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Eyes wide open: Perceived exploitation and its consequences

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Journal

Academy of Management Journal, 62(6)

ISSN

0001-4273

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Publication Date

2019-12-01

DOI

10.5465/amj.2017.1421

Peer reviewed



Eyes Wide Open: Perceived Exploitation and Its Consequences

Journal:	<i>Academy of Management Journal</i>
Manuscript ID	AMJ-2017-1421.R2
Manuscript Type:	Special Research Forum: New Ways of Seeing
Keywords:	Quantitative orientation (General) < Quantitative Orientation < Research Methods, Social exchange theory < Theoretical Perspectives, Mood and emotions < Attitudes, Cognitions, and Affect < Organizational Behavior < Topic Areas, Social issues in management (General) < Social Issues in Management < Topic Areas
Abstract:	<p>Drawing on the array of literature on exploitation from several social science disciplines, we propose a new way of seeing employer-employee relationships by introducing the concept of perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships, distinguish it from related concepts, and conduct five studies to develop a scale and test our theoretical model of the effects of such employee perceptions. Contributing to the Employee-Organization Relationships and workplace emotions literatures, perceived exploitation is defined as employees' perceptions that they have been purposefully taken advantage of in their relationship with the organization, to the benefit of the organization itself. We propose and find that such perceptions are associated with both outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility toward the organization and inward-focused ones of shame and guilt at remaining in an exploitative job. In two studies including construction workers and a time-lagged study of medical residents, we find that the emotions of anger and hostility partially mediate the effects of perceived exploitation on employee engagement, revenge against the organization, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions, whereas the emotions of shame and guilt partially mediate the effects of perceived exploitation on employee burnout, silence, and psychological withdrawal.</p>

Eyes Wide Open: Perceived Exploitation and Its Consequences

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Forthcoming in the Academy of Management Journal

Acknowledgements. We wish to thank Editor Jason Shaw and the anonymous reviewers for their insightful suggestions and comments throughout the review process, which helped to significantly improve our article. We are also grateful to Lynn Shore, Jonathan Booth and Chiahuei Wu for their invaluable feedback earlier in the process, as well as Adi Broyde, Ofir Livne and Sean O’Gorman for their assistance in data collection.

EYES WIDE OPEN: PERCEIVED EXPLOITATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

ABSTRACT

Drawing on the array of literature on exploitation from several social science disciplines, we propose a new way of seeing employer-employee relationships by introducing the concept of perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships, distinguish it from related concepts, and conduct five studies to develop a scale and test our theoretical model of the effects of such employee perceptions. Contributing to the Employee-Organization Relationships and workplace emotions literatures, perceived exploitation is defined as employees' perceptions that they have been purposefully taken advantage of in their relationship with the organization, to the benefit of the organization itself. We propose and find that such perceptions are associated with both outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility toward the organization and inward-focused ones of shame and guilt at remaining in an exploitative job. In two studies including construction workers and a time-lagged study of medical residents, we find that the emotions of anger and hostility partially mediate the effects of perceived exploitation on employee engagement, revenge against the organization, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions, whereas the emotions of shame and guilt partially mediate the effects of perceived exploitation on employee burnout, silence, and psychological withdrawal.

Keywords: Exploitation, employee-organization relationships, emotions, revenge, employee engagement, turnover intentions, organizational commitment, burnout, silence, withdrawal

The exploitation of workers is not a plague of the past, or of failed states and countries where the workforce may be weakly protected by law. Exploitation such as forced labor and slavery prevails globally today across a range of industries (Crane, 2013). While examples of slavery and serfdom are real and understudied in our field, the extreme and vivid images that come to mind when considering exploitation should not blind us to the various and more subtle forms of employee exploitation that exist today across many countries and industries. Indeed, there is great potential for organizations to exploit their employees today considering changes in employment relationships including the decline in trade unions and collective bargaining agreements (Cobb, 2016), outsourcing, and the rise of short-term forms of employment, such as contingent and freelance work (Bidwell, Briscoe, Fernandez-Mateo, & Sterling, 2013). These changes, an outcome of the advance of technology, have increased organizations' potential for

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3 exploitation of employees through reduced regulation of labor practices (Bidwell et al., 2013).
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5 Therefore, while exploitation is an age-old phenomenon, it requires a new way of seeing and
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7 understanding these exploitative relationships in today's world of work.
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10 To date, organizational behavior research has lagged behind other social sciences in
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12 seeking to understand how employees respond to an exploitative employment relationship.
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14 Although its potential has been recognized, for example, researchers have used fear of
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16 exploitation as an explanation for why employees may not follow the norm of reciprocity in their
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18 exchange relationships (e.g. Shore, Bommer, Rao, & Seo, 2009), and have discussed the
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20 potential for organizations' human resources practices to be exploitative (Cobb, 2016),
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22 theorizing about exploitation is conspicuously absent in the organizational behavior literature.
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26 Yet, exploitation has a long and rich history in other disciplines. In particular, the work of
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28 sociologists and industrial relations scholars has illuminated the rise in exploitation amongst
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30 particular groups and communities in society. The *raison d'être* of trade unions has been to
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32 prevent and curb management's potential to exploit its workers (Kelly, 1998) and industrial
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34 relations research examines the route by which the exploited (contracted workers, self-employed
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36 workers, migrant workers) fight exploitation through organizing (Agarwala, 2016). Labor law
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38 changes have also helped "blunt the most brutal forms of exploitation" (Friedman & Lee, 2010:
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40 514) and the role of consumer pressure and non-governmental organizations, such as Green
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42 America's latest campaign to highlight the work-related diseases affecting those workers in
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44 "smartphone sweatshops" (Green America, 2015) have also received academic attention (Pines
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46 & Meyer, 2005; Snyder, 2010).
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51 The exploitation of migrant workers represents a visible strand of empirical research.
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53 One factor that increases the vulnerability of this group of workers to exploitation is the absence
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3 of citizenship rights (Wilkinson, 2014; Zamudio, 2004). Wilkinson (2012), drawing on two
4 qualitative studies of several hundred migrant workers in the U.K., documents accounts of
5 routine, systematic and widespread exploitation covering escalating debt, illegal deductions and
6 systematic underpayment, substandard accommodation, and unsafe working conditions: “A
7 woman started out with £149 as her net wage, and by the time all the illegal deductions had been
8 taken from that she was left with £19” (Wilkinson, 2014: 503). A similar picture is portrayed of
9 migrant mushroom pickers in Northern Ireland (Potter & Hamilton, 2014) with deleterious
10 consequences for physical and mental health of these workers. One migrant worker said: “We
11 are nothing. We are less than dog because we have nothing” (McQuade, Wilkinson,
12 Skrivankova, Craig & Gaus, 2007: 38-39). As Wilkinson (2014) notes, “for the vast majority of
13 migrant workers, the only realistic coping strategy...[omitted]...is to put particular instances of
14 abuse and exploitation down to experience and seek, through word of mouth, to move on to a
15 better gangmaster or employer” (p. 508).
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33 The absence of a measure of exploitation has hampered investigations of exploitation by
34 sociologists in social stratification. As noted by Sakamoto and Kim (2010) “despite its
35 importance, exploitation has not been adequately investigated by any sociologist using statistical
36 data since the time of Karl Marx” (p. 20). The authors define exploitation in the labor market as
37 “the extent to which the earnings of various groups in the labor force are underpaid relative to
38 the market values of their productivities” (p. 20). Using data for U.S. manufacturing industries
39 from 1971-1996, the authors find that women, Hispanics, African Americans and blue-collar
40 workers are substantially underpaid relative to their contributions to productivity and the trend
41 indicates that exploitation is rising. Their analysis finds that the only occupational category that
42 is substantially overpaid is that of managers!
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3 To this end, our study complements and extends sociological and industrial relations
4 work by investigating exploitation from the individual's perspective rather than as structural
5 properties of groups or employment. We also counterbalance and extend prior employee-
6 organization literature and research, which has largely emphasized positive relationships, in
7 which negative events may occur. As an individual-level phenomenon, we consider emotional
8 reactions as playing a crucial role in understanding the consequences associated with the
9 perception of organizational exploitation. Building upon Lazarus's (1991) contention that there is
10 little empirical distinction between mood and acute emotions, we test our argument that acute,
11 episode-specific emotions are also associated with longer-term appraisals of an individual's
12 exploitative relationship with the organization.
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26 We begin with a brief history of the roots of exploitation in political economy, sociology
27 and philosophy in the writings notably of Marx and his contemporaries such as Weber
28 and Durkheim, as well as later scholars such as Etzioni (e.g. 1961), Parsons (e.g. 1967), Moore
29 (e.g. 1972) and Kelly (e.g. 1998) to provide the foundation and context for our theory of the
30 effects of employees' perceptions that their organizations are exploiting them. More recent work
31 that touches on workplace exploitation is briefly reviewed prior to framing our own theory of
32 exploitation in the employee-organization relationship literature. Drawing on these literatures,
33 we define exploitation in the context of the employee-organization relationship and develop a
34 measurement scale, which we evaluate and validate using three independent studies (the two
35 studies designed to develop the scale are described in the Appendix and the validation study is
36 presented in the methods section). We then propose an emotion-centered theory of the effects of
37 perceived exploitation and test this in two field studies.
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LITERATURE TOUCHING ON EXPLOITATION

A Historical View of Exploitation

The idea of exploitation received significant attention in the early social sciences. We draw on this structural literature to inform our definition and conceptualization of employees' perceptions of organizational exploitation and its consequences. Keynes (1960) proposed that, outside of monopsonies, labor is rewarded by its marginal value to productivity, and consequently, little room is left for the possibility that employees perceive themselves to be exploited. Therefore, exploitation is viewed as rare and primarily a product of one's own inability to take charge (Raico, 1977; Zafirovski, 2003). Yet, as Zafroviski (2003) demonstrated, wages do not always conform to labor's marginal contribution, and so the structural exploitation of labor is prevalent. Contrarily, political economy and early sociology perspectives regarded exploitation as pivotal to explaining capitalist social systems, although there is divergence in levels of analysis and parties involved. On one side, Marx viewed capitalism as based on exploitation. It is exploitative in the sense that it lends itself solely to the advantage of the bourgeoisie (wealthy middle and upper classes) who expropriate the surplus value from the work of the proletariat (the wage laborers), rather than redistributing the profit to the wage laborers (McClellan, 1980). This leads wage laborers, or what we today call employees, to experience alienation (Marx, 1932/1970). As wage work becomes merely a means to satisfy survival needs and lacks inherent enjoyment, it cannot be regarded as voluntary, but rather compelled and thus exploitative (McClellan, 1980).

Weber (1922/1968) offers an alternative view of structural exploitation based on status. He proposed that exploitation may be based on status affiliations, and thus makes way for a conceptualization of exploitation which is not dependent on Marx's class structure, but it can also occur in any society where status plays a role, or where other asymmetric power differences

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3 exist. Durkheim (1893/1997) believed that in a meritocracy, class would lose its innate meaning
4 and power differences would stem from differences in hereditary dispositions and distributions
5 of talent. Durkheim viewed this division of labor as a natural law, however, he warned that it is
6 not necessarily a moral law. Marx, Weber, and Durkheim all saw exploitation as arising from
7 structural power asymmetries in relationships, a point emphasized by more recent scholars who
8 have noted that it is not profit per se that indicates exploitation of labor, but exploitation is
9 possible anytime there is differential power in relationships (Yoshihara & Veneziani, 2013). We
10 draw on these early theorists' premises about the effects of exploitation on employee attitudes
11 and behavior in our theoretical predictions.
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25 **Towards a Working Definition of Perceived Exploitation**

26 Although these theorists wrote long ago and since then employment law has attempted to
27 curb exploitative practices (e.g. minimum wage regulation), changes in the global economy and
28 technology platforms over the past three decades have increased external pressures which have
29 led organizations to seek new and different opportunities to exploit employees. For example,
30 new forms of work. In 2017, 3.8 percent of total U.S. employment was reported to hold
31 contingent jobs (including gig economy workers), and over 10 percent of total employment was
32 reported to have alternative work arrangements including independent contracting, on-call work,
33 temporary agency work and contracted work (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018). The rise in this
34 type of employment leaves a significant proportion of workers facing insecurity. Even traditional
35 employment contracts are being re-engineered by companies to bypass employment law and cut
36 wages (LeRoy, 2017). Recently, Wells Fargo forced employees to sell unsuitable products to
37 their friends and families and then fired them when they had no more personal contacts to misuse
38 (Morris, 2016). Similarly, Scholz (2012) describes the various degrees of exploitation of workers
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3 in today's digital industries: working long hours as a contractor and so not covered by
4 employment law protections, having no job security, organizations unilaterally cutting benefits
5 or compensation, and other adverse working conditions. The detrimental physical and
6 psychological health effects of such conditions also have been documented (e.g. Moen, Kelly, &
7 Lam, 2013; Siegrist et al., 2004). Indeed Petriglieri, Ashford, and Wrzesniewski (2018), note the
8 chronic uncertainty experienced by gig economy workers lead to individuals' anxiety and
9 frustration, and to societal ones, such as social unrest. Researchers have also noted the health
10 risks to construction workers in countries such as the U.S. and U.K., due to exposure to
11 hazardous materials and operating potentially dangerous equipment, which takes advantage of
12 the many unregistered, non-unionized subcontractors (Snashall, 2005). The medical profession is
13 another area where exploitation can be found. Doctors often do not receive fair and robust
14 contracts (Lecky, 2008), a trend which worsens as governments try to reduce healthcare costs
15 manifested in reduced income, shrinking clout with insurers, and increased time requirements
16 (Lecky, 2008; Leigh, 2014). Many physicians view these changes as exploitative as they find
17 themselves powerless to fight back, particularly because strikes are seen by many as morally
18 unjustifiable (e.g. Ogunbanjo & Knapp, 2009). Exploitation of people working for organizations
19 is not solely relevant to a bygone era, but it remains important in light of the changing nature of
20 work.

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45 The early theorists defined exploitation as work compelled by survival needs in which
46 others use their positions to extract unfair advantage from their relationships with those doing the
47 work. This is consistent with conventional definitions: "The action or fact of treating someone
48 unfairly in order to benefit from their work" (The Oxford English Dictionary, 2015), and taking
49 advantage of an individual or situation for one's benefit (Friedman, 1994). The latter definitions
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3 do not specify whether exploitation is perceptual, or a structural objective condition, whether
4 such treatment is a transient incident or captures a relationship and have not explored the effects
5 of exactly who the exploiting party is. Therefore, in order to focus on employees' experience of
6 organizational treatment we offer the following definition of exploitation as *employees'*
7 *perceptions that they have been purposefully taken advantage of in their relationship with the*
8 *organization, to the benefit of the organization itself.* Each element in this definition draws from
9 past works in other disciplines. First, as for the idea of subjectivity, perceptions of exploitation
10 rather than exploitation as an objective condition is consistent with Moore's (1972) argument
11 that,

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24 "The presence or absence of exploitation as determined by some supposedly
25 impartial observer by itself makes very little difference in human feelings and
26 human behavior. It is always necessary to find out how people themselves
27 judge their situation [...] there are too many potential social and psychological
28 mechanisms that can prevent human beings not only from expressing moral
29 outrage at their situation but sometimes also from feeling it" (p. 457).

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37 Thus, individuals may vary in the degree to which they experience their organization as
38 exploitative and, therefore, it is more useful to talk of employees' perceptions of exploitation.

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42 The second element in this definition is the purposefulness behind the mistreatment, which
43 echoes the view of exploitation shared by the above scholars as an intentional act, not unintended
44 or accidental. Third, we are focused on perceptions that the employing organization is exploiting
45 employees, not other individuals such as supervisors or coworkers exploiting for their own
46 personal gain. This distinction is consistent with Pinto, Leana and Pil's (2008) separation of
47 corrupt individuals from corrupt organizations, and consistent with Masterson, Lewis, Goldman,
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3 and Taylor's (2000) finding that employees distinguish between injustice from a supervisor and
4 from their organization. Finally, the idea of expectations of ongoing exploitation in the
5 relationship, rather than exploitation as an isolated event draws on Moore's (1972) work which
6 stressed that in order to claim that exploitation is taking place "it is necessary to take into
7 account a whole range or set of exchanges, not a single transaction" (p. 53). A perception of
8 exploitation could potentially arise from a single event that shifts attentional focus, or from
9 repeated events. However, we concentrate on employees' perceptions that their ongoing
10 relationships with their organizations are exploitative, regardless of how that perception came
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25 **Employee Exploitation in Organizational Research**

26 Most of the research touching on workplace exploitation in organizational behavior has
27 focused on interpersonal exploitation rather than organizational exploitation of employees, as
28 evidenced by the literature on abusive supervision (e.g. Tepper, 2000), narcissistic leadership
29 (e.g. Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006), exploitative leadership (Schmid, Verdorfer & Peus, 2017),
30 and sexual harassment (Fitzgerald, et al., 1988). In contrast to the research on negative
31 interpersonal behaviors, research on employee-organizational relationships tends to emphasize
32 positive or neutral relationships, treating negative events as occurring within an overall positive
33 relationship (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008). This skewed focus can be
34 partly explained by the neo-classical assumptions underpinning our field and the dominance of
35 social exchange theory as theoretical foundations for our research (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway,
36 2004). Nevertheless, we draw on research within the employee-organization relationship (EOR)
37 literature that touch on negative aspects of the relationship: psychological contract breach
38 (Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1995), low perceived organizational support
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3 (e.g. Eisenberger, Fasolo & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Allen, Shore & Griffeth, 2003), distributive
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5 injustice (e.g. Greenberg & Colquitt, 2013), and initial theorizing about types of perceived
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7 negative employee-organizational relationships. Table 1 compares these concepts with
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10 perceived exploitative relationships.

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17 Psychological contract research treats breach and violation as an event that disrupts a
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19 hitherto positive employee-organizational relationship that may or may not be intentional by the
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21 organization (e.g. Dulac et al., 2008; Zhao, Morrison & Robinson, 1997) in contrast to negative
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23 relationships captured by perceived exploitative relationships. Second, perceived organizational
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25 support captures employees' global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization
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27 supports them based on benevolent organizational intentions (e.g. Eisenberger et al., 1986). The
28
29 benevolence underpinning perceived organizational support (even in low levels) sits in
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31 opposition to the intentional exploitation for organizational gain inherent in perceived
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33 exploitative relationships. Finally, perceived exploitative relationships are conceptually similar
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35 to perceptions of distributive injustice in the workplace (Colquitt et al., 2001). Employees not
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37 receiving the outcomes they thought were fair could well be perceived as exploitation if they felt
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39 that this was based on an intent to exploit them. However, these two concepts are different
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41 because distributive injustice is an event appraisal rather than an appraisal of the relationship
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43 with the organization in its entirety. Consequently, distributive injustice may occur in an overall
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45 positive relationship, as such perceptions can be offset by procedural and interactional justice
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47 (Bobocel & Holmvall, 1999). Perceived exploitative relationships, however, are appraisals of the
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49 overall employee-organizational relationship. Of course, this appraisal of the relationship might
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51 be spurred by a particular event or events, such as distributive injustice, which, in turn, primes
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3 employees to interpret other events as consistent with the exploitative appraisal. Indeed,
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5 Proudfoot and Lind (2015) noted that justice serves as an indicator that an employee is “safe
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7 from exclusion and exploitation” (p. 373), suggesting that distributive injustice may eventually
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9 give rise to perceptions of an intentionally exploitative relationship.
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12 We build and extend the two initial attempts to address fundamentally negative
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14 employee-organizational relationships. Perceived organizational obstruction (Gibney,
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16 Zagenczyk, & Masters, 2009) captures employees’ perceptions of the organization as hindering
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18 and obstructing their goals and posing a threat to their well-being. However, organizations may
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20 not intentionally obstruct employees’ goals, and if employees’ personal goals are contrary to the
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22 interests of the organization, the organization may be justified in doing this and so it is not
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24 exploitative. Perceived organizational cruelty (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012) captures
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26 employees’ perceptions of contemptuous, disrespectful and inhumane treatment from the
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28 organization. In contrast to a perceived exploitative relationship’s requirement of intent to
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30 benefit the organization at the employee’s expense, perceived organizational cruelty can
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32 encompass a wide range of inhumane acts that might not serve a clear purpose to the
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34 organization and so not necessarily intentional (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). It is the
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36 combination of perceived intentionality behind the organization’s actions and the overall view of
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38 the relationship by employees as a negative one that differentiates perceived exploitation from
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40 these other constructs.
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46 47 **A THEORY OF THE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEES’ PERCEPTIONS OF** 48 **EXPLOITATION** 49

50 Based on the foregoing literatures we develop a theory of employees’ perceptions that
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52 their organization is exploitative, schematically outlined in Figure 1. We propose that a
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54 perception that one’s relationship with the organization is exploitative leads to complex emotions
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3 that can be outward- or inward-focused or both, and these discrete emotional reactions account
4 for various employee attitudinal and behavioral responses. In the organizational behavior
5 literature scholars have distinguished between mood and distinct emotion episodes (see
6 Ashkanasy & Humphrey, 2011, for a review). This work has made valuable contributions to our
7 growing understanding of the role of emotions at work. However, we contend that while many of
8 those studying discrete emotions recognize that a discrete event may initiate attention to a series
9 of events that may have emotional significance (See Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), they have not
10 theoretically or empirically addressed the implications of this for organizational behavior. We
11 seek to contribute to this literature by maintaining that at least one of two specific groups of
12 discrete emotions are likely to be aroused by perceived exploitative relationships (PERs) and that
13 these distinct emotional categories elicit different attitudes and behaviors.
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33 **Emotional Reactions to Perceived Exploitation and their Differential Effects**

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35 The need to vent emotions (Lazarus, 1991) and act upon them has a biological
36 foundation, which serves the purpose of communicating our needs efficiently (Panksepp, 1992;
37 Plutchik, 1980). In organizational behavior, scholars have distinguished between mood and
38 discrete emotions, yet the empirical research in psychology does not support the core distinction
39 between moods and emotions: that the former is less intense and longer lasting than the latter.
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41 Lazarus (1991) summarizes this research noting that moods can be short-lived and acute
42 emotions can be felt intensely or mildly: "I am inclined to interpret both moods and acute
43 emotions to the way one appraises relationships with the environment." (p. 48). We build on this
44 work in psychology to argue that appraisals of an exploitative relationship with the employing
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3 organizations can lead to acute emotional responses, which, unless subsequent observations
4 suggest the exploitative episode was an isolated incident, are expected to be sustained over time.
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8 Negative experiences have a pronounced role in evoking negative emotional reactions
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10 (Taylor, 1991), and these tend to be more influential than positive experiences (Baumeister,
11 Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001; Labianca & Brass, 2006). Psychological distress can
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13 elicit strong emotional reactions (Baumeister et al., 2001; Spencer & Meyers, 2006) and these
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15 emotions can serve to relieve this psychological distress (Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006). Two
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17 discrete groups of negative emotions have been studied in the organizational and psychology
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19 literatures: anger and hostility, and shame and guilt (Strawson, 2008), corresponding to outward
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21 or inward-focused affective responses, respectively (Falomir-Pichastor, 2011). The causal
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23 reasoning framework (Martinko, Gundlach & Douglas, 2002) not only helps explain these
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25 differences between the two sets of emotions, but also accounts for why perceived exploitative
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27 relationships might lead to such different emotions: it proposes that a disparity in emotional
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29 reactions is due to the attributions that individuals make, such that they tend to blame others
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31 when they make an external attribution for failure or negative outcomes and blame themselves
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33 when they make internal attributions for failure or negative outcomes (Gilbert & Miles, 2000).
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35 When internal attributions are made for negative events, the result is often negative evaluations
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37 of the self (e.g., Martinko & Gardner, 1982). Such individuals are therefore more likely to refrain
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39 from behaviors directed at external targets (Martinko et al., 2002). Why some individuals react to
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41 distress with outward-focused emotions and others react with inward-focused emotions or some
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43 combination of the two is beyond the scope of this paper. Rather, of central interest here is
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45 whether these differently focused emotions will have different organizational behavior
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47 consequences.
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3 **Anger and hostility.** These emotions, often viewed as synonymous (see Spielberger,
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5 Jacobs, Russell, & Crane, 1983; Eckhardt, Norlander, & Deffenbacher, 2004), consist of
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7 “feelings that vary in intensity, from mild irritation or annoyance to fury and rage” (Spielberger
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9 et al., 1983: 162). Drawing on the relational model framework (Tyler, 1994) we propose that
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11 perceptions of an exploitative relationship would lead employees to feel anger and hostility
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13 toward their organizations because exploitation poses a threat to “the sense of self-respect that
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15 people acquire through treatment with respect and dignity” (p. 852). Such a threat to one’s self-
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17 respect can result in psychological distress (Spencer & Meyers, 2006), often followed by the
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19 emotional response of anger and hostility, which allow the relief of such distress (Aquino et al.,
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21 2006) essentially through the rejection of the diminishing treatment and the preservation of one’s
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23 self-respect by self-empowerment (Ellsworth & Gross, 1994). Indeed, these adaptive emotions
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25 have been empirically linked to high levels of self-assurance, physical strength and bravery
26
27 (Izard, 1991), supporting the empowering function of anger and hostility. We thus expect that
28
29 exploitative relationship perceptions will result in anger and hostility for many employees.
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35 *Hypothesis 1. Employees’ perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
36
37 *relationship are positively related to their anger and hostility.*
38

39 **Shame and guilt.** These are considered overlapping and synonymous emotions (Lazarus,
40
41 1991; Barclay, Skarlicki & Pugh, 2005) or as highly complementary as they both deal with a
42
43 discrepancy between ideal and actual selves (Lewis, 1971). Consequently, they tend to be
44
45 experienced together because guilt “gives way to an undesired identity” (Menesini & Camodeca,
46
47 2008: 190). As self-directed attributions in reaction to distress (Martinko et al., 2002),
48
49 individuals might feel shame for having been victimized, as well as guilty for passively allowing
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51 themselves to become victims of exploitation (Gilligan, 2003). Especially in cultures in which
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53 the belief that individuals control their own destiny, failure is viewed as a product of one’s own
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3 doing (De Botton, 2004), and thus a disappointing outcome can result in an internal attribution
4 failure and in feelings of shame and guilt. Indeed Skinner (1996) sees shame and guilt as coping
5 mechanisms to deal with a very real sense of helplessness and vulnerability. By developing
6 explanations that the harm done was somehow one's own fault, the victim achieves a comforting
7 illusion of retrospective control. However, as Skinner (1996) notes, retrospective control can
8 lead to shame and guilt if accompanied by "doubt in one's capacities to exercise controlling
9 responses to such negative events in the future" (p.560). Thus, for some, the emotions of shame
10 and guilt, which occur when one "feels the self negatively evaluated" (Scheff, 1988: 401),
11 especially by an authority figure (Braithwaite, Ahmed, & Braithwaite, 2008), are likely to be an
12 emotional response to perceiving one's self in an exploitative organizational relationship, in
13 which they feel undervalued, small, worthless, and powerless (Tangney, Miller, Flicker, &
14 Barlow, 1996).

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31 *Hypothesis 2. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
32 *relationship are positively related to their shame and guilt.*

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34 Affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) states that emotions are a direct
35 result of triggered experiences, especially if individuals have an expectation that these
36 experiences will be ongoing (Kiefer, 2005), and that in turn they can affect work attitudes and
37 behaviors (Judge, Scott & Ilies, 2006). As anger and hostility are more likely to elicit outwards-
38 focused action against the perpetrator (Barclay et al., 2005), the organization in this case,
39 whereas shame and guilt are more likely to elicit inwards-focused outcomes, we focus on
40 outcomes that allow for the differentiation between the targeted response - towards the
41 organization in the case of anger and hostility, and inwardly in the case of shame and guilt.
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Outward-Focused Emotions and Employee Reactions

We propose that the outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility will partially explain the relationships between employees' perceptions of organizational exploitation and organization-focused reactions: their thoughts of revenge, lower work engagement, turnover intention, and lower organizational commitment. Partial mediation is expected because for each reaction there exist substantial literature demonstrating other possible causes and we would not expect perceived exploitation-fuelled emotions to be the sole drivers of employee attitudes and behaviors. We focus on these outcomes for two reasons. First, there is an indication in the literature that the discrete emotions of anger and hostility may lead to them, and second, their discretionary nature renders them ideal for reducing feelings of anger and hostility because they can be given voluntarily or withheld by employees (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996).

Revenge. Revenge refers to instances in which the victim becomes a perpetrator and tries to injure or harm the other (Michalak, 2010). This definition has roots in social exchange theory whereby exchanges in which believe they are being intentionally harmed, such as perceived exploitative organization-employee relationships, are likely to prompt employees to negatively reciprocate through retaliatory behavior, such as posting anonymous criticisms of the employer online. This assumption relies on one of the tenets that guide reciprocity that such exchanges the focus can be on the return of injuries (Gouldner, 1960). Therefore, acts of revenge are an outward-focused action against the source of harm -- the organization in this case. The motivation behind acts of revenge is therefore an attempt to 'even the score' (Miller, 2001) as a way of re-establishing control (Bennett, 1998). For instance, the manifestations of revenge include behaviors such as theft (e.g. Greenberg, 2002), sabotage (Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997), violence (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998) and publicly embarrassing the employer (Tripp, Bies, & Aquino, 2007). The motive behind such retaliatory actions have been interpreted in various

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3 ways, ranging from punishing the target (e.g. Greenberg, 1996) to emotion-reducing expression
4 and ventilation (Robinson & Bennett, 1997). In addition, Leith and Baumeister (1996) show that
5 negative affect increases an individual's propensity towards risk-taking behaviors, such as
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10 revenge. Thus, revenge serves as a means of expressing anger.

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12 *Hypothesis 3. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
13 *relationship are positively related to employees' acts of revenge, partially mediated*
14 *by their anger and hostility.*

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16
17 **Work engagement.** Engagement entails a "positive, fulfilling work-related state of mind
18 that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006:
19 702). Based on the job demands-resources model (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakov, & Kantas,
20 2001) and research on engagement, resources replenish employees and foster work engagement,
21 whereas demands deplete coping resources and reduce work engagement. Van den Broeck,
22 Vansteenkiste, De Witte, & Lens (2008) explain that job resources, such as financial rewards and
23 career opportunities, positively influence work engagement through a motivational process, with
24 accumulative and lasting effects over time (De Lange, De Witte, & Notelaers, 2008). In contrast,
25 a sense that one is being exploited drains energy, either psychologically, as the victim engages in
26 rumination and sense-making, or physically, as the victim may be working under demanding
27 circumstances they perceive to be exploitative. This is even more so in the presence of negative
28 emotions such as anger, which drain psychological capital resources that help foster engagement
29 (Sweetman & Luthens, 2010). Therefore, if perceiving your organization as exploitative leads to
30 anger and hostility, we expect those emotions to reduce active work engagement (Bakker et al.,
31 2007). Consistent with this, both Marx (1932/1970) and Weber (1922/1968) argued that
32 exploitation leads workers to suffer from alienation, the obverse of what scholars today call work
33 engagement.

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3 *Hypothesis 4. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
4 *relationship are negatively related to employees' work engagement, partially*
5 *mediated by their anger and hostility.*
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7 **Turnover intentions.** Researchers have maintained that leaving the organization might
8
9 not only represent a way to reduce a sense of inequity (Carrell & Dittrich, 1978) in search for
10 better prospects, but searching for another job can also be a way to reduce the negative emotions
11 and the distress (i.e. anger and hostility) associated with negative events (Harlos, 2010) in the
12 same way that thoughts of revenge do by creating a satisfying sense of righting a wrong.
13
14 Empirical data indeed supports the contention that emotions of anger can lead to intentions to
15 leave the organization. The sources of anger are not only rooted in negative interpersonal
16 treatment (Harlos, 2010; Booth & Mann, 2005), but also in negative treatment from the
17 organization. For instance, O'Neill, Vandenberg, DeJoy, and Wilson (2009) found that
18 perceptions of low organizational support led to anger and consequently to turnover intentions
19 among employees. Thus, anger following exploitative treatment from the organization can lead
20 to the proactive search for another job, an outward focused action in response to the outward
21 focused emotion of anger.
22
23

24 *Hypothesis 5. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
25 *relationship are positively related to employees' turnover intentions, partially*
26 *mediated by their anger and hostility.*
27

28 **Organizational commitment.** Organizational commitment has been defined as "the
29 strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization"
30 (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974: 604). Such commitment involves assuming the
31 organization's goals and values, willingness to employ effort for and on behalf of the
32 organization, and a desire to remain an organizational member (Mowday, Steers, & Porter,
33 1982). Organizational commitment is an outward, or organization-focused commitment to
34 continuing the relationship with the organization. (Barclay et al., 2005). Further, it has been
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3 associated with employee compliance, and prosocial behaviors (e.g. O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986;
4 Bozeman & Perrewé, 2001). Meyer and Allen (1991) maintain that employee commitment can
5 be seen as a result of reciprocation for organizational rewards or costs that it incurs in providing
6 employment (e.g. job training). The hypothesized inverse relationship between perceived
7 exploitative relationships and organizational commitment is proposed because if employees
8 believe that the organization is exploiting them, and they react with anger and hostility, they are
9 less likely to commit to this exploitative organization. Indeed, research shows that positive affect
10 and cognitions (such as commitment) and negative emotions (such as anger) directed at the same
11 source are mutually exclusive (Diener & Iran-Nejad, 1986), such that if employees feel angry or
12 hostile towards the organization, then they cannot simultaneously feel committed to it.
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26 *Hypothesis 6. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
27 *relationship are negatively related to employees' organizational commitment,*
28 *partially mediated by their anger and hostility.*
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30 **Inward-Focused Emotions and Employee Reactions**

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32 When individuals experience inward-focused or self-directed negative emotions for a
33 distressing circumstance (Martinko et al., 2002), feelings of shame and guilt may arise, because
34 these emotions address the discrepancy between an ideal self and actual selves (Lewis, 1971).
35 We propose that the inward-focused emotions of shame and guilt lead to different employee
36 reactions than the outward-directed ones. These reactions may include employee burnout,
37 employee silence, and psychological withdrawal. Partial mediation is expected because for each
38 reaction there exist substantial literature demonstrating other causes and we would not expect
39 perceived exploitation-fuelled emotions to be the sole drivers. We focus on this specific group of
40 outcomes as there is indication in the literature that they are causally linked to negative job
41 conditions which can result in negative self-evaluation and feelings of low personal
42 accomplishment (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986).
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3 **Burnout.** Researchers have modelled burnout as resulting from employees' sense of lack
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5 of personal accomplishment, a negative self-image, reduced self-confidence and consequent
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7 depersonalization from the work and job, which cause role stress over not meeting one's own
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9 expectations, and consequently burnout (e.g. Gil-Monte, Peiró, & Valcárcel, 1998; Maslach,
10
11 1982; Cordes & Dougherty, 1993). According to these approaches, depersonalization is a coping
12
13 strategy to deal with the underlying unpleasant emotions of shame and guilt due to the
14
15 diminished personal accomplishment and self-blame, which consequently lead to burnout (e.g.
16
17 Chang, 2009). While burnout borne out by a sense of depersonalization and its emotional causes
18
19 might be rooted in individual factors, organizational factors, such as inappropriate job demands,
20
21 have also been identified (Chang, 2009). Therefore, employees' perceptions of exploitation may
22
23 elicit a process by which shame and guilt-prone individuals blame themselves for their
24
25 diminished accomplishment or not meeting their own personal goals, resulting in burnout.
26
27 Burnout is characterized by inward-focused attributes, such as cognitive and emotional
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29 deterioration (Gil-Monte, 2012), and therefore we view burnout as a self-directed outcome of
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31 perceived exploitation. In other words, burnout is a likely outcome of shame and guilt-fuelled
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33 perceptions of exploitation. In other words, burnout is a likely outcome of shame and guilt-fuelled
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35 perceptions of exploitation. In other words, burnout is a likely outcome of shame and guilt-fuelled
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37 perceptions of exploitation. In other words, burnout is a likely outcome of shame and guilt-fuelled
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39 perceptions of exploitation.

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41 *Hypothesis 7. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
42 *relationship are positively related to employees' burnout, partially mediated by their*
43 *shame and guilt.*
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45 **Silence.** Employee silence entails withholding ideas, information and opinions that could
46
47 lead to improvements in the workplace (Van Dyne, Ang & Botero, 2003). Individuals who
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49 experience shame and guilt about allowing themselves to be exploited by their organization are
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51 more likely to remain silent rather than actively voice their grievances because silence is a result
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53 of fear of vulnerability, embarrassment, or retaliation (Van Dyne, et al., 2003; Fontenot-
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3 Premeaux & Bedeian, 2003; Rochat, 2003). Silence is a risk-averse defensive strategy rooted in
4 self-protective behavior, which, is more likely to occur among individuals who display
5
6 characteristics of the shame and guilt-prone individual – those with higher self-awareness, with
7
8 lower self-esteem and with a negative self-evaluation (Fontenot-Premeaux & Bedeian, 2003;
9
10 Cordes & Dougherty, 1993).

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15 *Hypothesis 8. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
16 *relationship are positively related to employees' silence, partially mediated by their*
17 *shame and guilt.*

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19 **Psychological withdrawal.** Such withdrawal behaviors involve psychologically removing
20
21 oneself from unsatisfying working conditions (e.g. daydreaming) (Lehman & Simpson, 1992). It
22
23 can also include reducing investment, time, and resources devoted to work (Taris, Horn,
24
25 Schaufeli & Schreurs, 2004). Withdrawal is a passive and self-focused inward reaction to shame
26
27 and guilt, which reduces the aversive emotions by disassociating oneself from the relationship
28
29 without the risks of actions taken against the organization or leaving the job. Researchers who
30
31 have examined psychological and cognitive processes that lead to withdrawal have found that
32
33 withdrawal entails self-criticism and self-attack and as such are shame-based behaviors
34
35 (Yelsma, Brown, & Elison, 2002). Accordingly, psychological withdrawal is an inwardly
36
37 focused outcome of perceived exploitation.
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42 *Hypothesis 9. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee-organization*
43 *relationship are positively related to their psychological withdrawal partially*
44 *mediated by their shame and guilt.*
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46 47 **METHODS**

48 49 **Overview of Studies**

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51 We conducted two field studies to test this theory of the effects of employees'
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53 perceptions that their organizations are exploitative. The first study was a sample of construction
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55 workers (Study 1), and the second sampled medical doctors in their residencies at two time
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3 periods (Study 2). In this early stage of the development, we chose samples where we expected
4
5 to find employees who might perceive their organizational relationships as exploitative.
6
7 Construction workers depend on their general contractors for future work and medical residents
8
9 must complete their residencies in their current workplaces or lose their specializations. Indeed,
10
11 in both settings there are highly physical work demands and occupational health risks
12
13 (Kaminskas & Antanaitis, 2010). While some of the hypotheses were tested in both studies,
14
15 others were tested in only one in order to keep the survey short because construction workers
16
17 completed the survey during their lunch break in the canteen and to facilitate doctors' completing
18
19 two surveys. Table 2 summarizes the measured variables in each study.
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25 Insert Table 2 about here
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28
29 In addition, three separate studies were conducted to develop and validate the new
30
31 perceived exploitative relationships (PERs) scale; descriptions of the two scale-development
32
33 studies and their results appear in the Appendix and the third validation study is described below.
34

35 36 **VALIDATION STUDY**

37
38 The main purpose of this validation study is to assess the construct validity of PERs in
39
40 terms of its convergent, discriminant, incremental, and criterion-related validities (e.g. Hinkin,
41
42 1998) in order to support our contention that the concept of perceived exploitative employee-
43
44 organization relationships is distinct from related constructs. We also utilized this sample to
45
46 conduct an exploratory factor analysis to examine the structure of perceived exploitative
47
48 relationships.
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50 51 52 **Respondents and Procedure**

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54 Data were gathered online using the Amazon MTurk platform. Respondents were offered
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56 hourly compensation based on the MTurk guidelines. Of the 186 completed surveys, 56% were
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3 male and the mean age was 33.50 (SD = 9.30). In addition, 24.2% of the respondents had
4 completed high school, 21% had additional vocational training, 39.8% had completed an
5 undergraduate degree and 15.1% had a master's degree and the majority had worked in their
6 organization 1-5 years. A diverse range of professions and industries were represented in the
7 sample (e.g. aircraft mechanic, key-holder, sales clerk); 92% were living in the U.S.
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14 **Measures**

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16 Unless otherwise stated, all scales used to measure the constructs used a seven-point
17 Likert scale (where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly agree").
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21 ***Perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships.*** We used the 14-item scale
22 developed from the initial two studies, described in the Appendix with the items appear in
23 Appendix Table A1 ($\alpha=.96$).
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27 To demonstrate that PERs are empirically distinct from related constructs we measured
28 the following:
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32 ***Perceived organizational support.*** We used Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, and Lynch's
33 (1997) 8-item short version (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Baranik, Roling & Eby, 2010). A sample
34 item is "My organization shows little concern for me" ($\alpha=.93$).
35
36

37
38 ***Psychological contract breach.*** We used Robinson and Morrison's (2000) five-item
39 global measure for this variable. A sample item is "I have not received everything promised to
40 me in exchange for my contributions". Items were measured on a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly
41 disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") ($\alpha=.94$).
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48 ***Distributive justice.*** This variable was measured using a 4-item scale (reverse coded) used
49 by Colquitt (2001). A sample item is "My outcome is not justified given my performance". Items
50 were measured on a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") ($\alpha=.96$).
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3 We also included two scales that capture supervisory treatment to test whether
4 respondents differentiate between treatment from the supervisor and treatment from the
5 organization. We thus measured:
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10 ***Abusive supervision.*** We used Tepper's (2000) 15-item scale to measure this variable. A
11 sample item is "My supervisor puts me down in front of others". Respondents were asked to rate
12 the frequency of their supervisor's behavior on a scale from 1 ("I cannot remember him/her ever
13 using this behavior with me") to 5 ("He/she uses this behavior very often with me") ($\alpha=.95$).
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19 ***Perceived supervisor support.*** We used Eisenberger et al.'s (2002) 4-item scale. A sample
20 item is "My supervisor cares about my opinions". ($\alpha=.93$)
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22
23

24 The dependent variables in the validation tests include:
25

26 ***Anger and hostility.*** This was measured using three items adapted from Weiss, Suckow
27 and Cropanzano (1999). Respondents were asked to state how they felt (e.g. angry, hostile) about
28 an object or event. This measure allows adaptation (for an example of a past adaptation see:
29 Barclay et al., 2005). In this study, a sample item is "I feel angry about the way I am treated by
30 my organization" ($\alpha=.95$).
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38 ***Shame and guilt.*** We used the State Shame and Guilt Scale (Marschall, Sanftner &
39 Tangney, 1994). A sample item is "My organization makes me feel like I'm a bad person". Items
40 were measured on a frequency scale ranging from 1 ("never") to 5 ("very often") ($\alpha=.90$).
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45 Two hypothesized variables were included for the discriminant and criterion-related
46 validity tests. These included:
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49 ***Turnover intentions.*** We used Landau and Hammer's (1986) 3-item scale. A sample item
50 is "I am actively looking for a job outside my organization" ($\alpha=.94$).
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3 **Organizational commitment.** We measured this variable using Bozeman and Perrewé's
4 (2001) 9-item adaptation of Mowday, Steers and Porter's (1979) Organizational Commitment
5 Questionnaire. A sample item is "I feel very little loyalty to this organization" (reversed). Items
6 were measured on a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") ($\alpha = .91$).
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11
12 We also measured age and gender to use as control variables. However, age did not
13 correlate with PERs in this sample ($r = .01$, n.s.), and while gender did correlate significantly
14 with PERs ($r = .17$, $p < .05$), its inclusion did not change the results.
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18 19 **Results**

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21 The descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of the validation study variables are
22 reported in Table 3.
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27 Insert Table 3 about here
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30 The correlation analysis supports convergent, discriminant, incremental, and criterion-
31 related validities. To support the discriminant validity of PERs, we conducted principle
32 component analyses, and all PERs items loaded on their appropriate factor when comparing
33 PERs item loadings with all the non-target variables in the model (all loadings were at least .50
34 on the target factor and cross-loadings on other factors were lower by at least .12). PERs were
35 significantly correlated with all the variables in the expected direction. While the correlation of
36 PERs with the emotional variables, particularly anger and hostility, is noticeably strong, it is
37 below .85, which is the conventional cut-off criteria for suspecting overlap between constructs
38 (Hinkin, 1998).
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51 As a robustness test we ran partial correlations and PERs were still significantly related to
52 anger and hostility and shame and guilt even when controlling for perceived organizational
53 support ($r = .65$, $p < .01$), psychological contract breach ($r = .71$, $p < .01$), distributive injustice
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3 ($r = .69, p < .01$), abusive supervision ($r = .68, p < .01$), and perceived supervisor support ($r =$
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($r = .69, p < .01$), abusive supervision ($r = .68, p < .01$), and perceived supervisor support ($r =$
.73, $p < .01$). Moreover, the results of a regression analysis show that PERs explain 72% of the
variance in anger and hostility and 45% of the variance in shame and guilt, which is above and
beyond the comparatively small variance explained by the other variables (the highest variance
in these emotions explained by another variable was 5%). These results point to the usefulness
and incremental validity of PERs.

Discussion

The validation study supports the convergent, discriminant, incremental, and criterion-
related validity of perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships. Our measure is
independent and distinct from perceived organizational support, psychological contract breach,
distributive justice, abusive supervision and perceived supervisor support, the emotions, and
hypothesized dependent variables. PERs are related to the emotions of anger and hostility and
shame and guilt even when controlling for other potential explanatory variables and exploitation
perceptions explain variance in anger and hostility and in shame and guilt above and beyond the
variance explained by other constructs. To support the discriminant validity of PERs, we
conducted principle component analyses, and all PERs items loaded on their appropriate factor
when comparing PERs item loadings with all the non-target variables in the model.

STUDY 1: CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Respondents and Procedure

We obtained access to a U.K. construction organization and recruited participants on site.
Respondents were offered a lottery ticket with a chance to win a cash prize in return for their
participation. After a week, 248 surveys were collected of which 219 were fully completed. Of
these respondents 14 (6%) were female, which reflects the population of this setting, and the

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3 mean age was 32.7 (SD= 12.78). The sample was comprised predominantly of manual laborers
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6 ($n = 211$, or 96%) and the remaining respondents were either administrative staff or engineers.
7

8 9 **Measures**

10 Perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships, anger and hostility, shame
11 and guilt and turnover intentions were measured with the scales used in the validation study ($\alpha =$
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17 .96, .95, .84, .88 respectively).

18 We also measured additional variables described below. Unless otherwise stated, all scales
19 used to measure these constructs used a five-point Likert scale (where 1 = “strongly disagree”
20 and 5 = “strongly agree”).
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24 **Revenge.** We measured this variable using Aquino et al.’s (2006) four item-scale which is
25 based on Wade’s (1989) revenge subscale (presented in McCullough et al., 1998). A sample item
26 is “I got even with my organization” ($\alpha = .91$).
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31 **Work engagement.** We measured Work engagement using the Utrecht work engagement
32 scale short version (Schaufeli et al., 2006). A sample item is “When I get up in the morning I feel
33 like going to work” ($\alpha = .91$).
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38 **Psychological withdrawal.** We used Lehman and Simpson’s (1992) measure to assess
39 psychological withdrawal on a frequency scale ranging from 1 (“never”) to 7 (“very often”).
40 A sample item is “I daydream” ($\alpha = .83$).
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45 We also collected measures of age and gender to use as control variables. Gender did not
46 correlate with PERs ($r = .05$, *ns*), and while age did correlate significantly with PERs ($r = .03$, p
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60 < .05, including it as a control did not change the results.

Results

The descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of the Study 1 variables are reported in Table 4.

Insert Table 4 about here

We tested our hypotheses via structural equation modelling using AMOS software (Arbuckle, 2012), version 21.0. The indirect effects were tested using the bootstrapping technique (Preacher & Hayes, 2004) and the results are depicted in Figure 2. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, perceived exploitation had a significant direct effect on anger and hostility ($\beta = .80$, CI [.65, .91], $p < .01$). Hypothesis 2 predicted that perceived exploitation is positively related to the emotions of shame and guilt in employees. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .24$, CI [.19, .30], $p < .01$). Hypothesis 3 proposed that anger and hostility would partially mediate the relationship between perceived exploitative relationships and revenge. This hypothesis was not supported but exhibited a non-significant trend ($\beta = .13$, CI [-.04, .20], $p < .10$). We also predicted that anger and hostility partially mediate the relationship between perceived exploitation and work engagement (Hypothesis 4) and this hypothesis was supported ($\beta = -.13$, CI [-.17, -.01], $p < .01$), as was the partial mediation of anger and hostility in the relationship between perceived exploitation and turnover intentions (Hypothesis 5) ($\beta = .28$, CI [.19, .48], $p < .01$).

Regarding the inward-focused emotions, support was found for the mediating role of shame and guilt in the relationship between perceived exploitation and psychological withdrawal (Hypothesis 9) ($\beta = .14$, CI [.00, .30], $p < .05$). A comparison between a mediated and non-mediated model (shown in Table 5) revealed that the model with mediators provided a significantly better fit for the data than the model without mediators, in support of the hypothesized partial mediation effects.

Insert Table 5 about here

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8 We also conducted two post hoc analyses as robustness tests, to rule out alternative
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10 explanations for the results. First, in a SEM analysis we found no evidence of cross-over results;
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12 the outward-focused emotions were not associated with the inward-focused outcomes and the
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14 inward-focused emotions were not associated with the outward-focused outcomes (as shown in
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16 Table 6).
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Insert Table 6 about here

Second, we tested for common method bias using a common latent factor following procedures described by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003) and Williams, Edwards, and Vandenberg (2003), and found that the model was not significantly impacted. In other words, any effect of common method variance on the model was negligent and did not significantly alter the results.

Discussion

The results of Study 1 support our theory that perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships are associated with the emotions of anger and hostility as well as shame and guilt, and that these different emotions partially mediate the relationship between PERs and the outward focused actions of work engagement, turnover intentions, and the inward-focused psychological withdrawal. There was only a non-significant trend for revenge. Outward- and inward-focused emotions were exclusively associated with their predicted attitudes and behaviors respectively.

Interestingly, respondents in this sample were more likely to report anger and hostility than shame and guilt. We examine this as well as replicating some of Study 1's relationships

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2
3 using time-lagged data in a sample of medical residents and extend the range of hypothesized
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5 outcome variables tested in Study 2.
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8 9 **STUDY 2: MEDICAL RESIDENTS**

10 Study 2 provided the opportunity to replicate and extend some of the findings from Study
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12 1 in a different sample with different characteristics (in terms of age, gender, education, industry
13
14 and geographic location).
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17 18 **Respondents and Procedure**

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20 A sample of 139 medical doctors, most of whom were in their medical residency in
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22 public and private hospitals in the U.S., U.K. and in Israel, was recruited. The data were gathered
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24 at two points in time, with a three-month time lag between measurements. This time lag was
25
26 chosen as long intervals between measurements can adversely impact attrition rates (Olsen,
27
28 2005), and attrition was crucial given the relatively small sample size achieved at Time 1. As
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30 residents need to leave their organization upon completion of their residency, a longer time lag
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32 would have also increased the likelihood that they would have moved to a different organization.
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34 To gather Time 1 data, two doctors who were our direct contacts sent recruitment emails to
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36 fellow doctors on our behalf, introducing us, providing a brief outline of our research as well as
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38 the link to the online survey on the Qualtrics platform. From the 1,013 doctors approached, we
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40 obtained 202 completed questionnaires (a 20% response rate) in Time 1. By requesting
41
42 respondents' emails in the first survey we could contact them directly for Time 2 data collection.
43
44 Of the 202 respondents at Time 1, 139 completed the Time 2 survey, yielding a 68.8% response
45
46 rate. To facilitate responses and to encourage doctors to complete both surveys, there was a
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48 promise of a \$30 Amazon gift voucher to be emailed to them upon fully completing both
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50 surveys. It should be noted that while the response rate might seem low, we believe that it poses
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3 little threat to the representativeness of the sample because we found no significant difference
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5 between the characteristics (average age, tenure and proportion between male and female
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7 respondents) of respondents at Time 1 and Time 2.
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10 11 **Measures**

12 Perceived exploitative employee-organizational relationships, anger and hostility, and
13 shame and guilt were measured at Time 1 ($\alpha = .95, .88, \text{ and } .86$ respectively). The outward-
14 focused outcomes of revenge, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions were
15 measured at Time 2 (with $\alpha = .96, .84, \text{ and } .88$ respectively), using the same scales described
16 previously.
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24 ***Burnout.*** Burnout was measured at Time 2 using 16 items comprising the Oldenburg
25 Burnout Inventory, a sample item being “There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at
26 work”. Responses ranged from 1 (“Strongly disagree”) to 5 (“Strongly agree”) ($\alpha = .89$).
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31 ***Employee silence.*** Employee silence was measured at Time 2 using five items adapted
32 by Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008) from Van Dyne et al.'s (2003) employee silence scale, a
33 sample item being “I chose to remain silent when I had concerns about [my hospital]”.
34 Responses ranged from 1 (“never”) to 5 (“very often”), with an $\alpha = .90$.
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40 Our control variables, age and gender, did not correlate with PERs ($r = -.11, \text{ n.s. and } r =$
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45 .11, n.s respectively) so were not controlled in the analysis.

46 47 **Results**

48 The descriptive statistics and correlations of the Study 2 variables are reported in Table 7.
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51 Insert Table 7 about here
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3 In this study we continued to test the hypotheses via structural equation modelling using
4 AMOS software (Arbuckle, 2012), version 21.0. The indirect effects were also tested using the
5 previous bootstrapping technique (Preacher & Hayes, 2004).
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10 The beta coefficient results of the structural model are shown in Figure 2. As expected,
11 those who perceive their employer to be exploitative were significantly more likely to report
12 anger and hostility (Hypothesis 1) ($\beta = .76$, CI [.60, .84], $p < .01$) and shame and guilt
13 (Hypothesis 2) ($\beta = .36$, CI [.34, .41], $p < .01$). Furthermore, anger and hostility partially
14 mediated the relationship between perceived exploitation and the outward-focused revenge
15 (Hypothesis 3) ($\beta = .14$, CI [.07, .20], $p < .01$), turnover intentions (Hypothesis 5) ($\beta = .25$, CI
16 [.12, .38], $p < .01$), and organizational commitment (Hypothesis 6) ($\beta = -.16$, CI [-.21, -.12], $p <$
17 .01). We also found that shame and guilt partially mediated the relationship between perceived
18 exploitation and inward-focused burnout (Hypothesis 7) ($\beta = .46$, CI [.28, .62], $p < .01$) and
19 employee silence (Hypothesis 8) ($\beta = .63$, CI [.43, .85], $p < .01$). A comparison between a
20 mediated and non-mediated model (shown in Table 8) revealed that the model with mediators
21 provided a significantly better fit for the data than the model without mediators, in support of the
22 hypothesized partial mediation effects.
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44 Following a SEM robustness test we found no evidence of cross-over results. As shown
45 in Table 9, outward-focused emotions were not associated with the inward-focused outcomes
46 and the inward-focused emotions were not associated with the outward-focused outcomes. This
47 replicates Study 1 and provides additional confidence in our theorizing, suggesting that the
48 results are not a consequence of capitalizing on common method variance.
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Insert Table 9 about here

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8 We also used the same procedures as in Study 1 (following Podsakoff et al., 2003 and
9
10 Williams et al., 2003) to further test for common method bias and found that the model was not
11
12 significantly impacted.
13

14 **Discussion**

15
16 Study 2 partially replicated and extended the findings of Study 1. As in Study 1, the
17
18 direct relationships between perceived exploitation and the emotions of anger and hostility and
19
20 shame and guilt, and the indirect effect of perceived exploitation on employee revenge and
21
22 turnover intentions through these emotions were supported. Likewise, it appears that respondents
23
24 tended to report the more outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility rather than inward-
25
26 focused shame and guilt. Here too, this finding may be the result of employees' under-reporting
27
28 shame and guilt, or this may be broadly characteristic of the samples in this study. The
29
30 replication of the findings in a markedly different sample from Study 1, supports the
31
32 generalizability of the findings; perceptions of exploitation are present among men and women,
33
34 among those with higher education and those with limited education, among those with more and
35
36 with less prestigious jobs and across different cultures and countries. This study also extended
37
38 Study 1 by uncovering the indirect effect of perceived exploitation on organizational
39
40 commitment, burnout and silence and by a time separation of the measurements in order to
41
42 attenuate common method bias and to lend additional support to our theorizing. Moreover, the
43
44 outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility explain the outward-focused outcomes and the
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46 inward-focused emotions of shame and guilt explain the inward-focused outcomes and not vice
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48 versa, supporting our model and the importance of discrete emotions in understanding
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50 subsequent attitudinal and behavioral consequences.
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DISCUSSION

This research suggests that employees may perceive exploitation by organizations. We theorized that employees' perceptions of exploitation would lead to either outward- or inward-focused emotions or both and this would have a differential and deleterious consequences on a range of outcomes. Developing and validating a measure in three studies, we tested a model of the effects of perceived exploitation in two additional settings (construction and medicine) where we anticipated that employees might perceive their relationship as exploitative. Our findings suggest that outward-focused emotional reactions (anger and hostility) help explain why perceived exploitative organizational relationships are associated with revenge against the organization, higher turnover intentions, reduced employee engagement, and commitment. Inward-focused emotions (guilt and shame) explained the relationships between perceived exploitation and burnout, employee silence, and psychological withdrawal. These findings have important implications for theory and research on the employee-organization relationship.

Theoretical Contributions

The findings presented here contribute to several literatures. First, we provide a complementary perspective to that provided in the industrial relations and sociology literature on the conceptualization and empirical investigation of exploitation. We offer a conceptualization of exploitation that goes beyond underpayment of tangible earnings (Sakamoto & Kim, 2010) to include a broader set of treatments by the organization. In contrast to the focus on a particular category of employees – migrants, we found reports of exploitation across several jobs, industries, and socio-economic strata, including highly educated professionals. Capturing individual-level perceptions of exploitation and its consequences acts as a counterbalance to the overemphasis in the sociological literature on exploitation as a structural condition, and in organizational behavior literature on greater organizational performance and efficiency. Here we

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2
3 demonstrated across a range of settings that employees' perceptions that their organizations are
4 exploiting them is far from an historical anomaly, even in the countries sampled here (U.S., U.K.
5 and Israel), which have regulated employment protection. Whether exploitation is something
6 employees know they must suffer temporarily to achieve their career goals (as for our studied
7 medical residents), is a feature of markets over which employees feel neither they nor their
8 employers exert much control (as for our construction workers), or is designed into relationships
9 in which highly dependent workers like contractors or gig economy workers perceptions of
10 exploitation are real and are associated with emotional reactions which can explain a diverse
11 array of worker reactions that have long been negatively associated with organizational
12 performance. While our studies focused on 'traditional' employees, future research might
13 address perceptions of organizational exploitation among contractors, temporary, migrant
14 workers, and also in settings where perceptions of exploitation may not be expected or visible.
15 Further, we studied only employee attitudes and intentions; although these have been shown to
16 be predictors of employee actions, future research would want to extend the study of perceived
17 organizational exploitation to its effects on employee actions.

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38 Second, our findings contribute to the increasing research attention to emotions at work,
39 drawing on research in psychology that finds that the current distinctions in the organizational
40 behavior literature between moods and discrete emotions are not viable. We would expect that
41 negative assessments, such as being in an exploitative organizational relationship, would foster
42 even stronger emotional reactions than the more frequently studied positive experiences at work,
43 and so suggest that the role of emotions is particularly important to the study of employees'
44 negative workplace experiences. Here, we drew on affective events theory (Weiss &
45 Cropanzano, 1996) and proposed that perceived exploitation would lead to outwardly and
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3 inwardly focused emotions which could account for the different effects of perceived
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5 organizational exploitation on employee reactions that have documented negative implications
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7 for employees and their organizations. Few studies have examined the influence of emotional
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9 reactions to how one is treated by one's organization, and the few that have stressed the
10
11 outwards-focused emotions (Zhao et al., 2007; Barclay, et al., 2005). We demonstrated the
12
13 importance of inward-focused emotions, and found that the inward-focused emotions, although
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15 less frequently reported by the studied employees, nevertheless did explain employee burnout,
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17 silence, and psychological withdrawal. This work suggests a need to revisit much of the earlier
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19 research on constructs central to organizational behavior research such as turnover intentions,
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21 organizational commitment, silence, and withdrawal, and view them as not just cognitive
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23 assessments but also as emotionally driven ones.
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28 The findings that shame and guilt were less frequently reported than anger and hostility in
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30 both studies also suggests a need to further explore the underlying cause of these differing
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32 emotional reactions. One potential explanation is that shame and guilt are more cognitively
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34 complex than other basic emotions, such as anger, because they require the presence of self-
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36 consciousness and self-awareness (Tracy & Robins, 2004) and are consequently less common.
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38 Another possibility is the influence of characteristics specific to these samples. For instance,
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40 Mosquera, Manstead, & Fischer (2000) found cultural differences in the tendency to report
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42 shame. Future research might move beyond studying one emotion at a time and look at why
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44 people may have differing emotional reactions to their workplaces.
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49 Third, our findings deepen our understanding of the consequences of negative employee-
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51 organization relationships by extending our knowledge beyond what is known (e.g. Gibney et al.,
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53 2009) to include emotional reactions and their effects on attitudinal and behavioral intentions.
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3 Nonetheless, the associations found here, while important, do not exhaust the range of potential
4 effects of exploitative employee organizational relationships. In finding support for all of the
5 hypothesised relationships (except for revenge, which was found in Study 2, but was a non-
6 significant trend in Study 1) between perceived exploitative organizations and diverse employee
7 reactions, the view that perceived exploitation can yield a potentially large range of attitudinal
8 and behavioral intentions is reinforced. This is important because it suggests not only that
9 perceived exploitation can impact the strength of employee reactions, but also foster different
10 types of reactions with different consequences. As Rozin and Royzman (2001) state, “negative
11 entities are more varied, yield more complex conceptual representations and engage a wider
12 response repertoire” (p. 296). Undeniably, the reactions to perceived exploitation found here
13 vary in their degree of outwardly-directed (e.g., revenge, turnover intentions, and organizational
14 commitment) or inwardly-directed harm (e.g. employee burnout, silence, and psychological
15 withdrawal), but all potentially have an impact on individuals’ well-being and organizational
16 performance (Vandenberghe, Bentein & Stinglhamber, 2004). We hope this work can spur
17 additional research on the important problem of the consequences of organizational exploitation
18 of workers.

40 **Limitations and Future Research Directions**

41
42 A primary limitation of these studies is common methods bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie,
43 Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), which we addressed in several ways. First, common method produced
44 by item context, such as order effects and priming effects were mitigated in all three studies by
45 counterbalancing the question order. Second, the effect of self-report bias was alleviated through
46 a temporal separation of measurements of the independent and dependent variables in Study 2
47 and testing the alternative claim that all emotions mediated all relationships. In addition, we
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3 found that emotions were associated with the predicted attitudes and behavioral intentions not
4 the ones we did not predict, which would not have been the case if common method bias was
5 driving the results. Finally, we re-ran the SEM tests in Studies 1 and 2 including a common
6 latent factor and found that common method bias did not significantly impact the results.
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12 Another limitation is generalizability, which was addressed by using distinct studies
13 sampling a variety of employees and industries. The largely consistent results across the range of
14 sampled occupations and industries provides some confidence in the generalizability of the
15 findings. A third potential limitation is the three months separating the measurement points in
16 Study 2. This was chosen to manage attrition rates as many of the medical residents would be
17 moving from their residencies to fellowships or permanent posts in the near future.
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26 A promising future line of research would be studying the evolution of perceived
27 exploitative relationships. Do such perceptions develop gradually over time, as positive
28 employee-organizational relationships do (Labianca & Brass, 2006), or do they develop through
29 a much faster process via a “Popeye” effect (McLean, Parks & Kidder, 1994), or a “phase-shift”
30 (Lind, 2001), in which one event is so extreme, or accumulated injustices or wrongdoings reach a
31 certain threshold, leading to an abrupt change in cognition and behavior. Further, are certain
32 employers’ approaches to their employee relationships such as quasi-spot contracts or under-
33 investment in employees (Tsui, et al., 1997) more likely to foster employee perceptions of
34 exploitation? Further, the early theorists proposed that exploitation is the result of structures of
35 employment or asymmetric dependence (Marx, 1932/1970). However, if such asymmetry is
36 highly institutionalized and normative, it may not result in employees’ perceptions of
37 exploitation. In addition, certain jobs may be more susceptible to exploitation than others, and
38 we selected our settings because we had reason to believe that we would find perceptions of
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3 exploitative relationships there. Those working in the gig economy as contract workers (Pearce,
4 1993) and migrant workers (Wilkinson, 2014) are an increasing proportion of the workforce.
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6 While many of these workers may welcome the freedom and autonomy, many others may feel
7 they have no choice but to take these jobs without security or predictable earnings. We would
8 hope future research could explore whether such workers do perceive themselves to be exploited
9 to the same extent (or more) than the employees sampled here, and what the potentially
10 detrimental consequences are for them and their organizations. Supervisors may also play a role
11 in the development of perceived organizational exploitation. Prior research has found that
12 supportive supervisors contribute to a positive employee perception of their employer-
13 organizational relationships and perceived organizational support (Shanock & Eisenberger,
14 2006). Future research could explore whether the converse holds true: do employees generalize
15 from an exploitative supervisor to perceiving their organization as exploitative?
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31 Future research could also examine the buffers to the development of PERs such as the
32 attraction of the work itself -- whether it is buildings that will stand for decades or saving lives.
33 These employees may hold professional obligations that they can separate from how they are
34 treated by their organizations, or that may mitigate their reactions to an exploitative relationship.
35 After all, employees with a sense of calling are willing to make sacrifices in favour of their
36 chosen line of work to pursuit their passion (see, Bunderson and Thompson, 2009).
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45 Although we focused on emotions to explain the consequences of PERs, additional
46 explanations could include depletion of resources and thwarted psychological needs. Being in an
47 exploitative relationship is likely to provoke a series of energy consuming cognitive processes
48 (sense-making and rumination) thus leading to resource depletion that, in turn, affects employee
49 behavior. Perceived exploitation could also thwart an individual's needs, such as a need for
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3 control, as it challenges the contingencies between one's actions and outcomes (Glass & Carver,
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5 1980) leading to negative employee responses.
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8 Finally, we examined several behavioral consequences of perceived exploitation, though
9
10 others can be explored. Cohen, Blake and Goodman (2016) found that turnover intentions and
11
12 actual turnover are distinct and have distinct predictors. While we found that perceived
13
14 exploitation predicts turnover intentions, in the future researchers could examine whether such
15
16 intentions translate into action. Perceived exploitation may also have adverse health outcomes
17
18 for employees, borne out by their feelings of powerlessness, normlessness and social isolation
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20 (Dean, 1961). Siegrist (1996) and Siegrist and colleagues (1990; 2009) found support for adverse
21
22 health effects when rewards from the organization fall short of employees' perceptions of their
23
24 contributions. Such potential personal consequences of exploitation also help expand the field of
25
26 organizational behavior beyond its dominance by organization-serving research. Lastly,
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28 mobilization, social movements and collective action have been traditionally tied to exploitation
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30 (Brewer, 1987) and considering the role that perceived exploitation plays in such efforts may be
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32 a fruitful path for future research.
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38 **Practical Implications**

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40 Ballinger and Rockmann (2010) noted that once negative relationships have been
41
42 established, they are not easily reversed. Thus, a primary task of organizations is to prevent or
43
44 curtail the development of perceptions of exploitation. This begins by understanding why
45
46 employees see the relationship as exploitative. Is it the limited rewards? A change in policies
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48 that was unfavorable to employees? Executives' assumptions that an exploitative relationship is
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50 just the way it is and employees can lump it or leave? It certainly is possible that employees'
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52 subjective perceptions of exploitation are more imagined than real, making addressing
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3 employees' perceptions and causal attributions appropriate (Weiner, 1986). Whether imagined or
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5 structurally real, once established, employees' perceptions that their organizations are
6
7 exploitative will be difficult to reverse. As those who have studied breaches of workplace trust or
8
9 injustice note, these perceptions are difficult to change (Tomlinson & Mryer, 2009; Zhao, et al.,
10
11 2007). Nonetheless, Folger and Bies (1989) and Kim, Dirks, and Cooper (2009) suggest that the
12
13 most effective approach is for the organization to communicate that it is not responsible for the
14
15 negative situation (Barclay et al., 2005; Colquitt, 2001) thus mitigating its effects when
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17 employees attribute it to conditions external to the organization versus intentional organizational
18
19 acts. Because perceived exploitation impacts a diverse range of outcomes (Labianca & Brass,
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21 2006), it would benefit organizations to ascertain whether these perceptions exist and if so, why,
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23 and then take steps to acknowledge and address them.
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29 **Conclusions**

31 Exploitation has not been sufficiently studied in organizational behavior and so has not
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33 had the theoretical and empirical attention its pervasiveness and importance warrant. Here, we
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35 document the commonness of employees' perceptions that organizations are exploiting them,
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37 propose that this arouses both outward and inward-focused emotions which can explain a host of
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39 employee reactions with well-documented workplace implications. Demonstrating that the
40
41 neoliberal assumption that employees will not remain in organizations they find unattractive is
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43 not always true, we find that whether temporarily or longer, employees do find themselves
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45 working for exploitative organizations, with negative consequences for themselves and the
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47 performance of those organizations. We hope this study initiates a broadening of the field of
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49 organizational behavior beyond service to organizational productivity and efficiency, to use its
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51 tools for a more inclusive set of organizational questions.
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7 **APPENDIX: SCALE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES**

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9 Scale development is based on two studies (with the validation study presented in the
10 paper). We first generated items for the pool of potential scale items employing a snowball
11 sample of working professionals. We then conducted a content validity assessment using a
12 student sample to eliminate conceptually inconsistent items. Finally, we assessed the
13 psychometric properties of the perceived exploitative employee-organizational relationships
14 scale on a sample of construction workers (reported in the main body).
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24 **Study A1: Item Generation and Scale Development**

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26 Scale items were generated using a mixed method approach because a theoretically
27 grounded conceptual definition exists yet there was limited empirical knowledge of the subject
28 (Hinkin, 1995; 1998). The deductive items were generated based on our definition of perceived
29 exploitative relationships such that the items captured at least one of the main characteristics of
30 the definition: a *perception* of an *intent* to take advantage of others to the *benefit of the*
31 *organization*.
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40 In addition, an open-ended questionnaire was administered electronically to ten working
41 professionals employed in different professions (e.g. lawyer, banker) using a 'snowball'
42 technique generating 124 exploitative incidents and was stopped when reached saturation.
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44 Respondents were asked to reply to two open-ended questions: "In your opinion, what
45 constitutes an exploitative relationship between the organization and its employees?", and "Give
46 an example or examples of situations in which you think your organization exploited you or your
47 colleagues?" Of the respondents, 60% were male and the mean age was 40 (SD = 7.64).
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3 Participants had been employed in their jobs for an average of 8.25 years (SD = 5.29). We
4 performed a content analysis on the 124 incidents of exploitation provided by the respondents
5 following procedures recommended by Hinkin (1995), and categorized each incident based on
6 the type of benefit yielded to the organization. The incidents of exploitation gathered from the
7 working professionals' sample were then converted into items, while keeping the wording
8 intelligible, avoiding double-barrelled statements, and avoiding reverse-scored items (Hinkin,
9 1998). We obtained 39 items from the researcher-generated inductive and executive-generated
10 deductive approaches combined and chose a 7-point response scale to allow for greater response
11 variability.
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25 **Study A2: Content Validity Assessment**

26 The second scale development study consisted of an item-sort task, conducted to assess
27 content validity (Hinkin, 1998; Anderson & Gerbing, 1991) to eliminate conceptually
28 inconsistent and repetitive items. Two independent panels, one expert panel of five graduate
29 students studying employment relations and organizational behavior in a large U.K. university,
30 and fourteen undergraduate and graduate students in a variety of fields from a large U.S.
31 university, were recruited. 58% (or 11 respondents) were female, and the mean age was 23.9
32 (SD = 2.88).
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43 Respondents were provided with construct definitions and the corresponding scale items
44 and asked to categorize each item with its best matching construct. We included perceived
45 organizational support, psychological contract breach, distributive injustice and perceived
46 organizational obstruction as well as PERs. Although some constructs are defined positively and
47 others negatively, we advised respondents that these constructs can range from high to low, and
48 that some measures included reversely worded items.
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3 All measures were on a 1-7 strongly disagree to strongly agree scale except for
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5 distributive justice that used a 1-5 scale. We measured perceived organizational support using
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7 Eisenberger et al.'s (1997) 8-item short version. We measured psychological contract breach
8
9 using a 5-item global measure (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). We measured distributive justice
10
11 with a 4-item scale by Skarlicki, Folger and Tesluk (1999). We measured perceived
12
13 organizational obstruction using a 5-item scale developed by Gibney et al. (2009). We used the
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15 proportion of substantive agreement (P_{sa} , the proportion of respondents that assigned an item to
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17 the posited construct), and the substantive validity coefficient (C_{sv} , which reveals whether an
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19 item is unintentionally tapping into another construct by assessing how much an item was
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21 assigned to its intended construct more than to any other construct) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991).
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26 The C_{sv} cut-off was obtained via a test of statistical significance (Anderson & Gerbing,
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28 1991), according to which the critical value of .5 is used to determine which items should be
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30 deleted. The test is binomial such that the null and alternative hypotheses are: $H(0): P(a) < .5$;
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32 $H(1): P(a) > .50$, whereby P_{sa} is the probability that the measure is assigned to its posited
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34 construct. (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991). We found that $m = 14$ (at 14 the probability of the
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36 number of correct assignments is smaller than .05). The formula for calculating the critical value
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38 for C_{sv} is $(2m/N) - 1 = (2 \times 14 / 19) - 1 = .47$. Thus, any item with a C_{sv} value larger than .47 is
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40 statistically significant. Therefore, items with P_{sa} 's larger than .75 and C_{sv} 's larger than .47
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42 were retained (Hinkin, 1995). The resulting scale consisted of 14 items (presented in Table A1),
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44 all of which were significantly assigned to the PERs construct alone, and not the conceptually
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46 similar perceived organizational support, psychological contract breach, distributive injustice or
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48 perceived organizational obstruction.
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Insert Table A1 about here

Study A3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Internal Consistency Assessment

The construction sample employed in Study 1 was also used for assessing the PERs construct in terms of factor structure and reliability. First, there was variability in respondents' report of perceived exploitation such some reported the very low levels of perceived exploitation (1 on the response scale), whereas others reported very high perceptions of exploitation (7 on the response scale)¹. Second, an EFA showed that all items loaded onto a single factor (all loadings $\geq .695$). Third, a confirmatory factor analysis was conducted using Amos version 21.0. We compared a 1, 2, 3 and 4-factor model. All the 14 items loaded onto a single factor (all loadings $\geq .70$), supporting the uni-dimensionality of PERs. The comparison of the measurement models is presented in Table A2. As shown, the 1-factor model provides the best fit for the data, providing further support for the single factor structure of PERs. The reliability was $\alpha = .96$, in this sample.

Insert Table A2 about here

Discussion: Scale Construction Studies

The scale development studies suggest that employees do experience exploitation of varying levels and that the PERs scale is stable and reliable. Further evidence of construct validity is provided in the Validation Study and in Studies 1 and 2 via the successful tests of its

¹ It should be noted that the mean of perceived exploitation was 3.16 and the SD was 1.41 in this sample (as shown in Table 4), so that reports of exploitation were skewed against high perceived levels of exploitation. This means that three SDs will account for nearly all the variance as is the case in a normal distribution (e.g. for IQ, 140 would be two SDs away from the mean, yet people do score 160+).

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8 **TABLE A1**
9 **Scale Items with their Psa and Csv Values**

Perceived Exploitative Employee-Organization Relationship Items		Psa	Csv
1.	As long as I work in my organization, it will keep taking advantage of me.	.84	.74
2.	My organization will never stop using me.	.95	.89
3.	This is not the first time my organization took advantage of me.	1.00	1.00
4.	My organization takes advantage of the fact that I need this job.	.89	.79
5.	My organization forced me into a contract that unilaterally benefits the organization.	.79	.68
6.	I am a modern-day slave.	.89	.79
7.	My organization mistreats me because I am dependent on it.	.84	.74
8.	My organization uses labor contract loopholes to avoid adequate compensation.	.79	.58
9.	My organization uses the fact that I need this job to avoid compensating me adequately.	.95	.89
10.	My organization intentionally under-compensates me because it knows that I am desperate for this job.	.95	.89
11.	My organization expects me to be available to work at any time without extra pay.	.79	.58
12.	My organization doesn't provide me with job security as it wants to be able to fire me at its convenience.	.84	.79
13.	My organization uses my ideas for its own personal benefit without acknowledging me for them.	.84	.79
14.	My organization doesn't care if it harms me, as long as it benefits from my work.	.84	.74

25 *Note:* Psa = The proportion of substantive agreement; Csv = The substantive validity coefficient.
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28 **TABLE A2**
29 **Comparison of Measurement Models in Construction Workers' Sample**

Factors	$\chi^2(df)$	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	SRMR
1. 1 Factor	134.62(65)*	2.07	.07	.98	.96	.03
2. 2 Factors	401.22(76)*	5.28	.14	.90	.88	.06
3. 3 Factors	380.89(74) *	5.15	.13	.91	.89	.06
4. 4 Factors	380.92(74) *	5.15	.13	.90	.89	.06

38 *Note:* N = 219.
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TABLE 1
Comparison between Perceived Exploitation and Constructs in the Employee-Organization Relationship Literature that Address Mistreatment by the Organization

Construct	Construct Definition	Nature of Relationship	Intentionality (Advantage to the Organization)
Perceived Exploitative Employee-Organization Relationships	<i>Employees' perceptions that they have been purposefully taken advantage of in their relationship with the organization, to the benefit of the organization itself.</i>	Overall Negative	The organization is perceived by employees to be intentionally exploiting them for self-gain
Psychological Contract Breach & Violation	<i>Employees' perceptions that "the terms of their psychological contracts have not been adequately fulfilled".</i> (Morrison & Robinson, 1997: 226)	Negative event in a positive relationship	Can be intentional (reneging) or unintentional (incongruence)
Low Perceived Organizational Support	<i>Employees' perception concerning the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being.</i> (Eisenberger et al., 1986: 501)	Positive: Focus on support (or lack thereof)	Benevolent intentions
Distributive Injustice	<i>Occurs when the profits of employees fall short of their investment.</i> (Colquitt, Greenberg & Zapata-Phelan, 2005)	Can be overall positive	The literature is silent on the intentionality behind distributive inequity
Perceived Organizational Obstruction	<i>An employee's belief that the organization obstructs, hinders, or interferes with the accomplishment of his or her goals and is a detriment to his or her well-being.</i> (Gibney et al., 2009: 667)	Targeted negative	The literature is silent on the intentionality behind the obstruction
Perceived Organizational Cruelty	<i>An employee's perception that the organization holds him or her in contempt, has no respect for him or her personally and treats him or her in a manner that is intentionally inhumane.</i> (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012: 141)	Overall Negative	The organization is perceived by employees to be intentionally cruel to them, however the purpose is unclear

TABLE 2
Variables Measured according to Study

Variable	Study	
	1	2
1. Perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships	x	x
2. Anger and hostility	x	x
3. Shame and guilt	x	x
4. Revenge	x	x
5. Engagement	x	
6. Turnover intentions	x	x
7. Psychological withdrawal	x	
8. Organizational commitment		x
9. Burnout		x
10. Employee silence		x

TABLE 3
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Validation Study

	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Perceived exploitative relationships	2.80	1.50									
2. Perceived organizational support	4.83	1.30	-.77**								
3. Psychological contract breach	2.30	.94	.65**	-.63**							
4. Distributive injustice	2.75	1.15	.78**	-.70**	.58**						
5. Abusive supervision	1.56	.80	.70**	-.53**	.45**	.55**					
6. Perceived supervisor support	5.04	1.41	-.68**	.74**	-.50**	-.52**	-.54**				
7. Anger/hostility	2.67	1.75	.82**	-.74**	.69**	.67**	.65**	-.63**			
8. Shame/guilt	1.99	.69	.61**	-.58**	.45**	.45**	.51**	-.53**	.64**		
9. Turnover intentions	3.26	2.01	.71**	-.72**	.57**	.65**	.50**	-.57**	.71**	.71**	
10. Organizational commitment	3.48	.91	-.66**	.78**	-.63**	-.68**	-.41**	.63**	-.63**	-.59**	-.70**

Notes: $n = 186$.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

TABLE 4
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 1

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Perceived exploitative relationships	3.16	1.41						
2. Anger/hostility	2.90	1.65	.68**					
3. Shame/guilt	2.18	.58	.58**	.50**				
4. Revenge	1.65	1.01	.20**	.13*	.31**			
5. Engagement	3.47	.76	-.28**	-.19**	-.33**	-.08		
6. Turnover intentions	3.37	1.61	.47**	.52**	.37**	.22**	-.24**	
7. Psychological withdrawal	3.20	1.34	.31**	.20**	.40**	.14*	-.48**	.23**

Notes: $n = 219$.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

TABLE 5
The Association between Perceived Exploitation and Attitudinal and Behavioral Outcomes in Study 1: Comparison between a Mediated and non-Mediated Model

Model	$\chi^2(df)$	χ^2/df	$\Delta \chi^2(df)$	RMSEA	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	SRMR
1. With Mediation	6.58(2)*	3.29	-	.10	.99	.99	.02
2. Without Mediation	23.72(2)**	11.86	17.14	.22	.92	.92	.08

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

TABLE 6
Results of Alternative Cross-Over Tests in Study 1

Independent Variable	Mediator Variable	Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	S.E.	P
PERs →	Anger/ Hostility →	Psychological Withdrawal	-.04	-.13	.04	.09	.336
PERs →	Shame/Guilt →	Revenge	-.02	-.09	.03	.07	.384
PERs →	Shame/ Guilt →	Work Engagement	.01	-.09	.12	.12	.739
PERs →	Shame/ Guilt →	Turnover Intentions	.24	-.25	.74	.08	.303

Note: PERs = Perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships.

TABLE 7
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 2

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Perceived exploitative relationships	3.25	1.36							
2. Anger/Hostility	3.08	1.56	.79**						
3. Shame/Guilt	2.37	.47	.44**	.46**					
4. Revenge	1.30	.61	.35**	.33**	.31**				
5. Turnover Intentions	2.34	1.49	.52**	.60**	.44**	.35**			
6. Organizational Commitment	3.22	.61	-.62**	-.61**	-.40**	-.32**	-.49**		
7. Burnout	2.81	.60	.52**	.57**	.65**	.35**	.60**	-.57**	
8. Employee Silence	2.47	.76	.27**	.24**	.46**	.08	.20**	-.19*	.40**

Notes: $n = 139$.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

TABLE 8
The Association between Perceived Exploitation and Attitudinal and Behavioral Outcomes in Study 2: Comparison between a Mediated and non-Mediated Model

Model	χ^2 (df)	χ^2 /df	$\Delta \chi^2$ (df)	RMSEA	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	SRMR
1. With Mediation	70.14(20)*	3.51	-	.14	.89	.85	.09
2. Without Mediation	438.24(76)*	5.76	368 (56)	.19	.55	.52	.18

* $p < .05$

TABLE 9
Results of Alternative Cross-Over Tests in Study 2

Independent Variable	Mediator Variable	Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	S.E.	P
PERs →	Anger/ Hostility →	Burnout	.05	-.01	.11	.03	.114
PERs →	Anger/ Hostility →	Employee Silence	.00	-.07	.08	.05	.938
PERs →	Shame/Guilt →	Revenge	.03	-.15	.21	.11	.826
PERs →	Shame/ Guilt →	Turnover Intentions	.33	-.06	.72	.24	.189
PERs →	Shame/ Guilt →	Organizational Commitment	-.01	-.15	.16	.09	.978

Note: PERs = Perceived exploitative employee-organization relationships.

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4 **FIGURE 1**
5 **Conceptual Model of the Consequences of Perceived Exploitative Employee-Organization**
6 **Relationships**

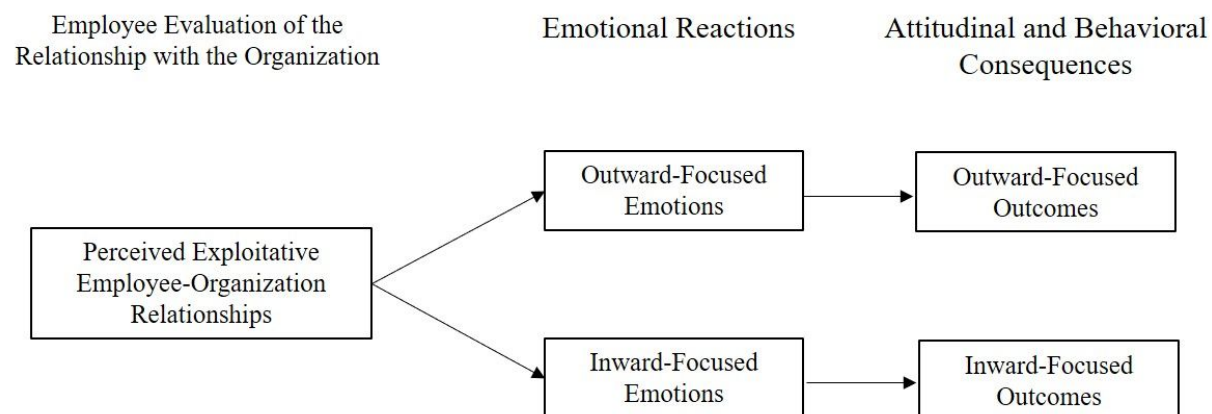
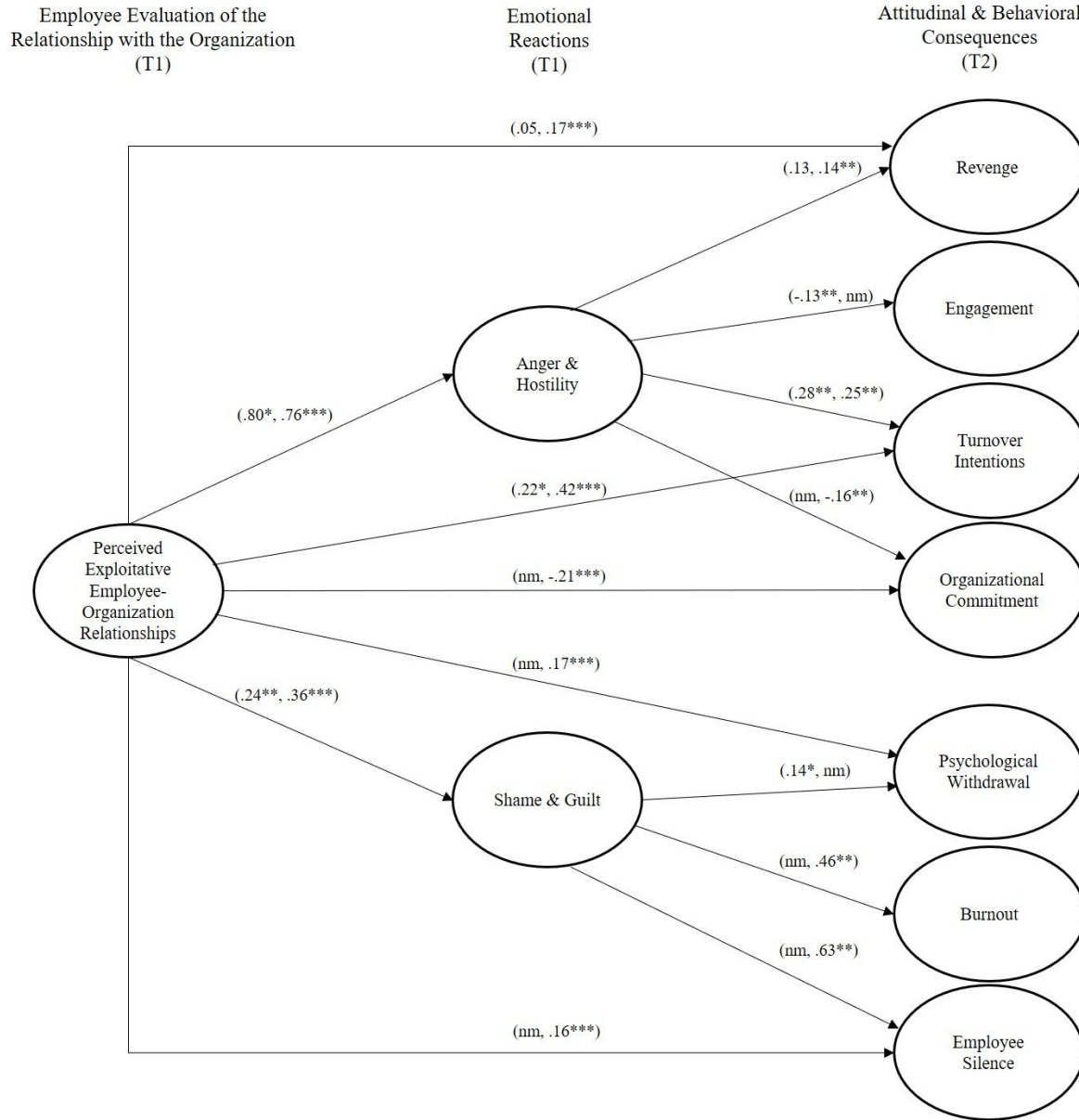


FIGURE 2
Structural Model Results for Direct and Bootstrap Indirect Effects of Perceived Exploitation on Emotional, Attitudinal and Behavioral Consequences in Study 1 and Study 2



Notes: $n = 219$ in Study 1; $n = 139$ in Study 2. In Study 2 T1 = Time 1; T2 = Time 2, three months after Time 1. In the parentheses, Study 1 results appear first, followed by Study 2 results. For the ease of readability, we did not present the coefficients for paths that were non-significant in both studies. When a path was measured in one study but not the other, 'nm' denotes that the path was not measured in that study.

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

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