Kenny (1986) full mediation occurs when, in the third regression equation, the predictor variable has no significant relationship with the criterion variable. Partial mediation occurs when the relationship between the predictor and criterion variable in the third regression equation is smaller in magnitude than in the second regression equation but is still

significant. A Sobel test is then carried out in order to test whether the mediation effect is statistically significant.

Chapter Three: Results

This chapter organizes findings into four main sections: (a) descriptive statistics, (b) control variables, (c) inter-variable correlation relationships and (d) mediated regression analyses.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics for all variables, including means (M), standard deviations (SD), skewness and kurtosis are presented in Table 5. No variable exhibited significant levels of skewness, or an absolute z-score above of 2.58 (Field, 2008), or a significant level of kurtosis according to Field's (2008) upper threshold of a z-score of 3.29. Thus, no data transformations were needed to insure normal distribution of data; no assumptions of normality were violated (Field, 2009).

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics for Variables

Variable	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	Cronbach's alpha
Perceived organizational support ^a	5.37	1.17	-.74	.10	.95
Affective organizational cynicism ^b	4.74	1.62	.14	.34	.91
Cognitive organizational cynicism ^a	2.95	1.32	.66	-.26	.86
Behavioral organizational cynicism ^a	2.97	1.75	.54	-.95	.85
Anxiety/depression ^c	1.78	.58	.69	-.11	.82
Social dysfunction ^c	2.43	.58	-.42	-.31	.83
Turnover intentions ^d	2.66	1.69	.99	.07	.89
Self-reported physical health ^c	2.39	2.39	.98	1.09	.76

^a7-point scale

^b9-point scale

^c4-point scale

^d5-point scale

Control Variables

The independent-samples t-test between Group 1 and Group 2 revealed a significant difference on almost every variable. Thus group was controlled for in all further analyses (correlations and multiple regression analyses). Group 1 comprised of participants recruited via social media and Group 2 consisted of employees from the manufacturing company. According to Levene's test for equality of variances, the variances in groups 1 and 2 were significantly different for most variables. Thus, Table 6 reports the test statistics for equal variances not assumed.

Table 6
Between Group Differences

Variables	Group 1		Group 2		t	df
	M	SD	M	SD		
Perceived Organizational Support	4.98	1.17	5.91	.89	5.77**	164
Affective Organizational Cynicism	4.52	1.97	5.04	.79	-2.31*	162
Cognitive Organizational Cynicism	3.33	1.35	2.43	1.06	4.80**	163
Behavioral Organizational Cynicism	3.71	1.77	1.98	1.14	7.60**	161
Anxiety/Depression	1.91	.59	1.6	.51	3.57**	160
Social Dysfunction	2.49	.58	2.34	.58	1.60	160
Self-reported Physical Health	2.64	.93	2.07	.67	4.56**	159
Turnover Intentions	3.25	1.77	1.19	1.19	5.96**	161

Note: **= $p < .01$. * = $p < .05$. M=mean. SD= Standard Deviation

Correlations

Results of Pearson Product Moments correlations between the variables are listed in Table 7.

Perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism.

This study hypothesized that employees would report cynical feelings, thoughts and behaviors towards their organization if they did not perceive support by their employer. The hypotheses concerning POS and all three components of organizational cynicism were supported:

Hypothesis 1a was supported. There was a significant negative relationship between perceived organizational support and cognitive organizational cynicism, $r = -.79, p < .01$.

Hypothesis 1b was supported. POS was significantly related to affective organizational cynicism, $r = -.81, p < .01$. Employees' cynical feelings of 'aggravation' or 'being fed up' with their organization were inversely related to their reported levels of POS.

Hypothesis 1c was fully supported. There was a significant negative relationship found between POS and behavioral organizational cynicism, $r = -.65, p < .01$.

POS and psychological strain

It was hypothesized that perceived organizational support would be negatively related to psychological strain. Since two factors were revealed during factor analysis, POS was compared to both anxiety/depression and social dysfunction to test hypothesis 2a. POS was found to have a significant inverse relationship with anxiety/depression, $r = -.47, p < .01$. POS also had a significant inverse relationship with social dysfunction, $r = -.42, p < .01$.

Turnover intentions were hypothesized to have a relationship with how employees viewed their organization (POS). Hypothesis 4a was supported; there was a significant, inverse relationship found between POS and turnover intentions, $r = -.54, p < .01$

It was also hypothesized that employees who reported feeling, thinking and behaving cynically towards their employer would also report increased intentions to quit. Turnover intentions were significantly related to the three components of organizational cynicism:

Hypothesis 4b was fully supported. A significant correlation was found between cognitive organizational cynicism and turnover intentions, $r = .45, p < .01$.

Hypothesis 4c was supported. There was a significant correlation between affective organizational cynicism and turnover intentions, $r = .53, p < .01$.

Hypothesis 4d was fully supported. There was a significant correlation between behavioral organizational cynicism and turnover intentions, $r = .44, p < .01$.

Table 7
Inter-variable Correlations

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Perceived organizational support	-						
2. Affective organizational cynicism	-.81**	-					
3. Cognitive organizational cynicism	-.79**	.67**	-				
4. Behavioral organizational cynicism	-.65**	.56**	.71**	-			
5. Anxiety/depression	-.47**	.45**	.37**	.41**	-		
6. Social dysfunction	-.42**	.39**	.43**	.31**	.34**	-	
7. Self-reported physical health	-.28**	.38**	.21**	.26**	.56**	.15**	-
8. Turnover intentions	-.54**	.53**	.45**	.44**	.33**	.27**	.21**

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

Multiple Regression Analyses

Hypothesis 2a and 2b predicted that affective organizational cynicism would mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain. Since psychological strain was found to consist of two factors, two separate multiple regression analyses were used to test this hypothesis. Table 8 presents the three mediated regression equations testing the relationship between perceived organizational support, affective organizational cynicism and psychological strain: anxiety/depression. Mediation was not supported.

Table 9 presents the three mediated regression equations testing the relationship between

Table 8
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation of POS and Anxiety/depression by Affective Organizational Cynicism

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R^2
1	Affective organizational cynicism	Perceived organizational support	-.87	-17.32**	.66
2	Anxiety/depression	Perceived organizational Support	-.50	-6.77**	.27
3	Anxiety/depression	Perceived organizational support	-.33	-2.63*	
		Affective organizational cynicism	.20	1.70	.42
		Sobel Test		Z= -1.73	$p > .05$

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

perceived organizational support, affective organizational cynicism and psychological strain: social dysfunction. Hypothesis 2b was not supported, there was no significant mediation found.

Table 9
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation of POS and Social Dysfunction by Affective Organizational Cynicism

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Affective organizational cynicism	Perceived organizational support	-.87	-17.32**	.66
2	Social dysfunction	Perceived organizational support	-.45	-5.83**	.18
3	Social dysfunction	Perceived organizational support	-.32	-2.45*	
		Affective organizational cynicism	.15	1.23	.18
		Sobel Test		Z= -1.22	P>.05

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

Hypothesis 2c predicted that cognitive organizational cynicism would mediate the relationship between POS and psychological strain. This hypothesis was partially supported. Table 10 shows the multiple regressions analysis testing for mediation between POS, cognitive organizational cynicism and psychological strain: anxiety/depression. There was no significant mediation found.

Table 10
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation of POS and Anxiety/depression by Cognitive Organizational Cynicism

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Cognitive organizational cynicism	Perceived organizational support	-.81	-16.25**	.66
2	Anxiety/depression	Perceived organizational support	-.50	-6.77**	.27
3	Anxiety/depression	Perceived organizational support	-.51	-4.27**	
		Cognitive organizational cynicism	-.02	-.15	.27
			Sobel Test	Z= .14	p>.05

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

Table 11 presents the results from the multiple regression analysis testing for mediation between POS, cognitive organizational cynicism and psychological strain: social dysfunction. All four conditions were met to signal full mediation. A Sobel test was carried out to test whether this mediation was significant. The mediation was found to be significant at $p < .05$. Cognitive organizational cynicism was found to mediate the relationship between POS and social dysfunction.

Table 11
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation between POS and Social Dysfunction by Cognitive Organizational Cynicism

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Cognitive organizational cynicism	Perceived organizational support	-.81	-16.25**	.66
2	Social dysfunction	Perceived organizational support	-.45	-5.83**	.27
3	Social dysfunction	Perceived organizational support	-.24	-1.89	
		Cognitive organizational cynicism	.27	2.23*	.27
		Sobel Test		Z= -2.20	p<.05

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

Hypothesis 3a predicted that psychological strain would mediate the relationship between affective organizational cynicism and self-reported physical health. Hypothesis 3a was partially supported. Table 12 shows the multiple regression equations testing for mediation between affective organizational cynicism, psychological strain: anxiety/depression and self-reported physical health. The Sobel test indicated the partial mediation was significant ($p < .01$).

Table 13 shows the multiple regression equations testing for mediation between affective organizational cynicism, psychological strain: social dysfunction and self-reported physical health. There was no significant mediation found.

Table 12
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation Between Affective Organizational Cynicism and Physical Health by Anxiety/depression

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Anxiety/depression	Affective organizational cynicism	.44	6.36**	.25
2	Self-reported physical health	Affective organizational cynicism	.36	5.14**	.23
3	Self-reported physical health	Affective organizational cynicism	.15	2.15*	
		Anxiety/depression	.48	6.74**	.40
			Sobel Test		p < .01

Note: ** = p < .01. * = p > .05

Table 13
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation Between Affective Organizational Cynicism and Self-reported Physical Health by Social Dysfunction

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Social dysfunction	Affective organizational cynicism	.39	5.34**	.16
2	Self-reported physical health	Affective organizational cynicism	.36	5.14**	.23
3	Self-reported physical health	Affective organizational cynicism	.36	4.72**	
		Social dysfunction	-.01	6.74	.22

Note: ** = p < .01. * = p > .05

Hypothesis 5a predicted that affective organizational cynicism would mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intentions. This hypothesis was partially supported as shown in Table 14. Affective organizational cynicism was found to partially mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intentions. Results of the Sobel test supported the findings of significant partial mediation.

Hypothesis 5b was not supported. Cognitive organizational cynicism did not mediate the relationship between POS and turnover intentions, as evidenced in Table 15.

Table 14
Multiple Regression Analysis Testing for Mediation between POS and Turnover Intentions by Affective Organizational Cynicism

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Affective organizational cynicism	Perceived organizational support	-.87	-17.32**	.66
2	Turnover intentions	Perceived organizational support	-.77	-.805**	.40
3	Turnover intentions	Perceived organizational support	-.31	-2.79**	
		Affective organizational cynicism	.26	2.51*	.42
		Sobel Test		Z= -2.43	p<.05

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

Table 15
*Mediated Regression Equation Testing for Mediation between POS and Turnover Intentions
 by Cognitive Organizational Cynicism*

Equation	Criterion Variables	Predictor Variables	β	t	R ²
1	Cognitive organizational cynicism	Perceived organizational support	-.81	-.16.25**	.66
2	Turnover intentions	Perceived organizational support	-.53	-8.05**	.40
3	Turnover intentions	Perceived organizational support	-.48	-4.41**	
		Cognitive organizational support	.07	.70	.40

Note: ** = $p < .01$. * = $p > .05$

Chapter 4:

Discussion

This study aimed to provide insight on the relationships between employees' perceptions of their employing organization, psychological strain in the workplace and voluntary turnover intentions. The present study examined the relationships between perceived organizational support, organizational cynicism and psychological strain, self-reported physical health and turnover intentions. Strengths of this study include that organizational cynicism has not been tested as a mediator between POS and psychological strain or turnover intentions in previous research; or, that the effect of organizational cynicism had not yet been compared to self-reported physical health in other studies, that the researcher is aware of.

This chapter discusses the following: organizational cynicism, relationships between variables, direct relationships, mediated regression relationships, limitations, practical implications and future research.

Organizational cynicism

Behavioral Organizational Cynicism. One of the purposes of this study was to investigate the multi-dimensional construct of organizational cynicism. This study investigated whether or not the behavioral component of organizational cynicism was a valid component of the attitude due to the fact that employees that would be considered as organizational cynics may not admit to engaging in cynical behaviors such as 'rolling eyes' or 'knowing looks' due to the social desirability bias ("Social desirability," 2008). Factor analysis revealed the behavioral component of the organizational cynicism measure was internally reliable with a Cronbach's alpha value of ($\alpha = .85$). Also, the inter-variable correlation revealed that the correlations between all three components of organizational cynicism were significantly correlated suggesting that employees

who would be found to be organizationally cynicism, would simultaneously report all three components of organizational cynicism. Thus, the behavioral component of organizational cynicism can be deemed a measurable component of organizational cynicism.

Relationships between variables

Perceived organizational support and organizational cynicism. In line with previous research, perceived organizational support was inversely related to the affective, cognitive and behavioral components of organizational cynicism. According to Chiaburu's (2013) meta-analysis, POS was significantly inversely related to organizational cynicism, ($r = -.56$) a combined score of the affective, cognitive and behavioral components. Results of this study showed significant high correlations between POS and all three components of organizational cynicism. POS had the strongest relationship with affective organizational cynicism ($r = -.81$) but was also very highly correlated with cognitive organizational cynicism ($r = -.79$) and behavioral organizational cynicism ($r = -.65$).

Perceived organizational support and psychological strain. Also in line with previous research, POS was significantly inversely related to psychological strain: anxiety/depression ($r = -.47$) and social dysfunction ($r = -.42$). Results of Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) meta-analysis found a significant inverse relationship between psychological strain and POS ($r = -.28$). Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) also found a significant relationship between POS and turnover intentions ($r = -.45$) similar to the findings of this study ($r = -.54$).

POS and self-reported physical health

Previous research has found mixed results regarding the relationship between POS and self-reported physical health. Arnold and Dupré (2012) found a positive correlation between POS and physical health ($r = 0.25$, $p < 0.05$), full mediation between POS and physical health by

negative job-related affect and partial mediation between POS and physical health by positive job-related affect. While other studies have found no relationship between POS and physical health (Richardson, Yang, Vandenberg, DeJoy, & Wilson, 2008). Other studies have found that POS reduces the effect of psychological strain on employees thus resulting in increased physical health (Richardson et al., 2006). However, the majority of research suggests that the POS and physical health relationship varies across different organizational contexts (Arnold and Dupré, 2012).

Turnover intentions

One aim of this study was to investigate turnover intentions in relation to the attitude of organizational cynicism and POS. Turnover intentions were most strongly related with POS ($r = -.54$) and affective organizational cynicism ($r = .53$). Chiaburu (2013) found that organizational cynicism, a combined score of the affective, cognitive and behavioral component was positively related to intention to quit ($r = .33$). This study found that turnover intentions were most highly correlated with the affective component of organizational cynicism ($r = .53$) then the cognitive component ($r = .45$).

Direct Relationships

One of the main purposes of this study was to examine the relationship between POS and organizational cynicism. This study hypothesized that employees evaluate the support they receive from their employer, or how much their employer cares about their well-being. If employees do not perceive that their employer cares about their well-being and values their contribution then they will develop negative emotions (affectivity), thoughts (cognitions) and behaviors towards their employer. While testing for mediation relationships, significant direct relationships between variables were found between POS and the different components of

organizational cynicism.

POS and organizational cynicism. According to the regression equation 1 evidenced in Table 8, POS accounted for 66% of the variance of affective organizational cynicism ($p < .01$). According to regression equation 1 evidenced in Table 10, POS also accounted for 66% of the variance of cognitive organizational cynicism. These findings support that employees may experience negative thoughts and emotions (cognitive and affective organizational cynicism) after negatively evaluating the support they perceive from their employing organization.

Mediated Regression Relationships

Out of the five hypothesized mediation relationships, and eight multiple regression analyses performed, this study found that three mediation relationships were statistically supported:

POS and psychological strain. It was hypothesized that affective organizational cynicism and cognitive organizational cynicism would explain the relationship between POS and psychological strain. Results of the mediated regression analysis found that cognitive organizational cynicism fully mediated the relationship between POS and social dysfunction. However, cognitive organizational cynicism was not found to mediate between POS and the second factor of psychological strain: anxiety/depression.

Affective organizational cynicism and self-reported physical health. Anxiety/depression partially mediated the relationship between affective organizational cynicism and self-reported physical health. Thus, affective organizational cynicism accounts for some, but not all, of the relationship between affective organizational cynicism and self-reported physical health. Therefore, there is a significant direct relationship between affective organizational cynicism and

self-reported physical health and also a significant relationship between anxiety/depression and self-reported physical health.

POS and turnover intentions. It was found that affective organizational cynicism partially mediated the relationship between POS and turnover intentions. These results support the idea that employees may be leaving their organization based on feelings of aggravation towards their employer as a result of a lack of POS.

As noted in the results section, there were mixed findings regarding the hypothesized relationships between the variables. The majority of the hypotheses regarding mediation between variables were not statistically supported, which may be due to the multicollinearity of the predictor variables. According to Field (2009), multicollinearity is detrimental to multiple regression analyses and exists when there is a strong correlation between two or more predictors in the regression model. Given the high correlations between POS and cognitive organizational cynicism ($r = -.79$) and POS and affective organizational cynicism ($r = -.81$), multicollinearity could explain the lower than expected value of r found in most of the regression analyses that included a combination of these predictor variables. Four of the five unsupported multiple regression hypotheses included a combination of POS and either cognitive organizational cynicism or POS and affective organizational cynicism. The variance accounted for in the multiple regression equation that was shared between the variables could overshadowed the unique variance of either cognitive or affective organizational cynicism, thus statistically showing there was no mediation when possibly there was. Furthermore, many of the hypothesized mediation relationships were borderline statistically significant. If the predictor variables had not been as highly correlated, there partial mediation might have been found.

Another explanation could be that POS has a direct effect on the outcome variables measured and that mediation of affective or cognitive cynicism would not be the correct explanation of how POS results in reduced self-reported physical health or in increased psychological strain.

Differences between groups

Group 1 consisted of the participants recruited from the social media websites while Group 2 consisted of employees from the human resources division of the manufacturing company. While other organizations were contacted to participate, the managers contacted within the organizations declined. One example given why an organization could not participate was that the time spent to fill out this survey (10-15 minutes) would take away from employees' productivity levels. This potential caveat with attempting to investigate organizational cynicism has been noted before Andersson (1996): "cynicism is generally viewed as negative and is therefore a sensitive topic to managers and organizations. Because of this sensitivity, negative attitudes as well as the organizational practices that foster them have been relatively neglected in management research" (p. 1401).

Another strength of this study was the use of two different groups of participants. The results of the independents' t-tests revealed these two groups' mean scores were significantly difference on all but one variable, social dysfunction. Group 2's scores also showed less variance than Group 1's.

Group 2's POS scores were significantly higher than those of Group 1. The observed difference between groups could be due to various reasons. The manufacturing company emphasized its' concern for the employees' wellbeing via the organization's mission statement and various mentions on the company website. If these values were effectively communicated to

employees, then this could explain the higher POS scores of this group. Another possibility is that the employees of this company who might be more cynical would opt out of participating in the survey. Nafei (2014) found that the three components of organizational cynicism were inversely related to organizational citizenship behaviors such as participating in any extra-role behaviors. While the survey was voluntary and not associated with the organization itself, participation could have been viewed as doing a favor for the organization since the survey link was administered from management.

Limitations

The presentation order of the measures within the survey could have biased participants' responses. The strength of the correlations between POS and the components of organizational cynicism reflect the order of presentation. Participants may have been influenced to react more strongly to the questions regarding their levels of cynicism towards their organization after they had to evaluate the level of support they perceived from their employer. As mentioned in the results section, the predictor variables in the majority of the multiple regression analyses were highly correlated, which could have biased the observed strength of the mediation effects between variables. These correlations could have been inflated due to the order in which the measures were presented within the survey; the 16-items measuring POS were immediately followed by the items measuring affective organizational cynicism, then cognitive organizational cynicism, and thirdly, behavioral organizational cynicism.

The current study had limitations based on its' methodological design. The self-report method of data collection could have resulted in common-method variance.

Another limitation of this study could be that the results are not generalizable to all full-time American employees. The majority of the respondents had attained a Bachelors' degree or a higher qualification. Employees with more qualifications may be more likely, *and able*, to find a new job if they are not happy in their current organization. Thus, the reported turnover intentions may have been higher than the average working American.

Practical Implications

Results of this study reinforce the importance of fostering a supportive work environment for employees, which benefits both the employees and employers. Results of this study reinforce the importance of employees' perceptions of their employing organization. In order to address employees' perceptions, an organization must first be aware of how their employees' views. By measuring levels of POS, employers could recognize whether their initiatives to communicate their concern for their employees have actually been recognized by said employees. Measuring POS, and then addressing the either the positive or negative results of the measures would benefit both employees and the employers. Employees benefit because they believe that their organization supports their well-being and recognizes their efforts. Thus, employees who perceive support by their employers will be less likely to look for a new job. This would in turn be beneficial to employers who want to save costs related to turnover and who want to retain talented employees. A talented employee who decides to leave an organization could become a resource for a competing organization.

Furthermore, more supportive work environments are related healthier employees, both mentally and physically. Psychological strain, and resulting lessened physical health, could mean lost productivity due to illness. While the employee would suffer from strain, and potentially physically, the organization could suffer from employees taking more sick leave. Also,

organizations are beginning to realize the benefits of providing employees with a supportive work environment, and in particular, of providing employees with supportive working conditions that promote health (Mearns, Hope, Ford & Tetrick, 2010). It is important for organizations to recognize the benefits of having healthy employees and to recognize that competing organizations may be altering their policies to address employee health. In order to stay competitive and attract and retain talented employees, organizations must adapt their policies to appeal to their employees.

Future Research

Future research could investigate these same variables but may benefit from altering the methodological design. Randomizing the order of measures, or measuring the variables of POS and organizational cynicism at different occasions, could eliminate the potential bias of inflated correlations between predictor variables.

Furthermore, future research could compare the three forms of perceived favorable treatment that an employee can experience from the organization found to predict POS: fairness, supervisor support and organizational rewards/job conditions. Previous research has found a significant correlation between the different forms of “fairness” and organizational cynicism: interactional justice ($r = -.50$), distributive justice ($-.51$) and procedural justice and organizational cynicism ($-.58$). It is likely that organizational cynicism would have significant relationships with the other two antecedents of POS (supervisor support and organizational rewards/job conditions). Comparing the strengths of these different relationships would provide insight onto what aspects of the organizational environment impact levels of POS, which then result in organizational cynicism.

Future research would also benefit from using a longitudinal design. By collecting cross-sectional data, this study was not able to make conclusions about the causation of variables. Furthermore, it would be beneficial to measure levels of cynicism at different points of time. Research surrounding organizational cynicism could benefit from investigating how consistent employees' reports of cynicism remain over time.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the results of this study supported the relationships between the variables POS, organizational cynicism, psychological strain, turnover intentions and self-reported physical health. While the majority of the hypotheses regarding mediation were not supported, future research could benefit from re-testing these relationships in regards to other mediating variables or at different times in order to address any results biased from statistical confounds. The identification of the strength of these relationships may encourage employers to actively attempt to address levels of POS within their organization.

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Appendix A- Survey Introduction Sent out via Social Media

Work Attitudes Survey

Research Q 2wsuestionnaire

This survey will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be completely confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your individual survey will be deleted/destroyed once the study has been completed. Furthermore you have the right to withdraw at any time. You can access a summary of the results of the study by emailing me at msp15@waikato.ac.nz with the subject 'Copy of survey results requested' at any time. Once the study is completed, I will send you the summary. Your completion of this survey will imply your consent to participate.

Please complete this survey *only* if you meeting criteria:

- Work full-time,
- Reside and work in the United States of America
- Are NOT self-employed.

If you have any questions for me, please email me at the address provided below. You may also contact my supervisors Donald Cable (dcable@waikato.ac.nz) and Michael O'Driscoll (psyc0181@waikato.ac.nz). This study has been approved by the Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato School of Psychology. You may also contact the head of the Ethics Committee Nicola Starkey (nstarkey@waikato.ac.nz) if you need further information beyond what I can provide you.

Researcher: Marin Peplinski

Institution: University of Waikato

Contact Details: msp15@waikato.ac.nz

Appendix B- Survey Introduction sent to Manufacturing Company

Work Attitudes Survey

Research Questionnaire

This survey will take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Your responses will be completely confidential and you will remain anonymous. Your individual survey will be deleted/destroyed once the study has been completed. Furthermore you have the right to withdraw at any time. You will receive a summary of the results of the study. The summary will describe the findings collected from multiple participating organizations. Your completion of this survey will imply your consent to participate.

If you have any questions for me, please email me at the address provided below. You may also contact my supervisors Donald Cable (dcable@waikato.ac.nz) and Michael O'Driscoll (psyc0181@waikato.ac.nz). This study has been approved by the Ethics Committee at the University of Waikato School of Psychology. You may also contact the head of the Ethics Committee Nicola Starkey (nstarkey@waikato.ac.nz) if you need further information beyond what I can provide you.

Researcher: Marin Peplinski
Institution: University of Waikato
Contact Details: marin.peplinski@gmail.com

[Start the Survey](#)

Appendix C- Research Questionnaire

Section 1.

The following statements represent the opinions that YOU may have about working at your employing organization. Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement.

Please indicate your answers using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

1. My organization values my contribution to its well-being.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. If my organization could hire someone to replace me at a lower salary it would do so.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. My organization fails to appreciate any extra effort from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. My organization strongly considers my goals and values.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. My organization would ignore a complaint from me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. My organization disregards my best interests when it makes decisions that affect me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Help is available from my organization when I have a problem.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Even if I did the best job possible, my organization would fail to notice.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. My organization is willing to help me when I need a special favor.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. My organization cares about my general satisfaction at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. If given the opportunity, my organization would take advantage of me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. My organization shows very little concern for me.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. My organization cares about my opinions.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. My organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. My organization tries to make my job as interesting as possible.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. My organization really cares about my well-being	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 2.

For each pair of opposing adjectives, mark an X in the box, which best fits how you *feel* about your employing organization.

17. Cynical

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Hopeful

Neutral

18. Aggravated

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Satisfied

Neutral

19. Tense

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Calm

Neutral

20. Anxious

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Reassured

Neutral

21. Fed Up

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

 Inspired

Neutral

Section 3.

Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement that best represents your opinion.

Please indicate your answers using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

22. I believe that my organization always does what it says it will do.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. When my organization says it's going to do something, I know that it will really happen.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. My organization's policies, goals and practices seem to have little in common.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. I see little similarity between what my organization says it will do and what it actually does.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. My organization expects one thing of its employees, but rewards another.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 4.

Please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statements:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

27. I criticize my organization's practices and policies.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. I often talk to others about the way things are run in this organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. I complain about how things happen at my organization to friends outside the organization	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 5.

Please indicate the degree of your agreement or disagreement with each statement using the following scale:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Neither Disagree nor Agree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

30. I will probably look for a new job in the near future.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. At the present time, I am actively searching for another job in a different organization.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. I do not intend to quit my job.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. It is unlikely that I will actively look for a different organization to for in the next year.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. I am not thinking about quitting my job at the present time.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 6.

Over the past month, to what extent have you felt each of the following? Please select the response which best reflects how you have felt in this period using the following scale:

0	1	2	3
Not at all	No more than usual	Rather more than usual	Much more than usual

35. Been able to concentrate on what you're doing?	0	1	2	3
36. Lost sleep over worry?	0	1	2	3
37. Felt you are playing a useful part in things?	0	1	2	3
38. Felt capable of making decisions about things?	0	1	2	3
39. Felt constantly under strain?	0	1	2	3
40. Felt you couldn't over come your difficulties?	0	1	2	3
41. Been able to enjoy your normal day-to-day activities?	0	1	2	3
42. Been able to face up to your problems?	0	1	2	3
43. Been feeling unhappy or depressed?	0	1	2	3
44. Been losing confidence in yourself?	0	1	2	3
45. Been thinking of yourself as a worthless person?	0	1	2	3
46. Been feeling reasonably happy, all things considered?	0	1	2	3

Section 7.

Consider your overall physical health. Circle the number that best describes how often or little you experience the following symptoms *in the previous month*:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Not at all	Rarely	Once in awhile	Some of the time	Fairly often	Often	All of the time

How often in the past month have you...

47. Had difficulty getting to sleep at night?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. Woken up during the night?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. Had nightmares or disturbing dreams?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. Slept peacefully and undisturbed?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. Experienced headaches?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. Had a headache when there was a lot of pressure on you to get things done?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. Gotten a headache when you were frustrated because things were not going the way they should have or when you were annoyed at someone?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. Suffered from an upset stomach (indigestion)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. Had to watch that you ate carefully to avoid stomach upsets?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. Felt nauseated (“sick to your stomach”)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. Felt you were constipated or suffered from diarrhea?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. Had minor colds (that made you feel uncomfortable but didn’t keep you sick in bed or make you miss work)?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. Had respiratory infections more severe than minor colds (such as bronchitis, sinusitis, etc.) that “laid you low”?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. Have you had a cold or flu and felt it lasted longer than you believed it should?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Section 8.

Please fill in the following information about yourself. This information will be used only for description purposes of the respondents.

61. What is your age? ____years

62. What is your gender? Circle one:

Male	Female
------	--------

63. How long have you worked at your organization? ____ years ____months

64. How long have you worked in your current position? ____ years ____ months

65. How would you best describe your position in your company? Mark an 'X' on the line to specify your position.

Entry level_____

Manager_____

Supervisor_____

Team leader_____

Associate_____

VP management_____

Senior management_____

'Other' _____

66. How would you classify your ethnicity? Mark an 'X' on the line that best describes you.

Caucasian/white_____

African-American_____

Asian____

Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin _____

American Indian or Alaska Native _____

Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander _____

Two or more races _____

Other_____

67. What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (If enrolled, highest degree received). Please mark an 'X' next to your answer.

Some high school, no diploma_____

High school graduate, diploma or the equivalent (for example, GED)_____

Some college credit, no degree_____

Trade/technical/vocational training_____

Associate degree_____

Bachelor's degree_____

Master's degree_____

Professional degree_____

Doctorate degree_____

Thank you for completing this survey and supporting my research initiative.

You will receive a summary of the results once the study is complete. If you have any questions for me please email me at marin.peplinski@gmail.com.

You may also contact my supervisors Donald Cable (dcable@waikato.ac.nz) and Michael O'Driscoll (psyc0181@waikato.ac.nz) or the University of Waikato School of Psychology's head of the ethics committee Nicola Starkey (nstarkey@waikato.ac.nz) if you need further information beyond what I can provide you.

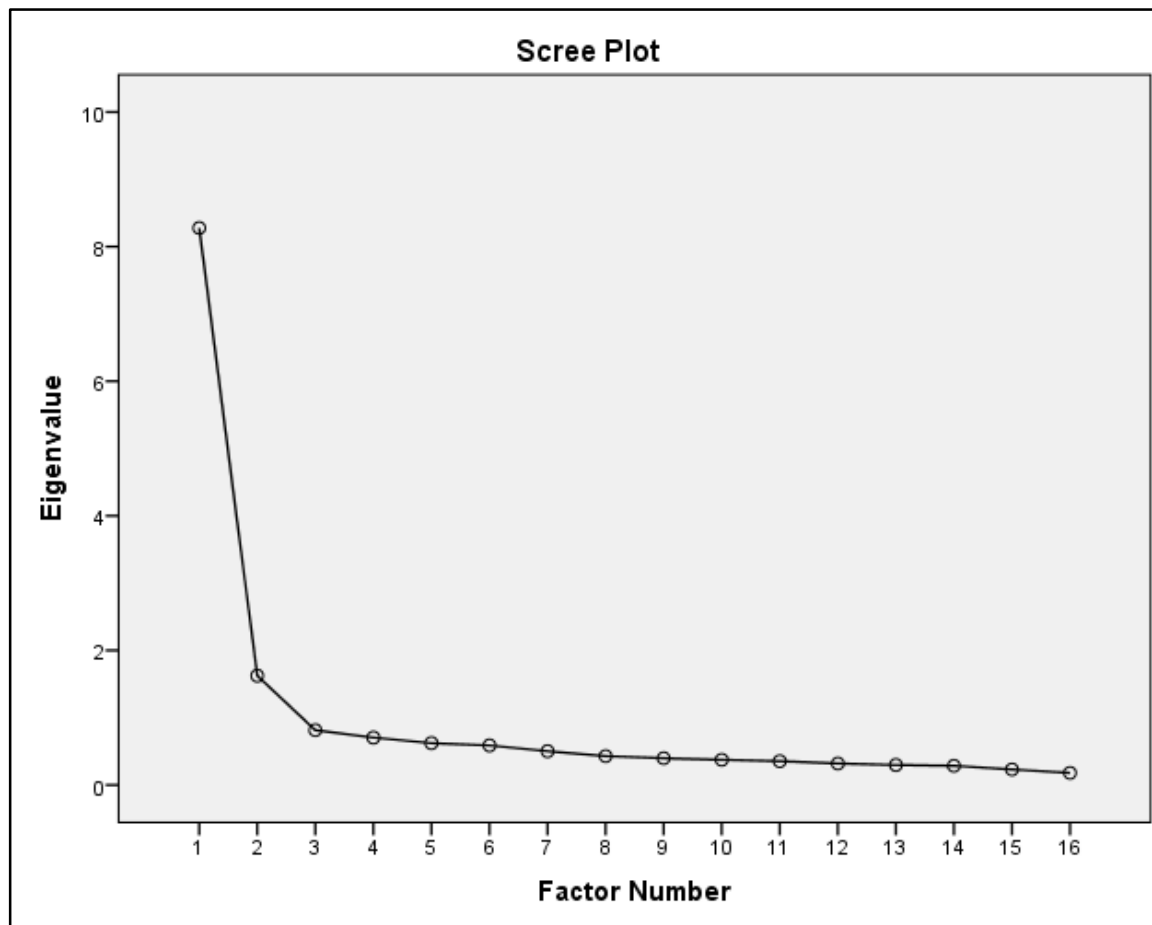
Researcher: Marin Peplinski

Institution: University of Waikato

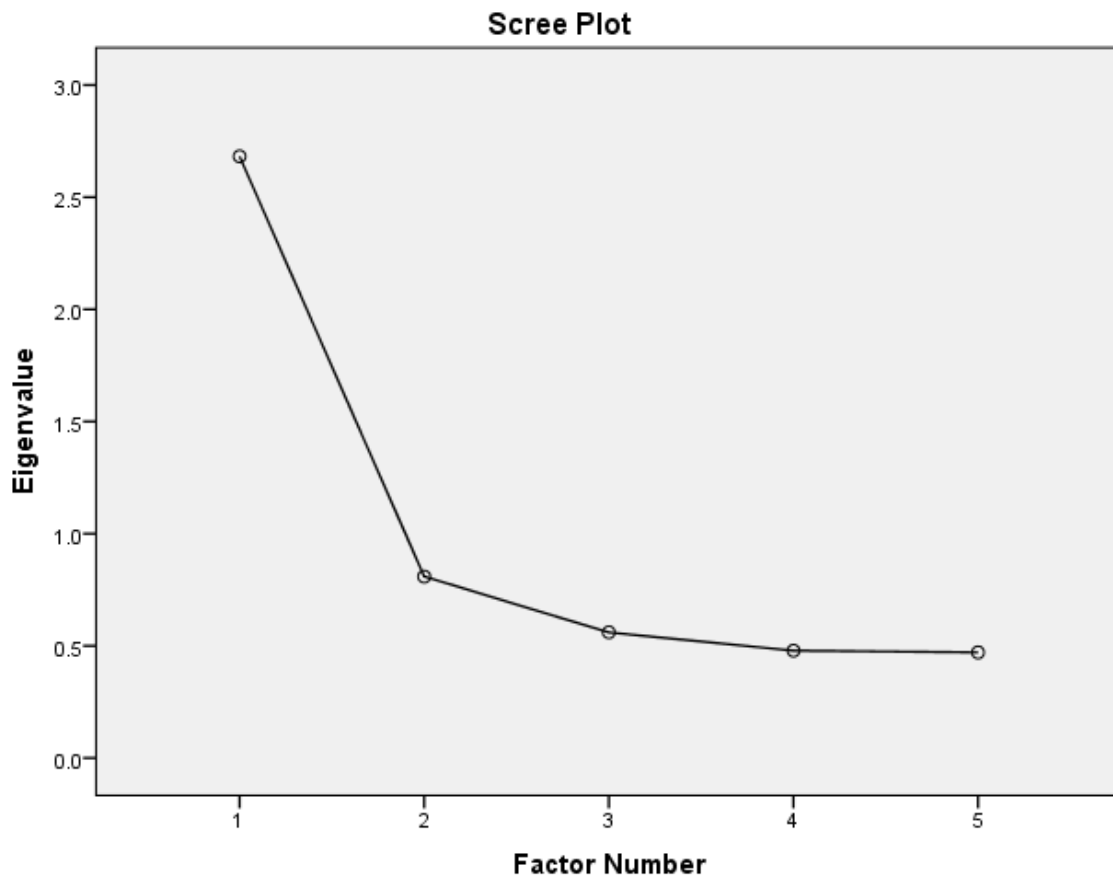
Contact Details: marin.peplinski@gmail.com

Appendix D- Scree plot for Eigenvalues for Survey of Perceived Organizational Support

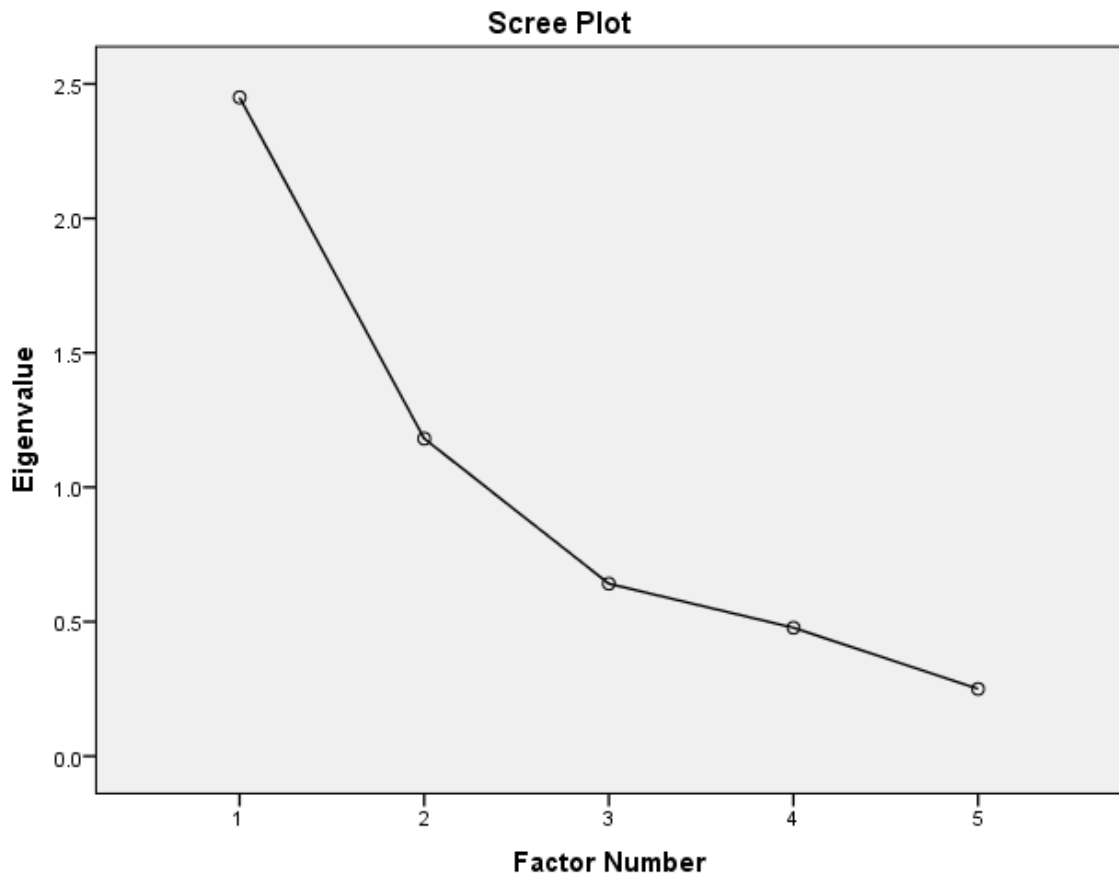
1



Appendix E- Scree plot for Affective Organizational Cynicism Factor Analysis



Appendix F: Scree plot for Cognitive Organizational Cynicism measure



Appendix G- Scree plot for Psychological Strain measure

