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The Influence of Overall Perceived Organizational Justice on the Effectiveness of Ethics Programs

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Abstract

This paper examines the role of overall perceived organizational justice for the effectiveness of ethics programs. Therefore, it was investigated if overall perceived organizational justice moderates or mediates the effect of a compliance / integrity-based ethics program on deviant workplace behavior or / and organizational citizenship behavior. After drawing a theoretical basis from existing theoretical and empirical studies, moderator and mediator effects were tested by using a sample of German employees from different organizational settings (N = 329). Results of hierarchical regression analysis and the bootstrapping interval method confirmed that overall perceived organizational justice mediates the effect of compliance and integrity strategies on counterproductive work behavior. Conversely, justice perceptions did not play a role for the influence of ethics programs and organizational citizenship behavior. Also, results of regression analysis including interaction terms indicate that overall perceived organizational justice is no moderator variable for the stated relationship. Theoretical and practical implications of the results are discussed.

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1. Introduction

Several corporate ethical scandals have occurred in the last century. Major scandals like the Volkswagen-Diesel scandal or Enron incident raised questions on how misconduct emerges and could be prevented (Tanner et al., 2019). It is widely accepted that misconduct in organizations does not solely depend on a few individuals who misbehave – some so-called "bad apples" (Askew et al., 2015; Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Tanner et al., 2019; Treviño & Youngblood, 1990). The organizational context is an important factor causing (un)ethical behavior, which is also referred to as "bad barrels". For instance, this includes the ethical culture or climate of an organization. Thus, it seems critical to include organizational factors in general while managing ethics. Towards this end, it is first of all important to know which specific factors influence employee's reaction to an ethics program and thus have to be taken into account while designing and implementing measures.

A previous empirical study on ethics programs by Treviño et al. (1999) found that fair treatment perceived by employees is a key factor influencing ethics-related outcomes. Employee's perception of fair treatment was strongly correlated with (a) less unethical behavior, (b) employee commitment and (c) employee's perception that it is acceptable to deliver bad news to management. Therefore, Treviño et al. (1999) conclude: "Companies demonstrate their good ethics to employees primarily through fair treatment. If a company passes the "fair treatment test", employees are more likely to be open to ethics and legal compliance initiatives and to cooperate in making them successful" (p. 143). This suggests that Perceived Organizational Justice (POJ) is a key determinant in managing ethics in an organization effectively. A widely used method to manage ethics in organizations is by using an ethics program. Therefore, this empirical study investigates the role POJ plays in the effectiveness of ethics programs. As these programs mainly attempt to promote ethical and prevent unethical behavior, their effectiveness will be addressed by analyzing their influence on Deviant Workplace Behavior (DWB) and Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB). Furthermore, this paper considers ethics programs as a two-dimensional construct that can be either based on an integrity or compliance strategy.

In the following section, the relevance of the present research topic for management as well as researchers will be presented. After that, concepts will be defined, and ultimately the hypotheses will be derived based on previous empirical findings and theoretical models. This paper suggests POJ acts as a mediator or moderator in the effect of ethics programs on DWB and OCB. Building on that, the method and results of the empirical study are described. Finally, the main findings will be discussed in detail and potential limitations will be pointed out.

2. Relevance

Various organizational factors have been found to influence the effectiveness of ethics programs (Kaptein, 2009; Treviño et al., 1999). Generally, research in the field of organizational ethics has considered the effect of (a) individual differences (e.g. locus of control), (b) issues related factors (e.g. moral intensity) and (c) contextual factors (e.g. ethical climate) (Kish-Gephart et al., 2010; Treviño & Weaver, 2001b). However, Treviño and Weaver (2001a) suggest including organizational justice as an independent contextual variable as this construct often influences the same outcomes as ethics programs. Also, Treviño et al. (2006) highlight the importance of justice for ethics-related research: "Given the obvious importance of reactions to unfairness, this new work provides an opportunity to strengthen the link between the justice and ethics literature" (p. 972). While there have been a few theoretical approaches to connect fairness and ethics programs, empirical evidence is missing to the best of my knowledge. Thus, this paper aims to close this research gap by evaluating what role organizational justice plays for the effectiveness of (different) ethics programs on work behaviors empirically.

The results provide valuable information for management decisions and behavior. First, it shows if ethics programs depend on POJ. If this would be the case, it is necessary to take POJ into account while managing ethics. Solely implementing an ethics program will not cause employees to behave less unethically or more ethically. Instead, it would be necessary to create a fair perceived organizational context.
Second, if POJ has a strong effect on successful ethics programs this would imply that further factors might be important for managing ethics as well. This would suggest, that more empirical evidence should be provided regarding organizational factors while considering ethics programs.
Third, this paper will address two different strategies of ethics programs: integrity and compliance. By analyzing the different roles of POJ for these strategies, organizations

can design and implement the chosen approach more targeted. For instance, if organizational justice would strongly affect integrity-based approaches, an organization should strongly focus on the fairness perception of their employees while implementing integrity-based measures. Also, this paper will further clarify the differentiation between compliance and integrity-based ethics programs.

3. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

The main contribution of this paper is an empirical assessment of the role of POJ in the effectiveness of ethics programs. The theoretical basis will be introduced in the following. This chapter defines the most important concepts used in this study including ethics programs (compliance and integrity strategy), work behaviors (DWB and OCB) and POJ. Also, the connection between these factors will be analyzed by applying existing literature. Finally, hypotheses for a compliance as well as an integrity strategy will be derived.

3.1. Ethics Programs and Work Behaviors

To begin with, this paper will introduce the concept of ethics programs including their integrity and compliance-based approach. Then, DWB and OCB will be described. Based on that, the relationship between ethics programs and work behaviors will be analyzed.

3.1.1. Ethics Programs: Compliance and Integrity Strategies

Ethics programs or ethics strategies present formal organizational control systems designed to influence the behavior of organizational members so that it aligns with legal rules and ethical standards (Kaptein, 2009; Stimmler & Tanner, 2019; Weaver et al., 1999; Weaver & Treviño, 1999). Weaver and Treviño (1999) define ethical programs "as organizational control systems … that aim to create predictability in employee behavior and correspondence between specific employees' behaviors and more general organizational goals and expectations" (p. 317). Thereby, organizations primarily implement these programs to build an ethical culture, prevent unethical behavior and foster ethical behavior (Kaptein, 2009). To achieve these goals, ethics programs include various components that can be applied by organizations like a code of ethics, an ethics office(r), ethics training or disciplinary processes within organizations (Kaptein, 2009, 2015).

Paine (1994) introduces the distinction between two forms of ethics programs which is widely used today: compliance strategy and integrity strategy. While both approaches have the same overall goal to manage rule adherence, the governance methods to achieve this strongly differ (Paine, 1994; Tanner et al., 2019). Compliance strategies aim to regulate via lawful rules while integrity strategies regulate by focusing on values.

3.1.1.1. Compliance Strategy

Compliance strategies, also referred to as control-and-command, foster the prevention of unlawful conduct and uphold legal standards through control, monitoring and (threats of) punishment for noncompliance (Paine, 1994; Stimmler & Tanner, 2019; Tanner et al., 2019; Weaver & Treviño, 1999).

This strategy results from two assumptions based on classic economic theory. First, individuals are thought of as autonomous beings that are solely guided by material self-interest (Paine, 1994). People are rationalized and therefore behave in a way that maximizes their personal benefits and minimizes their costs (Paine, 1994; Tanner et al., 2019). This is also the case in regard to rule adherence which makes individuals indifferent to the morality of their action (Paine, 1994). Second, this leads to the assumption that people are ethically incompetent and not trustworthy (Tanner et al., 2019). Hence, the only way to ensure that employees do not misbehave is by implementing external rules and control in organizations, which explains the means of a compliance-based approach (Tanner et al., 2019; Weaver & Treviño, 1999).
Common measures are designing understandable rules (rule clarity), ensuring that misconduct will be noticed for example by increasing surveillance (detectability) and punishing unlawful behavior (sanctionability) (Paine, 1994; Stimmler & Tanner, 2019; Tanner et al., 2019; Weaver & Treviño, 1999).

3.1.1.2. Integrity Strategy

Integrity strategies or values orientation aim to encourage exemplar behavior by strengthening ethical values and employee commitment to the values of an organization, which results in an organizational environment where a set of shared values exists (Paine, 1994; Weaver & Treviño, 1999). It encourages self-governance as well as responsibility.

Contrary to compliance strategies, integrity strategies are based on the assumption that people are not solely guided by material self-interest but are social beings that also

include values and ideals into their actions and decisions (Paine, 1994). In general, individuals are intrinsically motivated to behave in accordance with rules (Tanner et al., 2019). These strategies assume that people aspire to behave ethically and be trustworthy. Thus, it is not necessary to focus on external rules and control but to increase employees' ethical desires as well as identification with ethical norms and values of an organization. Among others, an integrity measure could be to make employees feel comfortable enough to speak up (comfort to speak up) and reward ethical behavior (reward system) (Stimmler & Tanner, 2019).

3.1.2. Work Behaviors: Deviant Workplace Behavior and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

As stated above ethics programs seek to influence employee behavior. This paper focuses on two specific types of work behaviors – DWB and OCB – which will be defined in the following.

3.1.2.1. Deviant Workplace Behavior

Different definitions and scopes of unethical behavior in the workplace exist. Lewis (1985) reviews 38 definitions of business ethics to conclude that it includes "moral rules, standards, codes, and principles governing individual behavior" (p. 383). Following these norms implies ethical behavior and violating them equals unethical behavior. While general unethical behavior focuses on general laws or other societal guidelines to decide upon the morality of behavior, workplace unethical behavior concentrates specifically on organizational norms. Another approach by Jones (1991) simplifies the term ethical decision "as a decision that is both legal and morally acceptable to the larger community" (p. 367). On the contrary, unethical decisions are illegal or morally unacceptable. Finally, Robinson and Bennett (1995) describe workplace deviance in the following way: "Employee deviance is defined here as voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and in so doing threatens the well-being of an organization, its members, or both" (p. 556).

The given definitions reveal key characteristics of unethical behavior. First, it does not solely consist of a violation of official and explicit standards like rules and laws, but also informal and implicit norms like fundamental interests of the community (Kaptein, 2008; Lewis, 1985). Second, people commit this behavior voluntarily. Third, in contrast to related constructs like counterproductive work behavior or corruption, unethical behavior does not have to include harming someone or something (Kaptein, 2008). Unethical behavior can be seen as a construct including several sub-forms of negative behavior.

For example, counterproductive work behavior is one specific form of unethical behavior which is defined as "behavior intended to hurt the organization or other members of the organization" (Spector & Fox, 2002, p. 3) and covers behaviors like avoiding work, physical aggressions, theft, sabotage but also verbal insults.

This paper focuses on Kaptein's (2008) development of DWB as it is a multidimensional construct that includes various stakeholders (financiers, customers, employees, suppliers, and society) and therefore serves to cover and measure unethical behavior in a broader way.

3.1.2.2. Organizational Citizenship Behavior

The above-stated definitions see ethical behavior as conforming to organizational norms. However, the construct of OCB goes beyond the given job requirements and presents an extra-role behavior (Moorman, 1991; Organ, 1988b). Organ (1988b) introduced the concept of OCB as "individual behavior that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognized by the formal reward system, and that in the aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organization" (p. 4). This definition indicates the core elements of OCB. To begin with, "discretionary" refers to the fact that this behavior is not part of one's organizational role or job description, but a matter of choice by an organizational member. Furthermore, contrary to ethical behavior in general, OCB serves to facilitate organizational functioning and to increase organizational welfare. This marks OCB as a specific form of ethical behavior. For instance, commitment in performing tasks, helping coworkers or attending functions voluntarily are some ways of performing OCBs (Lee & Allen, 2002).

3.1.3. Effects of Ethics Programs on Work Behaviors

The different assumptions and measures of compliance and integrity strategies indicate that the effects of these strategies on DWB and OCB also vary. Overall, scholars have suggested that an integrity-based program is more successful in achieving the desired behavioral outcome (Paine, 1994; Tanner et al., 2019; Treviño et al. 1999; Weaver & Treviño, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2005).

3.1.3.1. Effects of Compliance on DWB and OCB

In general, a compliance strategy aims to prevent unethical behavior rather than increase employee's ethical behavior (Tanner et al., 2019). Concerning unethical behavior, Paine (1994) argues that compliance strategies risk negative outcomes as "employees may rebel against programs that stress penalties" (p. 111). However, compliance strategies

were found to prevent unethical conduct even if not to the same degree as integrity strategies do (Kaptein, 2015; Tanner et al., 2019; Treviño et al., 1999; Weaver & Treviño, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2005). Discipline for violations and other compliance-based measures seem to reduce unethical conduct as compliance upholds the value of conformity to shared norms and could let employees perceive organizational fairness as wrongdoers have to take responsibility for their action (Treviño et al., 1999). The latter explanation already suggests that justice has a role in the effect of a compliance strategy on unethical behavior which will be analyzed in more detail later on.

Regarding ethical behavior, Paine (1994) argues that "even in the best cases, legal compliance is unlikely to unleash much moral imagination or commitment [as] the law does not generally seek to inspire human excellence or distinction" (p. 111). She further describes compliance as "no guide for exemplary behavior – or even good practice" (Paine, 1994, p. 111). This indicates that compliance strategies will not influence OCB as it would require an "extra-role behavior" by definition. Several empirical studies have supported this theoretical argument (e.g., Treviño et al., 1999). Due to the general acceptance of this, this paper assumes that there is no connection between compliance strategies and OCB. Further, theoretical investigations of this paper will not consider this relationship.

3.1.3.2. Effects of Integrity on DWB and OCB

Contrary to a compliance strategy, an integrity-based approach focuses on promoting ethical behavior (Tanner et al., 2019). Integrity strategies were found to have a positive effect on ethical behavior (Treviño et al., 1999). By focusing on shared values, creating an environment that supports ethical conduct, and supporting a sense of shared accountability an integrity strategy creates an organizational environment in which employees seek ethically sound behavior (Paine, 1994).

Furthermore, integrity also reduces unethical behavior of employees, even more than a compliance strategy (Treviño et al., 1999). This implies that integrity-based approaches are more successful in shaping employee behavior (Paine, 1994; Tanner et al., 2019; Treviño et al., 1999; Weaver & Treviño, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2005). Paine's (1994) argument supports this as she describes an integrity strategy as broader (as it strengthens responsible conduct), deeper (as it cuts to the ethos and operational system), and more demanding (as responsibilities and aspirations of an organization need to be defined) compared to a compliance strategy. Shared organizational values

and supporting employees' ethical aspirations seem strongly important for managing ethics (Treviño et al., 1999).

3.2. Perceived Organizational Justice

In this chapter, the concept of POJ will be defined. After describing it as a multi-dimensional factor, an overall concept will be presented which will be employed for this study. Building on that, the effect of POJ on DWB as well as OCB will be examined based on prior theoretical and empirical studies.

3.2.1. Overall Perceived Organizational Justice

The concept of organizational justice was introduced by Greenberg (1987a, 1987b) as the perception of fairness in organizations by its human resources. This indicates that organizational justice does not refer to a concept trying to explain how just an organization is but how just an organization is perceived (Dar, 2020). This study considers the concept of overall POJ. However, to provide a better understanding of the concept and explain this choice, POJ dimensions will be explained briefly.

POJ is often treated as a multidimensional concept including different dimensions (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Cropanzano et al., 2001): distributive justice (fairness of allocations and outcomes distributed in an organization), procedural justice (fairness of rules and procedures used to decide the distribution of outcomes) and interactional justice (fairness of treatment during the implementation of the procedures) (Adams, 1965; Colquitt et al., 2001; Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976, 1980; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). The latter is often divided into two sub-dimensions: Interpersonal justice (polite, dignified, and respectful treatment) and informational justice (information and explanations for procedure and outcome) (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Colquitt, 2001; Dar, 2020). However, more recently this approach of differentiation between justice types has been questioned due to several disadvantages it causes (Ambrose et al., 2015; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Colquitt, 2012; Hauenstein et al., 2001). Among others, strong multicollinearity has been found between the different justice dimensions which has negative effects on statistical analysis. For example, the interpretation of results is difficult if a shared covariance between various outcome variables exists as the effect cannot be assigned to one specific outcome (Colquitt, 2012). In addition, by analyzing unique variance for each justice facet the aggregated influence of justice might be diminished (Ambrose et al., 2015).

Thus, more recently researchers supported the aggregation of justice (Ambrose et al., 2015; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Colquitt, 2012; Hauenstein et al., 2001). As the present study aims to evaluate the influence of fairness in an organization as a whole, an overall fairness approach is more suitable (Hauenstein et al., 2001). Theoretically, even though employees might be able to differentiate between justice dimensions, it has been suggested that they experience justice in a more holistic way (Ambrose et al., 2015; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Greenberg, 2001). Considering an overall sense of justice seems to capture employees' justice experience more accurately.

One approach is to view overall organizational justice as a separate construct. It includes an overall sense of fairness in which the specific justice facets "serve as antecedents of overall fairness, with overall fairness then serving as an antecedent of attitudinal and behavioral outcomes" (Colquitt, 2012, p. 7). Most importantly for this study, it clarifies a "that's not fair!" response which is critical in influencing the ethics program's effectiveness and serves to overcome the problem of multicollinearity (Colquitt, 2012). Empirical studies have provided evidence for this kind of overall justice construct. Probably the most important study was conducted by Ambrose and Schminke (2009) who discovered that overall justice judgments mediate the relationship between the four justice dimensions and specific outcomes including OCB. Thus, in the present study, the term POJ refers to an overall justice perception.

3.2.2. Effect of Perceived Organizational Justice on Work Behavior

Prior studies have revealed that POJ influences various attitudinal and behavioral outcomes like commitment, job satisfaction, turnover intention, pay satisfaction and task performance (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Konovsky et al., 1987). Furthermore, it is widely accepted that POJ influences unethical and ethical behavior which is particularly important for the present study (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Colquitt et al., 2001). In the following, a direct link between POJ and DWB as well as OCB will be presented based on existing theoretical and empirical findings.

3.2.2.1. Effect of POJ on DWB

Several scholars have acknowledged that employees who perceive their organization as fair engage in less unethical behavior and the other way around. For example, organizational justice has been linked with employee theft, retaliation and counterproductive work behavior (Colquitt et al., 2001; Greenberg, 1987b, 1990, 1993; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997).

Fairness heuristic as well as equity theory provide strong theoretical explanations for this effect of justice. Organizational members consistently have to make decisions and thereby are required to balance their own interests and the organization's interests or welfare. As it is not possible to include all information in such situations, decisions about cooperation rely on fairness heuristics (Lind, 2001; Lind et al., 1993; van den Bos et al., 1998, 2001). Fairness indicates that organizational members are valued and respected by the collective. As a result, deciding in the interest of the organization is a way of fulfilling one's interest. Treviño & Weaver (2001a) conclude:

> According to the fairness heuristic, if employees perceive just treatment at the hands of their organization, they will be unlikely to see any risk to their own welfare from conforming to organizational expectations, and thus they will be more likely to conform to those expectations. Similarly, they will sense no need to balance the scales of justice by looking for opportunities to improve their own outcomes at the organizations expense. (p. 652)

This indicates that employees have a motive to take action against the company to rebalance the scales of justice in their minds if the organization is seen as unfair. On the contrary, when employees perceive fairness they feel responsible for the organization's well-being and DWB is less likely (Treviño et al., 1999; Treviño & Weaver, 2001a, 2001b).

Furthermore, Adam's (1965) equity theory suggests that individuals will behave to balance benefits and burdens in an organization equitably. If employees receive unfair treatment tension will evoke within a person, which will be solved by harming the organization: "According to equity theory, employees who perceive injustice in the workplace will be more likely to look for opportunities to improve their own welfare or status at the organization's expense" (Treviño & Weaver, 2001a, p. 653). Thus, negative behavior serves to compensate for the injustice an employee received and restore equity.

3.2.2.2. Effect of POJ on OCB

Strong empirical evidence exists that POJ is directly linked to OCB (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Ball et al., 1994; Colquitt et al., 2001; Lim & Loosemore, 2017; Moorman, 1991; Skarlicki & Latham, 1996; Tansky, 1993). Similar to its effect on unethical behavior, equity theory provides a theoretical explanation as increasing or decreasing OCB balances inequality perceived in an organization (Organ, 1988a, 1990). In addition, the differentiation between social and economic exchange was applied to

justice (Blau, 1964). Organ (1988a, 1990) suggested that perceiving an organization as just makes employees see their relation to the organization as a social exchange rather than just an economic one. Employees think that they owe something to their company and as result support it by engaging in extra-role behavior. Thereby, employees reciprocate fair treatment they received from their organization.

3.3. Role of Perceived Organizational Justice for the Relationship between Ethics Programs and Work Behaviors

In the previous chapters, it was described that ethics programs aim to influence work behaviors and prior research was presented showing that POJ influences similar behaviors. This implies that employee's fairness perception might have an influence on the effectiveness of ethics programs.

Treviño and Weaver (2001b) explain a connection of fairness and ethics management by using social cognition terms. According to this theory, people use categories to store memories and apply these categories to process new information. Considering ethics management, it is likely that the category including ethics also holds information about justice or fairness, and "when employees hear that the company is focusing its attention on ethics, this is likely to cue a cognitive connection with the ethical issues that are salient to employees, such as fairness in hiring, promotion, performance appraisal, pay, restructuring, etc." (Treviño & Weaver, 2001b, pp. 115–116). Both Treviño and Weaver (2001b) as well as Treviño et al. (1999) use this reasoning to explain why many employees call ethics hotlines to complain about justice-related issues like fairness in hiring or layoffs.

Thus, this paper suggests POJ affects the relationship of ethics program's on work behaviors. This could occur in two different ways: POJ could be a mediator or moderator which is illustrated in Figure 1. Both, a moderator and mediator variable, present a third factor between two other variables, thereby explaining the influence an independent variable has on a dependent variable. In the case of a mediator "a set of two or more causal events [are] chained together in sequence of the form X → M → Y" (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017, p. 2). Thus, POJ would be causally located between ethics programs and work behaviors as shown in Figure 1 model a. Contrary, a moderator addressed "*how* a causal effect operates … , *when,* or under what *circumstances* … that effect exists or does not and in what magnitude" (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017, p. 9). As in model
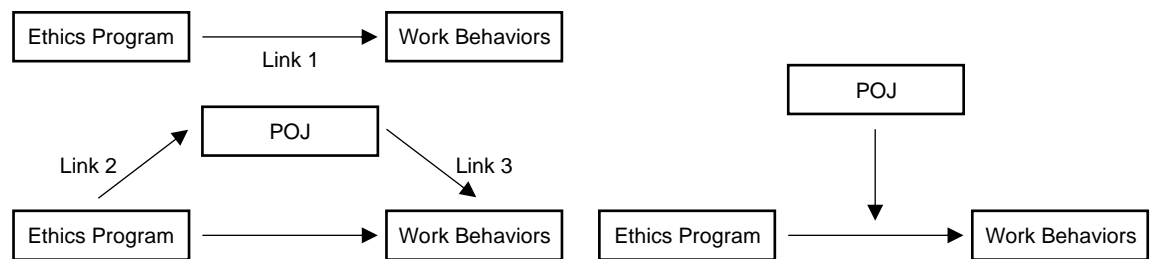
b. in Figure 1 presented, POJ could influences the magnitude or direction of the effect ethics programs have on work behaviors.

Figure 1

Theoretical Model: POJ as a third variable between Ethics Programs and Work

a. POJ as Mediator   *b. POJ as Moderator*

3.3.1. Perceived Organizational Justice as Mediator

This paper proposes that a compliance and an integrity strategy affect POJ which in turn affects behavioral outcomes (DWB and OCB). In previous chapters, it was argued that a compliance reduces DWB and an integrity strategy reduces DWB as well as increases OCB (Link 1 in Figure 1 a.). Further, it was shown that POJ could decrease DWB and increase OCB (Link 3 in Figure 1a.). A final link required for a mediation effect will be derived in the following: The effect compliance and integrity strategies have on POJ (Link 2 in Figure 1 a.).

3.3.1.1 Compliance Strategies and Work Behaviors

Treviño and Weaver (2001b) argued that an ethics program focusing on compliance will create fairness concerns in an organization. To support this, they provide three compelling arguments. First, compliance-based measures impose behavioral expectations and burdens on employees. No assurance exists that employees following these proposed rules will be supported or receive something in return from the organization. As a result, "the additional risks and burdens of the compliance program can be seen as an unfair imposition on employees" (Treviño & Weaver, 2001b, p. 120). Second, the assumptions and nature of compliance strategies reflect distrust. Employees are seen without any ethical aspiration. Employees could sense this distrust and on suspicion-based measures as not justified and perceive the organization as less just in general. Third, a compliance strategy is most likely inconsistent with other aspects

of the organizational culture. Expectations might be introduced by the compliance program that oppose other behavioral expectations like economic goals (for instance quarterly profit aims of an organization). Thus, the compliance program may be perceived as unrealistic and as a method to protect top management from blame. Responsibility is transferred from management to employees. This would in turn raise fairness concerns.

Despite these effects, compliance-based measures provide clear policies and punishment for violations which is necessary to satisfy employee's fairness expectations (Lerner, 1977; Niehoff & Moorman, 1993; Treviño & Weaver, 2001b). Various scholars have pointed out that the influence of compliance-based measures like monitoring and punishment on POJ depends on how these measures are designed (Podsakoff et al., 2006; Treviño, 1992; Xue et al., 2011). For instance, Niehoff and Moorman (1993) argue that "when employees perceive monitoring as appropriate, or justified, they accepted it and developed positive feelings for the organization as a result" (p. 532). How just employees perceive monitoring implied by an organization was found to depend on monitoring consistency, justification and employee's influence on time and setting (Stanton, 2000). In regard to punishment, factors like the magnitude of punishment and consistency of allocation procedures influenced reactions to punishment events (Bennett, 1998). Also, Treviño (1992) proposes a theoretical model where justice evaluation serves as a mediating factor between punishment and behavioral results.

While it has been argued that the effect of the measures of a compliance strategy could vary depending on the way measures are designed and implemented, the pure notion of a strong compliance strategy seems to convey an impression of injustice. Three out of four compliance strategy implications (behavioral expectations and burdens, inconsistency with other organizational aspects, reflection of distrust and incompetence) will decrease organizational justice perceived by employees. The potential result of satisfying employee expectations is the sole possible factor that could lead to more POJ. However, this effect strongly depends on how compliance strategies are designed and, thus, is not ensured. The following is proposed:

Hypothesis 1: The effect of a compliance strategy on DWB is mediated by POJ.

3.3.1.2. Integrity Strategy and Work Behavior

Considering an integrity strategy, various connections to POJ can be derived by looking at its features and measures. Most importantly, the assumptions of this strategy that employees are trustworthy and include values into their decision making, implies that the organization values its members. This signals a dignified and respectful treatment of employees which in turn has been found to increase POJ (Treviño & Weaver, 2001a; Zhang, 2006). As mentioned earlier, the respectful, polite, and dignified treatment of employees shown by authorities refers by definition to the interpersonal justice dimension. Several scholars have acknowledged that justice dimensions, including interpersonal justice, predict overall justice (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Jones & Martens, 2009). Furthermore, one common integrity-based measure is to create comfort to speak up. The possibility to exercise voice in decision-making processes has been found to influence justice perceptions positively (Folger, 1977; Lind et al., 1990; Thibaut & Walker, 1975). Closely related to voice is the concept of empowerment which exists if people have a choice in influencing organizational factors. Zhang's (2006) study supports that empowerment increases POJ. The effect of voice and empowerment on POJ can both be explained by applying the control model of organizational justice (Thibaut & Walker, 1975; Zhang, 2006). It suggests that if organizational members can express their opinion or make decisions, they feel in control of the decision-making process and its results. This causes them to perceive their organization as fairer.

In conclusion, an integrity strategy could increase POJ due to its signaling of a dignified and respectful treatment and support for voice as well as empowerment:

Hypothesis 2: The effect of an integrity strategy on DWB is mediated by POJ.

Hypothesis 3: The effect of an integrity strategy on OCB is mediated by POJ.

3.3.2. Perceived Organizational Justice as Moderator

Furthermore, the effectiveness of compliance and integrity strategies could depend on the existence or level of POJ. This would indicate that POJ acts as a moderator. While the influence of both ethics programs strategies on DWB and OCB has been addressed, the interaction between strategy and POJ needs further theoretical examination.

Employees who experience fair treatment in their organization are more committed to the organization (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Konovsky et al., 1987; Treviño et al.,

1999). Treviño and Weaver (2001b) suggest that therefore perceived unfairness might not only lead employees to behave less conforming to the ethics program's expectations but also to feel less committed to the program itself. However, if an organization is perceived as fair, employees will engage according to the program's expectations and will be more committed to it. Treviño et al. (1999) argue that if a company passes the "fair treatment test", employees will be more willing to act according to ethics and legal compliance initiatives. In addition, fairness heuristic, as well as equity theory, indicate that unfair perceptions lead employees to "balance the scale of justice". One way of accomplishing this would be to misbehave by not following an ethics program implemented by the organization (Treviño et al., 1999).

These arguments provide support that the effects of an ethics program in general (including both strategies) on ethical work behaviors might interact with POJ. Thus, if an organization is perceived as just by the employees and at the same time an ethics program exists, DWB will be smaller and OCB will be higher. In addition to this general ethics programs perspective, hypotheses for both strategies will be proposed separately.

3.3.2.1 Compliance Strategy and Work Behaviors

It was pointed out that the effect of compliance-based measures on POJ depends on how these measures are designed. The same holds for the effect they have on work behavior: On the one hand, punishment or monitoring reflect distrust and that employees are incompetent which could lead employees to rebel against the organization by employing DWB (Treviño & Weaver, 2001b). On the other hand, rules, punishment, and clear policies could decrease undesirable behavior when (a) it is perceived as a social event that serves to uphold social norms within a group or (b) acts as a social learning function whereby subjects who observe someone being punished are less likely to engage in prohibited activities (Arvey & Jones, 1985; Walters et al., 1965; Walters & Parke, 1964). Thus, how employees perceive compliance-based measures and in turn react to them could strongly depend on other factors. In particular, POJ could be critical "because employees will make cognitive connections between ethics programs and fairness, and in general will rely on a fairness heuristic in guiding their … behavior at work" (Treviño & Weaver, 2001b, p. 116). A prior study conducted by Weaver and Treviño (2001a) found that the compliance-based measure of sanctioning or follow-through interacts with POJ. If follow-through exists and the organization was perceived as fair at the same time, employees engaged in less unethical behavior as well as greater willingness to report problems compared to an organization that was not perceived as

fair. Further empirical evidence was provided by Friedland et al. (1973) who found that employees' rules-conforming-behavior was influenced by how fairly surveillance procedures and penalties for rule violations were perceived. Thus, the following relationship is suggested:

Hypothesis 4: The effect of a compliance strategy on DWB is moderated by POJ such that the negative effect will be higher when employees perceive organizational justice.

3.3.2.2. Integrity Strategy and Work Behaviors

In regard to an integrity strategy, its measures are less controversial and do not risk undesired outcomes to the same degree as a compliance strategy does. Supporting employees and encouraging shared values within an organization is less likely to cause a rebellion against the organization. However, it is possible to employ a not successful integrity strategy where "talk of values and aspirations may be seen as a charade" (Treviño & Weaver, 2001b, p. 119). In return this could cancel out the program's efforts and lead to no OCB and no reduced DWB, making integrity strategies efforts irrelevant. Again, following prior arguments of fairness heuristic and organizational commitment, POJ could support the authenticity of an organization and build credibility. Summarized, POJ could be a necessary foundation for an integrity strategy to be credible which in return is critical to be successful in shaping employees' behavior. Therefore, this paper proposes:

Hypothesis 5: The effect of an integrity strategy on DWB is moderated by POJ such that the negative effect will be higher when employees perceive organizational justice.

Hypothesis 6: The effect of an integrity strategy on OCB is moderated by POJ such that the positive effect will be higher when employees perceive organizational justice.

4. Methods

Before analyzing the results, the methods used in the study will be described in more detail. Therefore, procedures and respondents of the conducted study will be presented, and the four measures included in the study will be introduced.

4.1. Procedures and Respondents

For this study, a heterogeneous sample of employees and managers is used. All participants are German as the study was conducted in German language. To ensure representative data, participants from various economic sectors and different hierarchical levels are included. Also, quotas for gender and age according to the German population were applied. The study was distributed by a market research agency that recruited participants with the stated characteristics. It was conducted online. The study consisted of two parts to prevent influencing participant's responses. By separating questions regarding the organization and behavior, it is ensured that the answering patterns regarding employee's experienced behaviors are independent of prior stimulated thoughts of the organization. Furthermore, the study was carried out in accordance with the ethical standards of the Zeppelin University.

To provide an overview of the sample, key characteristics of the sample will be provided in the following. The sample of this study consists of 329 German employees and managers working in different economic sectors. This number includes all participants after removing responses lacking variance, failing the attention check, answering in a very short period of time (less than 2 seconds per item) or entering different sociodemographic information in the two survey parts. Overall, 46,5% of these participants are female and 53,5% male. The mean age is 43,85 years with a range of 19 to 65 years and a standard deviation of 12,7. Table 1 presents further work-related characteristics of the sample.

Table 1

Work-related descriptive statistics

Sample (N = 329)	N	Percentage
Employment		
Part-time	59	17.9%
Full-time	270	82.1%
Job Position		
Non-management level	205	62.3%
Lower management	60	18.2%
Middle management	40	12.2%
Upper management	8	2.4%
Others	16	4.9%
Tenure in current organization		
1 – 2 years	44	13.4%
3 – 5 years	92	28.0%
6 – 10 years	62	18.8%
> 10	131	39.8%
Company size		
< 50 employees	88	26.7%
50 – 249 employees	92	28.0%
250 – 10.000 employees	107	32.5%
> 10.000 employees	42	12.8%
Economic Sector		
Services	52	15.8%
Industry / Manufacturing	40	12.2%
Public Administration	36	10.9%
Healthcare / Care	35	10.6%
Retail / Trade	31	9.4%
Logistics / Transports	29	8.8%
Banking / Insurances	19	5.8%
Constructing	15	4.6%
Others	72	21.9%

Note. Participants with a tenure in current organization <1 year were removed.

4.2. Measures

In the first survey part, compliance and integrity strategies of an ethics program (independent variables) as well as POJ (proposed mediating or moderating variable) were surveyed. In the second part, participants had to report on DWB and OCB (dependent variables). Therefore, four measures were used which will be described in the following paragraphs. These measures included 47 items in total which are presented in Supplementary Table 1. Responses for all questions were given on 5-point Likert-scales and a *no answer is applicable* option was included for all measures.

Revised German Ethical Culture Scale

Compliance and integrity strategies were measured by using a revised version of the German Ethical Culture Scale which was initially developed and validated by Tanner et al. (2019). This instrument originally combined the notion of compliance and integrity-based ethics programs with the notion of an ethical culture to develop a 37-items culture scale in German language. The revised scale is an adapted version of these items which divided the items not solely by compliance and integrity-based approach but also by strategy and implementation. Thereby, some items focus on the strategy of the ethics program pursued by the organization, and some items on the measures taken by the organization to achieve rule adherence. It consists of 44 items, of which 13 items focus on the strategy. For the present research question, only these strategy items are relevant. Answers were given on a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Perceived Organizational Justice

To assess how just employees perceive their organization, a 6 items measure of Ambrose and Schminke (2009) was used. All items were translated into German language. The measure includes 3 items to assess an individual's personal justice experience (for example "Overall, I'm treated fairly by my organization") and three items to assess the organization's general fairness (for example "Usually, the way things work in this organization are not fair").

This measure was chosen for two main reasons. First, in their study, Ambrose and Schminke (2009) tested successfully that POJ functions as a mediator between different justice dimensions and behavioral outcomes. Therefore, empirical evidence exists that this measure captures the overall perception of justice. Second, it is an entity measure contrary to an event measure. Cropanzano et al. (2001) describe the difference as

follows: „In summary, the event paradigm informs us that events can be seen as unjust. The social entity paradigm, on the other hand, informs us that people and groups can be seen as unjust" (p. 191). As the object of this study is to identify how just the participants perceive the whole organization and not solely a single event, Ambrose and Schminke's (2009) measure is suitable. For consistency, the original 7-point scale was reduced to a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*).

Deviant Workplace Behavior

Beyond these two measures, participants were asked to report on deviant behavior they observed in the workplace. Therefore, a German version of Kaptein's (2008) scale assessing observed unethical behavior was included in the survey. Out of the 37 items 14 items were selected in accordance with the research topic. These items cover unethical conduct towards diverse stakeholder groups: employees, financiers as well as society. Based on the original instrument, a 5-point frequency scale was used (*never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always*).

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Last but not least, participants were asked to report OCB present in their organization by using 14 items of Lee and Allen's (2002) instrument. 8 of those items focused solely on the OCB towards individuals and the remaining 6 items considered the OCB towards the organization. The original 7-point scale was adopted to a 5-point scale (*never, rarely, sometimes, often, almost always*) so that it is consistent with the scale on DWB.

5. Results

Before describing the results in detail, the procedure used to calculate the variables is presented shortly. Compliance strategies, integrity strategies as well as POJ were calculated by averaging the items of each scale. In contrast, the dependent variables DWB and OCB were assessed by using a procedure described by Tanner et al. (2019). The items of these variables were grade on a 5-point frequency scale which is common in social science. However, it causes several disadvantages like its skewness or kurtosis. Most importantly, however, it was questioned if participants have a shared understanding of the vague frequency expressions "rarely, sometimes, often". Bocklisch et al. (2012) found that shapes and positions of participant's responses differed and that the answer frequency of such expressions was not equidistantly distributed. Thus, Tanner et al. (2019) highlight that "dichotomizing reduces the linguistic vagueness" (p. 11). Following

their approach, response scales of both work behaviors were dichotomized (0 indicates that the specific behavior was never observed, 1 indicates that it was observed at least rarely). Then, the sum across all items was calculated which results in a number of situations where DWB or OCB was observed (both ranging from 0 to 14).

Means, standard deviations, internal consistency (Cronbach's alphas) and intercorrelations among the subscales are presented in Table 2. All scales reported a Cronbach's alphas between 0.90 and 0.94. These values show very good internal consistency as they correspond with Nunnally's (1978) recommendation to reach reliability between 0.70 and 0.95 (the required level depends on the research situation, but a higher level is preferred).

Results indicate that there are significant correlations between all suggested variables: Integrity strategy correlates positively with OCB and negatively with DWB, indicating that a higher level of integrity equals more extra-role behavior and less unethical behavior. On the contrary, if a higher level of a compliance strategy exists DWB is higher. Even if this correlation does not correspond with the expected direction there have been theoretical argumentations supporting this negative relationship (e.g., Paine, 1994). Also, compliance strategies do not relate statistically significant to OCB. The latter aligns with the previous theoretical argumentation and empirical results (Treviño et al., 1999). Due to this confirmation, this relationship will not be further empirically analyzed. Also, POJ was found to have a significant negative correlation with DWB and a positive correlation with OCB which aligns with previous theoretical argumentations. In addition, as hypothesized POJ has a negative relationship to a compliance strategy and a strongly positive relationship to integrity strategy. A rather unexpected result is that OCB correlates positively with DWB, indicating that employees who undertake more extra-role behavior also behave in more activities harming the organization. A possible explanation

Table 2

Means, standard deviations, Cronbach's alpha and correlations

Variable	*M*	*SD*	*α*	1	2	3	4
1. Compliance Strategy	2.87	1.01	0.91	-			
2. Integrity Strategy	3.52	1.01	0.94	.10	-		
3. POJ	3.73	0.91	0.90	-.27**	.49**	-	
4. DWB	4.29	4.40	0.92	.15**	-.15*	-.29**	-
5. OCB	12.33	3.28	0.93	-.05	.30**	.18**	.19**

Note. N = 329. *M*, *SD* and *α* are used to represent mean, standard deviation and Cronbach's Alpha, respectively.
* *p* < .05. ** *p* < .01.

for this could be that employees perform DWB to support the goals of an organization which in turn would contribute to a higher level of OCB. For example, the action to manipulate numbers to help the organization to reach a profit aim could have been reported as DWB and OCB by survey participants.

To assess if POJ influences the relationship of ethics programs and outcome behaviors, it will be analyzed if it presents a third variable as a mediator or moderator variable.

5.1. Mediator

Different tests of mediation exist (Albers et al., 2009; Hayes & Rockwood, 2017; Jose, 2013). The most commonly used method to conduct mediation analyses is the causal-step-method introduced by Baron and Kenny (1986) which is based on several criteria that are tested via regression analyses. While this approach allows for testing partial mediation and is simple to conduct, it also provides disadvantages like low statistical power (MacKinnon et al., 2002). Most important for the present study, it has been criticized as it does not provide a joint test of all three conditions, estimate the indirect effect of independent on the dependent variable and conduct standard errors required to construct confidence limits (Baron & Kenny, 1986; MacKinnon et al., 2002). Due to these limits, it is widely accepted to add another test to the mediation analysis. A common method is the Sobel test, which however assumes that the sampling distribution of the indirect effect is normal and was found to be vulnerable to biased errors. Thus, scholars have recently recommended avoiding this test and using the bootstrap confidence interval which does not assume any form of distribution and does not require a large sample size (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017; Jose, 2013; Preacher & Hayes, 2004). Therefore, for this study the causal-step-method in combination with a bootstrap confidence interval method will be used. Before presenting the results of these analyses, both methods will be explained in more detail.

Following the causal-step-method of Baron and Kenny (1986), it will be tested if the following conditions are fulfilled: (1) compliance and integrity strategy (independent variables) significantly affect POJ (mediating variable), (2) compliance and integrity strategy (independent variables) significantly affect DWB and OCB (dependent variables), (3) POJ (mediating variable) significantly affects DWB and OCB (dependent variables) while holding compliance and integrity strategy (independent variables) constant and (4) the effect of compliance and integrity strategy (independent variables)

on DWB and OCB (dependent variables) reduces by adding POJ (mediator) to the model. A full mediation exists "if the independent variable has no effect when the mediator is controlled" (Baron & Kenny, 1986, p. 1177), otherwise, the relationship is partially mediated. To assess these conditions, three regression equations are necessary: In Step 1 POJ is regressed on compliance / integrity strategy, in Step 2 OCB / CWB is regressed on compliance / integrity strategy and in Step 3 OCB / CWB is regressed on POJ and compliance / integrity strategy.

If all stated conditions hold, the bootstrap confidence interval will be conducted afterwards. Preacher and Hayes (2004) define bootstrapping as a method that is "accomplished by taking a large number of samples of size n (where n is the original sample size) from the data, *sampling with replacement*, and computing the indirect effect … in each sample" (p. 722). In the following analysis, a sampling of 1,000 will be computed. Then, the indirect effect compliance / integrity strategy on DWB / OCB will be estimated based on the sampling distribution. This estimation is the mean of the 1,000 sample results. Furthermore, the 95% confidence interval of the bootstrapped sampling distribution will be derived, and the p-value will be calculated. This allows testing for significance of the effects, most importantly the indirect effect which is the effect of the independent on the dependent variable that goes through the mediator.

The results of the mediating tests will be presented in the following – first for compliance strategies and second for integrity strategies as the independent variable. The regression analyses include sociodemographic variables as control variables.

5.1.1. Compliance Strategy on DWB

Table 3 shows the results of the three regressions analysis necessary to identify a potential mediation effect of POJ (mediating variable) for the effect of a compliance strategy (independent variable) on DWB (dependent variable). Important numbers for the mediation analyses are marked bold. The first two regressions show the following significant results: Compliance strategies are negatively associated with POJ by 0.224 (Step 1: $p < .001$) and positively with DWB by 0.656 (Step 2: $p < .01$). In Step 3 the combined effect of compliance strategies and POJ on DWB was tested. In this model, solely POJ relates significantly to DWB (-1.416; $p < .001$). The compliance strategy becomes insignificant which suggests that it does not support predicting the outcome variable DWB when including compliance strategies as a predictor as well. Therefore, all

conditions provided by Baron and Kenny's (1986) causal-step-method for a full mediation effect are fulfilled.

Table 3

Results on (hierarchical) regression analyses: Compliance Strategy, POJ and DWB

Effect	POJ	DWB	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Gender (female)	0.019 (0.127)	-0.983 (0.662)	-0.955 (0.639)
Age	0.009 (0.005)	-0.058* (0.028)	-0.046 (0.027)
Company Size	-0.080 (0.064)	-0.434 (0.335)	-0.547 (0.325)
Position	0.090 (0.069)	0.036 (0.362)	0.164 (0.351)
Years in Company	-0.004 (0.062)	0.010 (0.322)	0.004 (0.310)
Compliance Strategy	**-0.224*** (0.060)**	**0.656* (0.312)**	**0.338 (0.311)**
POJ			**-1.416*** (0.356)**
Constant	3.958*** (0.366)	6.750*** (1.908)	12.353*** (2.319)
Adjusted R^2	0.079	0.031	0.097
F Statistic	3.944*** (df = 6; 200)	2.086 (df = 6; 200)	4.178*** (df = 7; 199)

Note. $N = 207$ (reduced *N* after removing missing values from the sample). Numbers present the estimates, brackets include the standard errors. Bold numbers are relevant for the mediator analyses.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

Furthermore, the results of the bootstrap confidence interval are illustrated in Table 4. It supports that the total effect of a compliance strategy on the DWB (which includes the direct and indirect effect via the mediator) as well as the proportion of the influence a compliance strategy has on DWB that goes through POJ are statistically significant using bootstrapping ($p < .05$). The effect of a compliance strategy on DWB that indirectly goes through POJ is estimated to be 0.317 (which equals -0.224 times -1.416). The bootstrapping procedure reported a 95% confidence interval ranging from 0.12 to 0.55

Table 4

Results on bootstrap confidence intervals: Compliance Strategy, POJ and DWB

Effect	Estimate	95% Confidence Interval Lower	95% Confidence Interval Upper	p-value
Indirect Effect	**0.317**	**0.12**	**0.55**	**<2e^{-16} *****
Direct Effect	**0.338**	**-0.22**	**0.95**	**0.210**
Total Effect	**0.656**	**0.15**	**1.27**	**0.012***
Proportion Mediation	0.484	0.15	2.06	0.012*

Note. $N = 207$ (reduced *N* after removing missing values from the sample). Bootstrap confidence interval method with 1,000 simulations.
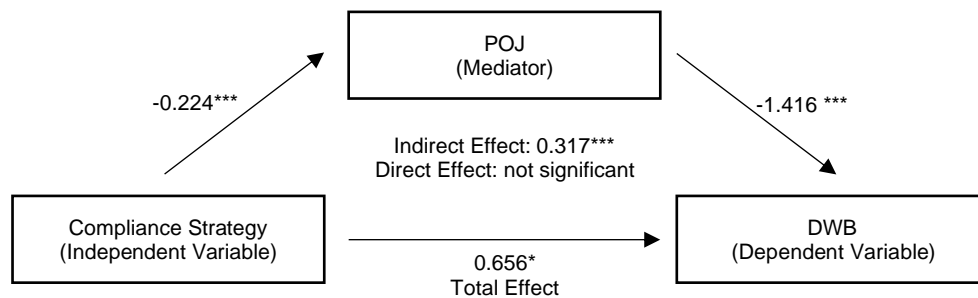* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

for the indirect effect. Thus, it was statistically significant ($p < .001$). Furthermore, the direct effect of a compliance strategy on DWB is insignificant which is in line with the results of the previously reported regression model (Step 3). This indicates that a full mediation exists.

Concluding, the effect of a compliance strategy on DWB was fully mediated by how just an organization is perceived. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 proposing this mediation effect is accepted. Figure 2 summarizes the most important findings of the described results in a path diagram.

Figure 2

Results on Mediation Analyses: Compliance Strategy, POJ and DWB

Note. N = 207 (reduced N after removing missing values from sample)
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

5.1.2. Integrity strategy on deviant work behavior

Table 5 includes the regression analysis results relevant to assess a potential mediation of POJ (mediating variable) for the effect of integrity strategy (independent variable) on DWB (dependent variable). The results support that an integrity strategy has a direct significant positive relation to POJ with an estimate of 0.440 (Step 1: $p < .001$). Also, results show a direct significant negative connection between an integrity strategy and DWB of -0.656 (Step 2: $p < 0.05$). When including both an integrity strategy and POJ in the regression model, the negative effect of POJ on DWB is significant (estimate of -1.523, $p < .001$) while an integrity strategy becomes insignificant (Step 3). Thus, all requirements of the causal-step-approach are fulfilled and according to Baron and Kenny's (1986) a full mediation of POJ exists for the effect of an integrity strategy on DWB.

Table 5

Results on (hierarchical) regression analyses: Integrity Strategy, POJ and DWB

Effect	POJ	DWB	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Gender (female)	0.004 (0.114)	-1.054 (0.659)	-1.048 (0.638)
Age	0.009 (0.005)	-0.058* (0.028)	-0.045 (0.027)
Company Size	-0.161** (0.058)	-0.272 (0.336)	-0.518 (0.331)
Position	0.004 (0.064)	0.157 (0.368)	0.163 (0.356)
Years in Company	-0.020 (0.056)	0.024 (0.322)	-0.006 (0.312)
Integrity Strategy	**0.440*** (0.056)**	**-0.656* (0.323)**	**0.014 (0.358)**
POJ			**-1.523*** (0.395)**
Constant	2.191*** (0.325)	10.307*** (1.878)	13.643*** (2.012)
Adjusted R^2	0.247	0.029	0.092
F Statistic	12.270*** (df = 6; 200)	2.034 (df = 6; 200)	3.986*** (df = 7; 199)

Note. N = 207 (reduced N after removing missing values from the sample). Numbers present the estimates, brackets include the standard errors. Bold numbers are relevant for the mediator analyses.

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

Further empirical is provided by reporting the bootstrap confidence interval in Table 6. Using this bootstrapping method, the total effect of integrity strategies on DWB is significant ($p < .05$). Also, the proportion of the effect an integrity strategy has on DWB through POJ is statistically significant ($p < .05$). Most importantly, bootstrapping shows that the estimated indirect effect of -0.670 is significant ($p < .001$) as the estimated 95% confidence interval has a lower value of -1.057 and an upper value of -0.36. Finally, the insignificance of the direct effect of an integrity strategy on DWB indicates a full mediation.

Table 6

Results on bootstrap confidence intervals: Integrity Strategy, POJ and DWB

| Effect	Estimate	95% Confidence Interval Lower	95% Confidence Interval Upper	p-value
Indirect Effect	**-0.670**	**-1.057**	**-0.36**	**<2e-16***
Direct Effect	**0.014**	**-0.678**	**0.66**	**0.99**
Total Effect	**-0.656**	**-1.307**	**-0.06**	**0.04***
Proportion Mediation	1.022	0.275	5.03	0.04*

Note. N = 207 (reduced N after removing missing values from the sample). Bootstrap confidence interval method with 1,000 simulations.

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

The results support Hypothesis 2: The effect of an integrity strategy on DWB is fully mediated by POJ. The path diagram in Figure 3 illustrates the effects summarized.

Figure 3

Results on Mediation Analyses: Integrity Strategy, POJ and DWB
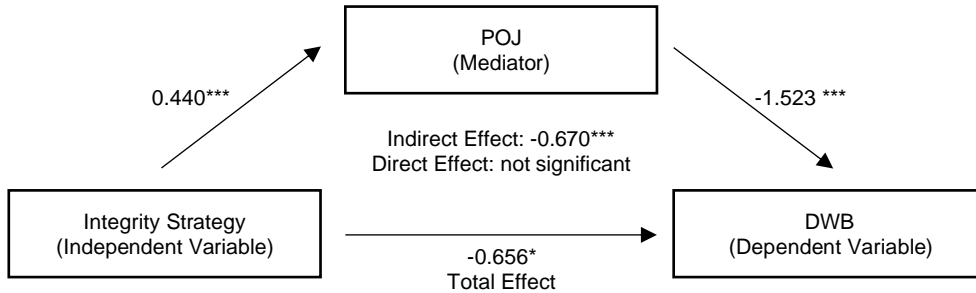
Note. N = 207 (reduced *N* after removing missing values from sample)
* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

5.1.3. Integrity strategy on organizational citizenship behavior

The last mediation analyses tested if POJ (mediator variable) mediates the effect of an integrity strategy (independent variable) on OCB (dependent variable). Results are reported in Table 7. Regression analysis provides empirical evidence that an integrity strategy relates to a higher POJ with an estimate of 0.440 (Step 1: p < .001) and OCB with an estimate of 0.961 (Step 2: p < .001). However, when regressing OCB on both

Table 7

Results on (hierarchical) regression analyses: Integrity Strategy, POJ and OCB

Effect	POJ	OCB	
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
Gender (female)	0.004 (0.114)	0.032 (0.423)	0.032 (0.423)
Age	0.009 (0.005)	-0.026 (0.018)	-0.028 (0.018)
Company Size	-0.161** (0.058)	-0.054 (0.215)	-0.020 (0.220)
Position	0.004 (0.064)	-0.062 (0.236)	-0.063 (0.236)
Years in Company	-0.020 (0.056)	-0.153 (0.207)	-0.149 (0.207)
Integrity Strategy	**0.440*** (0.056)**	**0.961*** (0.207)**	**0.869*** (0.238)**
POJ			**0.209 (0.262)**
Constant	2.191*** (0.325)	10.866*** (1.205)	10.408*** (1.336)
Adjusted R^2	0.247	0.087	0.085
F Statistic	12.270*** (df = 6; 200)	4.274*** (df = 6; 220)	3.748*** (df = 7; 199)

Note. N = 207 (reduced *N* after removing missing values from the sample). Numbers present the estimates, brackets include the standard errors. Bold numbers are relevant for the mediator analyses.
* p < .05. ** p < .01. *** p < .001.

variables (Step 3), integrity is positively associated with OCB by 0.869 (p < .001) while POJ becomes insignificant. Thus, the requirement of the causal-step-approach that the mediator significantly affects the dependent variables while holding the independent variable constant does not apply. As a result, Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

5.2. Moderator

To identify a moderator statistically, an interaction effect between two predictors has to exist: compliance / integrity strategy (independent variables) and POJ (moderator variable). An interaction is "an interplay among predictors that produces an effect on the outcome … that is different from the sum of the effects of the individual predictors" (Cohen et al., 2003, p. 255). For continuous variables, moderator analysis is usually conducted by regression analyses including an interaction term to the equation. The interaction term presents the product of both predictors and thus the unique combined part of the predictors beyond the separate single effects (Cohen et al., 2003). For continuous variables, it is recommended to center predictors of the model before entering them in a regression that includes an interaction term (taking raw scores minus the mean value of the variable) due to interpretation. However, if "a predictor has a meaningful zero point then one may wish to keep the predictor in uncentered form" (Cohen et al., 2003, p. 266). Thus, the variables POJ, as well as an integrity and compliance strategy, were centered for the moderator analysis. To ensure that the effects do not depend on other variables, sociodemographic variables were included as control factors. Due to the meaningful zero point of all sociodemographic variables (e.g., zero years in a company), they remained uncentered.

To test the proposed moderator effects, three regression models – each including one interaction term – were conducted.
First, OCB was regressed on sociodemographic factors, POJ, integrity strategies and the interaction of POJ and integrity strategies. Second, DWB was regressed on the same variables used in the first regression model. Third, a model was built to predict DWB including sociodemographic variables, POJ, a compliance strategy and the interaction term of POJ and a compliance strategy. Results of all three regression analyses are presented in Table 8. The values of the interactions are marked bold. It can be seen that all conducted interaction effects are statistically insignificant on a level of p < .05. Therefore, the requirements for a moderation effect are not fulfilled. It can be concluded

that POJ does not moderate the effect of ethics program strategies on work behaviors. Thus, results did not support Hypotheses 4, 5 and 6.

Table 8

Results on regression analyses for POJ as moderator

Effect	OCB	DWB	
Gender (female)	0.170 (0.399)	-1.108 (0.569)	-0.952 (0.572)
Age	-0.027 (0.017)	-0.030 (0.025)	-0.040 (0.024)
Size of the Company	-0.061 (0.204)	-0.453 (0.294)	-0.468 (0.287)
Position	0.004 (0.228)	0.147 (0.327)	0.122 (0.319)
Years in Company	-0.167 (0.196)	-0.079 (0.280)	-0.021 (0.280)
POJ	0.176 (0.252)	-1.643*** (0.356)	-1.457*** (0.320)
Integrity Strategy	0.893*** (0.229)	0.098 (0.314)	
Interaction Integrity & POJ.	**-0.241(0.191)**	**-0.187 (0.274)**	
Compliance Strategy			0.411 (0.287)
Interaction Compliance & POJ			**0.036 (0.305)**
Constant	14.225*** (1.062)	7.417*** (1.477)	7.643*** (1.455)
Adjusted R^2	0.104	0.098	0.108
F Statistic	4.392*** (df = 8; 226)	4.312*** (df = 8; 237)	4.695*** (df = 8; 236)

Note. N = 329. Numbers present the estimates, brackets include the standard errors. Bold numbers are relevant for the moderator analyses.
* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$. *** $p < .001$.

6. Discussion

The purpose of the present research was to examine the role of POJ in the effect of ethics programs on work behaviors. Thus, it was hypothesized that POJ would mediate or moderate the relationship between ethics programs (compliance and integrity strategy) and workplace behaviors (DWB and OCB). The analysis provides clear support that POJ fully mediates the relationship of both ethics program strategies on DWB. However, there was no empirical evidence that POJ mediates the effect of an integrity strategy on OCB. Also, results neglect the hypothesis that POJ presents a moderator in the relationship of ethics strategies on work behaviors. This chapter discusses the primary findings of this study in more detail.

Most importantly, the result that a compliance and an integrity strategy affect DWB solely through their effects on POJ calls for additional attention. This finding suggests that DWB does not directly depend on ethics programs. Instead, the level of misconduct is influenced by how fair an organization is perceived which in turn can be influenced by a compliance or integrity initiative. Therefore, it is very important for management to focus

on POJ when managing ethics. Management should address POJ directly and design measures to support that employees perceive the organization as fair. In addition, when designing an ethics program, the management should strongly consider what effect it might have on POJ.

For the latter, another key finding is important: compliance and integrity strategies have different effects on POJ. While a compliance strategy causes employees to perceive their organization as less fair, an integrity strategy increases POJ. At the same time, POJ decreases employees' unethical conduct. Thus, compliance strategies increase DWB and integrity strategies decrease DWB indirectly through POJ. This aligns with existing literature that sees an integrity strategy as the more successful version of an ethics program (Paine, 1994; Tanner et al., 2019; Treviño et al., 1999; Weaver & Treviño, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2005). Results indicate that management should be careful implementing compliance strategies and consider potential risks it causes like decreasing POJ.

The result that compliance strategies do not directly influence DWB is especially important as it provides an explanation for the mismatch between Paine's (1994) argument that compliance strategies risk DWB and empirical findings that showed that compliance strategies decrease DWB (Tanner et al., 2019; Treviño et al., 1999; Weaver & Treviño, 1999; Tyler & Blader, 2005). While the level of DWB has been attributed to compliance strategies, the present study found support that it was in fact caused by how fair employees perceived their organization.

Additionally, an interesting finding of this study is that the effect of ethics programs on OCB does not depend on POJ. However, integrity strategies were found to predict OCB. Thus, measures like encouraging employees to speak up or building shared values do matter. Also, results showed that when including POJ as well as an integrity strategy to regress OCB, POJ became irrelevant. The model including both, POJ and an integrity strategy, did not have a higher R squared than the model solely including an integrity strategy. This indicates that POJ does not contribute to the variance in the outcome variable OCB and that employees' extra-role behavior is not guided by the fairness perceived by an organization. As a result, management should include integrity-based measures when managing ethics, especially when aiming to encourage OCB.

Also, POJ did not act as a moderator variable in the relationship between integrity strategies and OCB. Thus, results indicate that POJ does neither act as a mediator nor moderator when predicting OCB. When including an integrity strategy, POJ becomes irrelevant. This finding contrasts previous theoretical and empirical findingy that

concluded that POJ affects OCB (e.g., Ambrose & Schminke, 2009; Ball et al., 1994; Colquitt et al., 2001; Blau, 1964; Organ, 1988a, 1990). Future research could further investigate if other factors influence the relationship of POJ and OCB to shed more light on the predictors of OCB.

7. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

Two key limitations of the present research should be addressed.

First of all, the research does not include the different justice dimensions. Even if an overall perception of fairness is important and has several advantages theoretically as well as empirically, testing the effects of different justice dimensions could shed more light on what factors actually play a role. Results would be more precise and recommendations for management could be more detailed. For instance, recommending to increase the overall fairness perception is difficult to implement. Its vague and wide-ranging definition makes it challenging to develop concrete measures. On the contrary, if justice dimensions would have been included and it would have been found that, for instance, informational justice has a strong effect, finding effective measures would have been more straightforward (e.g., training leaders to communicate and to provide information to employees). Considering the moderating effect, it could be possible that unique justice dimensions present a moderator variable that was sunk in the overall fairness construct. Concluding, looking at the different dimensions of POJ could provide further important information.

Second, a revised version of the German Ethical Culture Scale introduced by Tanner et al. (2019) was used in the study. While this measure has been changed by Tanner and colleges themselves and prior studies were already conducted to validate this version as well, it has not been published and validated in this exact form before. Thus, a factor analysis should have been undertaken before testing the moderating and mediating effect to ensure that the items actually measure compliance and integrity strategies. However, as this has been done in prior studies it is expected that this has no or only a very small impact on the results.

8. Conclusion

Concluding, this paper presented the first empirical investigation on the importance of POJ for the effectiveness of ethics programs. While Treviño and Weaver (2001a)

suggested including POJ in ethics management, there was no prior empirical testing of this relationship to the best of my knowledge.

In the beginning, a theoretical basis was drawn from existing theoretical and empirical work. After defining relevant constructs, it was hypothesized that POJ presents (a) a moderator or mediator for the effect of a compliance-based ethics program on DWB and (b) a moderator or mediator for the effect of an integrity-based ethics program on DWB as well as OCB. These hypotheses were tested by using a sample of German employees from different organizational settings (N = 329). Hierarchical regression analysis, regression analysis including an interaction term as well as the bootstrapping interval method were conducted. Results provide evidence that POJ mediates the effect of both strategies on DWB. Compliance strategies increase and integrity strategies decrease DWB indirectly through POJ. The other hypotheses were rejected.

These results were discussed in detail as they provide valuable information for management on how to design and implement future ethics programs. Most importantly, it is suggested to include POJ when managing ethics. When implementing a compliance strategy, it should be done carefully as it risks that employees perceive their organization as less fair which in turn increases DWB. However, integrity strategies support employee's fairness perception which can lead to positive outcomes for an organization. Also, an integrity strategy increases OCB. Thus, organizations should focus on integrity-based measures when managing ethics. Some suggestions for future research were given. Finally, the limitations of the present paper were pointed out.

Appendix

Supplementary Table 1

Scales and Items

GECS	Items
Compliance Strategy	1. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, das Verhalten der Mitarbeitenden zu kontrollieren.
	2. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, Regelbrüche und Fehlverhalten zu bestrafen.
	3. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, Regelverstöße aufzudecken.
	4. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, das Verhalten der Mitarbeitenden zu überwachen.
	5. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, Mitarbeitende zu sanktionieren, wenn sie von Regeln abweichen.
	6. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, den Mitarbeitenden zu verdeutlichen, dass sie bei Fehlverhalten mit disziplinarischen Konsequenzen rechnen müssen.
Integrity Strategy	1. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, die Fähigkeit der Mitarbeitenden zu stärken, mit Konflikten umzugehen, bei denen ethische Werte auf dem Spiel stehen.
	2. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, gemeinsame Werte zu entwickeln.
	3. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, die Mitarbeitenden bei der Umsetzung der ethischen Unternehmenswerte zu unterstützen.
	4. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, ehrliches und verantwortungsvolles Verhalten zu belohnen.
	5. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, die ethischen Unternehmenswerte zu kommunizieren.
	6. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, die Verfolgung ethischer Ziele als Mehrwert und Chance für das Unternehmen darzustellen.
	7. Die Maßnahmen sind darauf ausgelegt, die Umsetzung ethischer Werte als Führungsaufgabe zu verankern.

POJ	Items
	1. Insgesamt werde ich von meiner Organisation fair behandelt.
	2. Im Allgemeinen kann ich mich darauf verlassen, dass diese Organisation fair ist.
	3. Im Allgemeinen ist die Behandlung, die ich hier erhalte, fair.
	4. Normalerweise ist die Art und Weise, wie die Dinge in dieser Organisation funktionieren, nicht fair.
	5. Größtenteils behandelt diese Organisation ihre MitarbeiterInnen fair.
	6. Die meisten Leute, die hier arbeiten, würden sagen, dass sie oft ungerecht behandelt werden.

DWB	Items
Towards Employees	1. Mitarbeitende diskriminieren aufgrund des Alters, der Ethnie, des Geschlechts, der religiösen Überzeugungen, der sexuellen Orientierung usw.
	2. Leute belästigen oder eine feindselige Arbeitsumgebung schaffen.
	3. Gesundheits- und Sicherheitsvorschriften am Arbeitsplatz verletzen.
	4. Vorschriften verletzen, die den Lohn, die Überstunden oder andere Leistungen für Mitarbeitende betreffen.
	5. Die Privatsphäre von Mitarbeitenden verletzen.
Towards Financiers	1. Spesenformulare und Arbeitszeitberichte fälschen.
	2. Vermögenswerte stehlen oder veruntreuen (z. B. Geld, Arbeitsgegenstände, Material).
	3. Vertrauliche oder rechtlich geschützte Informationen der Organisation unangemessen benutzen oder missbrauchen.
	4. Tätigkeiten ausführen, die einen Interessenskonflikt darstellen (z. B. Nebentätigkeiten, Bevorzugung von Familie/Freunden, Nutzung der Arbeitszeit für private Zwecke etc.).
	5. Die Ressourcen der Organisation verschwenden, schlecht einsetzen oder missbrauchen.
Towards Society	1. Umweltschutzvorschriften nicht einhalten.
	2. Die Öffentlichkeit Sicherheitsrisiken aussetzen.
	3. Unwahre oder irreführende Behauptungen der Öffentlichkeit oder den Medien gegenüber machen.
	4. Das internationale Arbeitsrecht oder Menschenrechte verletzen.

POJ

OCB	Items
Individual	1. Anderen helfen, die abwesend waren.
	2. Willentlich Zeit schenken, um anderen zu helfen, die arbeitsbezogene Probleme haben.
	3. Den Arbeitsplan anpassen, sodass er mit den Urlaubsanfragen der anderen Mitarbeitenden zusammenpasst.
	4. Sich große Mühe geben damit sich neuere Mitarbeitende in der Arbeitsgruppe willkommen fühlen.
	5. Aufrichtiges Interesse und Entgegenkommen gegenüber Arbeitskolleginnen zeigen, auch unter schwierigsten persönlichen oder unternehmensbezogenen Umständen.
	6. Sich Zeit nehmen, um anderen zu helfen, die arbeits- oder nicht-arbeitsbezogene Probleme haben.
	7. Andere bei ihren Pflichten unterstützen.
	8. Persönliche Dinge teilen, um anderen mit ihrer Arbeit zu helfen.
Organization	1. An Veranstaltungen teilnehmen, die nicht verpflichtend sind, die aber dem organisationalen Image helfen.
	2. Sich über Entwicklungen in der Organisation auf dem Laufenden halten.
	3. Sich stolz zeigen, wenn man das Unternehmen in der Öffentlichkeit vertritt.
	4. Ideen einbringen, um die Abläufe der Organisation zu verbessern.
	5. Aktiv werden, um das Unternehmen vor potenziellen Problemen zu schützen.
	6. Sorgsamkeit über das Image des Unternehmens ausdrücken.

Note. Scales were developed by the following authors: GECS by Tanner et al. (2019), POJ by Ambrose and Schminke (2009), DWB by Kaptein (2008) and OCB by Lee and Allen (2002). Scales for POJ, DWB and OCB were translated from the original English version into German.

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