

Achieving Fairness in Policing: The Link Between Internal and External Procedural Justice

Maarten Van Craen¹ and
Wesley G. Skogan²

Police Quarterly

0(0) 1–21

© The Author(s) 2016

Reprints and permissions:

sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav

DOI: 10.1177/1098611116657818

pqx.sagepub.com



Abstract

Decades of research on public support for the police has documented the prominent role of procedural justice in shaping popular views of police legitimacy and the predisposition of citizens to comply and cooperate with them. However, much less attention has been given to the issue of how to get police officers to actually act in accord with its principles when they interact with the public. Reminders of the importance and the difficulty of fostering police legitimacy are not hard to come by, as witnessed in events in the United States during 2014 to 2015. This article addresses the hard, multifaceted issue of fostering procedural justice in the ranks. It theorizes and assesses the relationship between fair supervision and fair policing. The results of our study indicate that perceived internal procedural justice is directly related to support for external procedural justice (modeling thesis), and also indirectly, via trust in citizens.

Keywords

procedural justice, fairness, modeling, trust, supervision

¹Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC), University of Leuven, Hooverplein, Leuven, Belgium

²Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University, Evanston, IL, USA

Corresponding Author:

Maarten Van Craen, Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC), University of Leuven, Hooverplein 10, 3000 Leuven, Belgium.

Email: maarten.vancraen@law.kuleuven.be

Introduction

More than two decades of research on public support for the police has documented the prominent role of procedural justice in shaping citizens' perceptions of and reactions to the police. The role of procedural justice in shaping public trust in the police, popular views of police legitimacy, and the predisposition of citizens to comply and cooperate with them has been documented by studies across countries (Jackson et al., 2012; Murphy, Mazerolle, & Bennett, 2014; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2008; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015a) and among many ethnic groups (Jackson, Bradford, Stanko, & Hohl, 2013; Murphy, 2013; Tyler, 2005; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015b; Warren, 2010). However, much less attention has been given to the issue of how to get police officers to actually act in accord with its principles when they interact with the public. Reminders of the importance and the difficulty of fostering police legitimacy even in the most democratic societies are not hard to come by. Events in the United States during 2014 to 2015 led to the creation of a Presidential Task Force on police reform. Its first "Pillar 1" conclusion was that

people are more likely to obey the law when they believe that those who are enforcing it have the legitimate authority to tell them what to do . . . The public confers legitimacy only on those they believe are acting in procedurally just ways. (President's Task Force, 2015, p. 9)

The Task Force recommended that "law enforcement culture should embrace a guardian mindset to build public trust and legitimacy" (p. 10). But being savvy, the task force members later wisely noted that "organizational culture eats policy for lunch" (p. 11). This article addresses the hard, multifaceted issue of fostering procedural justice in the ranks. It examines the relationship between fair supervision (i.e., internal procedural fairness) and fair policing (i.e., external procedural fairness).

Procedural justice theory is a systematic way of thinking about legitimate policing (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2005). The dimensions of procedurally fair policing include neutrality (even-handedness in decision making and equal treatment), voice (giving citizens an opportunity to tell their side of the story and formulate suggestions about tackling problems), respect (treating citizens with dignity and acting politely), and accountability (giving reasoned explanations for the decisions officers have made). It seems likely that agencies will need to employ a variety of organizational strategies to foster the actual application of these principles by officers. Supervision and discipline would have to be part of the mix, but their effectiveness would be contingent on somehow monitoring the delivery of procedurally just—in addition to constitutionally allowable—service. Police executives have long struggled to maintain control through supervision and discipline because everything about policing makes monitoring officers' actions on the street hard to penetrate (Skogan & Meares, 2004).

The policies of the department are also important. Research indicates that organizations that are not actually aligned to support what they say they want their officers to do are not likely to get much accomplished. For example, Mastrofski and Ritti (1996) found that getting officers to make drunk driving arrests went more smoothly in places that had policies and practices in place which supported and rewarded focusing on Driving under the influence (DUI) cases. With regard to the application of procedural justice principles, we note that organizations' emphasis on efficiency in processing cases may reduce the ability of officers to be fully procedurally fair in encounters with members of the public. We also know from evaluations of use of force policies that certain types of these policies are more effective than others in limiting the use of force and reducing citizen injuries and complaints (Terrill, Paoline, & Ingram, 2011).

Training is another vehicle for shaping officer behavior. Skogan, Van Craen, and Hennessy (2015) have shown that training officers in the principles of procedural justice can influence the views of officers both in an experimental setting and longer term, once they have returned to the street. Wheller, Quinton, Fildes, and Mills (2013) have reported broad-based evidence that procedural justice training can influence both the views of officers and reports made by crime victims about their behavior. Training is an attractive mechanism for fostering procedural justice because it is an accepted organizational routine.

Research also suggests that fair policing may be linked to fair supervision. There are indications that the relationship between internal and external procedural justice is mediated by officers' self-legitimacy and compliance with instructions and policies (Bradford & Quinton, 2014; Haas, Van Craen, Skogan, & Fleitas, 2015). The relationship between fair supervision and fair policing is also the subject of this article, yet we approach it from another perspective. Assuming indirect links through compliance and self-legitimacy are not the only ways in which the relationship between internal and external procedural fairness can be conceptualized. Building on recent theoretical work of Van Craen (2016a, 2016b), we scrutinize in this article two alternative—possibly complementary—mechanisms that link internal and external procedural justice. The first is *supervisor modeling*. When officers watch their supervisors engage in procedurally fair behaviors, they learn how they can engage in such behaviors themselves and that those behaviors are expected, valued, rewarded, and effective. These perceptions may motivate officers to imitate their supervisors and behave in a similar way. The second mechanism entails an indirect relationship through *trust in citizens*. Frequent experiences of fair treatment by supervisors may contribute to the belief among officers that most people can be trusted. This belief is likely to facilitate just policing practices as well.

In the next sections, we further theorize these mechanisms and test hypotheses that are derived from them. The testing is done using a structural equation model fitted to data gathered among sworn members of the Chicago police department. The results indicate that the mechanisms which are detailed in

this article—supervisor modeling and indirect influence through trust in citizens—have significant explanatory power. The findings suggest that supervisors can positively influence the way officers deal with citizens by providing good examples and setting the right tone in their own leadership practices.

Supervisor Modeling

To achieve external procedural justice, Van Craen (2016a, 2016b) recently proposed an approach dubbed *fair policing from the inside out*. This approach emphasizes that perceptions of internal procedural justice stimulate police officers to practice external procedural justice. More specifically, Van Craen has argued that the extent to which police officers' behavior toward citizens is guided by the principles of neutrality, respect, voice, and accountability depends on the extent to which supervisors' behavior toward their officers is characterized by these principles. He identified supervisor modeling as a mechanism that may explain this link. In this article, we discuss that mechanism more comprehensively and test it empirically.

The supervisor modeling thesis draws on elements of social learning theory (Bandura, 1971). This theory argues that most of the behaviors that people display are learned through the influence of models. People learn how to behave by observing and imitating other people's behavior (which is called *modeling*). Observers are most likely to imitate models with high status, power, or competence, as these attributes lead them to believe that their model's behavior is appropriate to the situation and has been rewarded in the past. In the management and organizational psychology literature, this theory has been applied to employee-supervisor relationships to help understand organizational socialization (Weiss, 1977). Specifically, it has been argued that employees learn how to behave in a work context by observing and imitating other people in the organization. The high status, power, and competence of supervisors increase the likelihood that employees will choose them as role models. Supervisors' behaviors signal to employees the expectations and intended norms of the organization. This information encourages the emulation of these by those at lower levels, especially when employees derive from supervisors' social characteristics that engaging in similar behavior may lead to organizationally mediated rewards.

Research in commercial organizations has shown that modeling is relevant to understand employees' behavior. Ruiz-Palomino and Martinez-Cañas (2011), for instance, have demonstrated that supervisor modeling shapes ethical behavior in the banking and insurance sector. More specifically, they found that perceived ethical behavior of supervisors stimulates employees' ethical behavioral intention. Through a process of supervisor modeling, ethical leadership increases the likelihood that employees will behave in an ethical way as well. Another illustrative example is Robertson and Barling's (2013) study on the role

of social learning in shaping pro-environmental behaviors in organizations. They argued that when employees watch their leaders engage in pro-environmental behaviors, they learn how they can engage in such behaviors themselves and that those behaviors are expected, valued, and rewarded. These perceptions would motivate employees to imitate their leaders and behave in a similar way. Empirical research confirmed that leaders' workplace pro-environmental behaviors indeed stimulate employees' workplace pro-environmental behaviors.

In light of this, we hypothesize that police officers model internal procedural justice in their dealings with citizens. For instance, when officers experience their supervisors explaining decisions to them, they observe accountability in action and experience the importance of this principle. This may encourage officers to explain their own decisions and actions to citizens. There is, further, also reason to assume that police officers imitate internal procedural unfairness. Tests of social learning theory have revealed the power of negative behavior modeling as well. This issue has been studied in the context of child–parent relationships. Muller, Hunter, and Stollak (1995), for instance, used a social learning approach to explain the intergenerational transmission of aggressive behavior. They hypothesized that an individual's tendency to manifest aggressive behavior would be a consequence of the observational learning that takes place when receiving corporal punishment from his or her parents. Empirical research among parents and their children (college students) confirmed this hypothesis. Greater levels of corporal punishment by their own parents led newer parents to use greater levels of corporal punishment in dealing with their children. Similarly, children who received more corporal punishment from their parents are more likely to manifest subsequent aggressive behaviors. Complementing these findings, a study of Mihalic and Elliott (1997) showed that girls who witnessed parental violence as a child—parental violence was measured as parents physically hurting each other—are more likely to be a violent adolescent—measured as hitting teachers, students, or parents—than those who did not witness parental violence. By extrapolation, modeling of negative behavior implies that officers will also imitate supervisors' procedurally unfair behavior. Verbally aggressive behavior by supervisors, for instance, will lead officers to believe that such type of conduct is an appropriate way to exercise authority, make people comply, or solve problems. This will encourage them to engage in similar behavior.

Trust in the Public

In addition to supervisor modeling, trust may play a role in generating and explaining a link between internal and external procedural justice (Van Craen, 2016a, 2016b). We hypothesize that fair leadership shapes fair policing by stimulating trust in citizens, and that trust in citizens partially mediates the relationship between internal and external procedural justice.

The first part of this argument—the positive impact of fair leadership on trust in citizens—can be seen as an extension of organizational justice theory. In the management and organizational psychology literature, a number of authors have argued and demonstrated that fair supervision fosters employees' trust in supervisors. Meta-analytic reviews of organizational justice studies made it clear that internal procedural justice influences a number of employees' attitudes, among which are trust in the organization and trust in supervisors (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001, Colquitt et al., 2013). Tyler and DeGoey (1996), for instance, showed that workers' trust in supervisors is strongly determined by the perceived neutrality of supervisors' decisions and by the degree to which workers feel treated with respect. More recent research of Tyler (2011) confirmed that employees' trust in supervisors and management is strongly influenced by perceptions of fair decision making and just interpersonal treatment.

Thus, the research literature suggests that internal procedural justice is key to explaining police officers' trust in supervisors. One can, however, take the internal procedural justice argument a step further still. Building on Rothstein and Stolle's (2008) institutional theory of generalized trust, we argue that officers' perceptions of internal procedural justice not only have a *particularized* effect on their trust in the people that treated them (un-)fairly, but also have a more *generalized* effect on trust in other people. In other words, we claim that officers' perceptions of internal procedural justice not only influence their trust in supervisors but also in citizens.

Rothstein and Stolle (2008) argue that citizens' generalized trust (i.e., trust in other people in general) is related to the fairness of order institutions. They emphasize that police officers' and judges' behaviors function as important signals to citizens concerning the moral standards of the society in which they live. Their behaviors lead citizens to make inferences about other people in society. For instance, if the police are not fair and cannot be trusted, then most other people can surely not be trusted. By acting fairly public authorities set the tone, stimulate citizens to behave fairly, and stimulate citizens to expect that other people will behave in a similar way. Such behavior and expectations would breed generalized trust. By contrast, order institutions that engage in corruption and discrimination would undermine generalized trust. Their activities and treatments divide citizens in distinct social and ethnic groups, and set people by the ears. Furthermore, their unfair behavior may be interpreted as a cue that corrupt and discriminatory behavior of fellow citizens will be tolerated. In such an atmosphere, generalized trust in other people is unlikely.

Translating Rothstein and Stolle's (2008) line of thought from a citizen perspective to an officer perspective, we argue that supervisors' behaviors function as important signals to officers about the moral standard of the society in which they work. As representatives of law and the government police supervisors are expected to play an exemplary role. If they are not fair and cannot be trusted, it

may be interpreted as a cue that nobody can be trusted. If police leaders do not respect the law, it may be considered unlikely that ordinary citizens will respect the law. Corrupt, discriminatory, and other unlawful practices of supervisors shape officers' inferences about other people in society and guide their observance of citizens' behavior. Unjust practices of supervisors focus officers' attention on similar phenomena in the broader society. Consequently, they lead officers to observe these phenomena more frequently, which undermine their trust in citizens. Furthermore, we gather from general strain theory that the perception of frequently being treated unfairly causes a chronic or repeated strain that may result in "a general dislike and suspicion of others" (Agnew, 1992, p. 61). Instead, daily positive experiences with fair and lawful behavior of supervisors contribute to the belief that this is a common type of behavior. By acting fairly supervisors set the tone, stimulate officers to behave fairly, and stimulate officers to expect that most other people will behave in a similar way. This expectation, we presume, breeds generalized trust. So, we claim that officers' perceptions of internal procedural justice not only influence their trust in supervisors but also in citizens.

The latter type of trust, we think, plays an important role in generating support for procedural fairness when dealing with the public. We expect that officers' trust in citizens strongly influences the degree to which they deal with citizens in a fair way: Police officers should be inclined to listen to citizens' views or treat them with respect when they believe in the goodwill or benevolence of citizens (this is often viewed as a cornerstone of trust: Tyler, 2011; Tyler & Huo, 2002; Uslaner, 2004). Likewise, Westmarland (2010) has argued that officers' preparedness to give the public a voice in priority setting depends on their trust in citizens. This claim links up with one made—and tested—by Yang (2005), who has studied public officials working in different functional areas. Yang demonstrated that the level of public administrators' trust in citizens influences the degree to which they are committed to citizen participation in the administrative process. Administrators with high trust in citizens were found to be more inclined to encourage citizen participation than administrators with low trust in citizens. Combining all these elements, we claim that fostering trust in the public among police officers is a promising way to realize fair policing.

Hypotheses and Conceptual Model

On the basis of these arguments, we hypothesize that internal procedural justice is directly related to external procedural justice (modeling hypothesis), and also indirectly, via trust in citizens. The hypothesized relationships are illustrated in Figure 1.

We test these hypotheses with the results of an officer survey in Chicago. A stimulus for this survey was the arrival of a new chief of police bent on

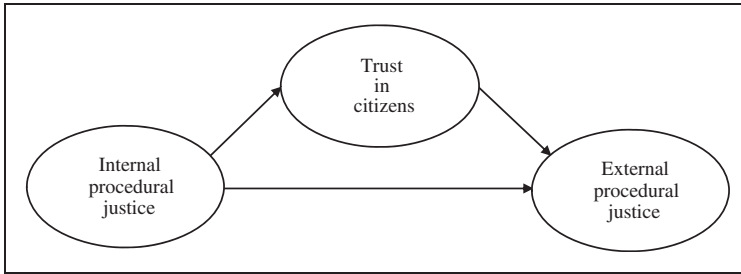


Figure 1. Conceptual model.

improving the relationship between police and the citizens of Chicago (especially with African Americans) through greater procedural fairness on the part of his officers.

Methods

The survey was conducted in 2013, in each of the city's 22 police districts. At each station, we randomly selected individual Police Officers (the bottom rank) and Sergeants in fixed proportions from the current duty roster. They were also spread proportionally across shifts and regular days off. Sampled employees were notified of their opportunity to participate in the survey via an appointment card distributed by an administrative sergeant. Roll call presentations, flyers and wall posters, and an offer of coffee and donuts were used to promote participation by those selected, who remained anonymous to the research team until (and if) they appeared. The survey was presented to respondents on laptop computers that the survey supervisors set up in stationhouse conference rooms. Using laptop, survey software ensured that no one could hear their responses to the questions, and that they could proceed at their own pace. The survey included 120 questions and took an average of 25 minutes to complete. The survey team made repeat visits to each district, around the clock, until the number of interviews targeted there was completed. The overall response rate was about 28%. A total of 714 Police Officers and Sergeants were interviewed. A few districts were slightly under-represented in the survey data set, but overall the race and sex distribution of respondents closely resembled those of all sworn personnel. The results could be weighted to ensure that the distribution of respondents matched that of the universe of officers serving in the districts, but doing so did not change any of the results presented here. Therefore, the original, unweighted results are presented.

The purposes of the survey included assessing officers' views of key dimensions of both internal and external procedural justice. There were also questions about a number of organizational processes (e.g., discipline), community

Table 1. Operationalizations and Factor Loadings (CFA).

Internal procedural justice	
My supervisors are influenced by prejudices (Neutrality)	0.72
My supervisors treat everyone the same when making decisions (Neutrality; reversed)	0.58
My supervisors are disrespectful toward their officers (Respect)	0.66
My supervisors can be rough with officers when trying to get them to do what they want (Respect)	0.66
My supervisors don't take time to listen when I express my views (Voice)	0.64
There is not a lot of open dialogue with my supervisors (Voice)	0.57
My supervisors don't tell officers the reasons for their decisions (Accountability)	0.72
My supervisors do not take time to explain when they make decisions directed at me (Accountability)	0.75
Trust in citizens	
Officers have reason to be distrustful of citizens	0.55
Citizens mostly can be trusted to do the right thing (reversed)	0.51
It is naive to trust citizens	0.85
External procedural justice	
There is little sense in officers trying to be impartial, because that is impossible in this job (Neutrality)	0.63
People who break the law do not deserve to be treated with respect (Respect)	0.68
Officers should not take time to listen to citizens complain about their problems (Voice)	0.40
Explaining your decisions to the public is a waste of time (Accountability)	0.60

Note. CFA = confirmatory factor analysis; Model fit statistics: Chi-square = 273.32; *df* = 87; *p* < .001; RMSEA = 0.06; CFI = 0.94.

policing, Compstat-style management, their training, and the public. The core theoretical concepts—internal procedural justice, trust in citizens, and external procedural justice—were all measured using multiple indicators. Each of the items employed a 6-point Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (*strongly agree*) to 6 (*strongly disagree*). We used confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to simultaneously estimate and validate the key measures. Table 1 presents an overview of the operationalizations and factor loadings.

We note that in the literature broad as well as narrow definitions and operationalizations of procedural justice have been used (for a discussion of the different approaches, see Bradford, Quinton, Myhill, & Porter, 2014; Colquitt et al., 2001; Roberts & Herrington, 2013). In this study, we followed the broad conceptualization of Tyler (2005; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003), who identified

neutrality, respect, voice, and accountability as among the core principles of procedural justice. Our survey consisted, however, to a large extent of newly developed measures. Most procedural justice research in the policing domain has focused on the public’s view of the police. There were some examples of studies asking officers about how they are being treated by their supervisors and own organizations (e.g., see, Bradford et al., 2014; Tyler, Callahan, & Frost, 2007). However, assessing officers’ views of how they should be treating members of the public, using questions reflecting the dimensions of procedural justice, was unexplored territory. The lack of a research tradition in these areas required us to craft new questions that promised to measure our three key concepts. The goodness-of-fit statistics generated by the CFA (see Table 1) indicate that we succeeded in this. The three-factor model fits the data well.

Findings

We employed structural equation modeling (SEM) to test the expected relationships. We estimated a structural equation model specifying the hypothesized links between the three theoretical variables and the influence of three additional variables that are commonly discussed in research on police views of themselves and the public: gender, race, and age. Figure 2 illustrates the results of the SEM analysis. In this figure, only the significant effects are depicted.

In the Chicago data, the latent variable *internal procedural justice* correlates positively and significantly with the latent variable *external procedural justice*: There is an empirical link between perceptions of fair supervision and support for procedural fairness in dealing with the public. Furthermore, we find indications that perceived internal procedural justice has an indirect impact on support for external procedural justice through trust in citizens. The latent variable *internal procedural justice* correlates positively with the latent variable *trust in citizens*

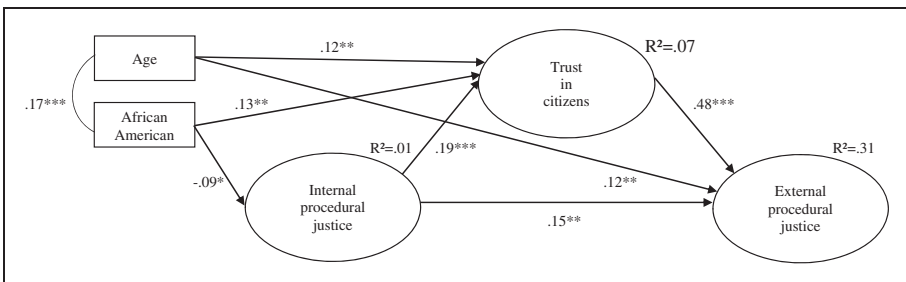


Figure 2. A model of antecedents of external procedural justice. Chi-square = 310.85; *df* = 113; *p* < .001; RMSEA = 0.05; CFI = 0.94. **p* < .050. ***p* < .010. ****p* < .001.

citizens, and *trust in citizens* in turn is positively associated with *external procedural justice*.

Personal characteristics of the officers play a role as well. Race influences support for external procedural justice indirectly through internal procedural justice and trust in citizens, while age influences support for external procedural justice both directly and indirectly through trust in citizens. In Chicago, African American officers perceive less internal procedural justice than do White and Latino officers. They have, however, more trust in citizens. Older officers reported more trust in citizens when compared with younger officers. Age also has a direct positive effect on support for external procedural justice. Finally, we note that gender does not influence the theoretical variables.

The model as a whole explains a considerable portion of the total variation in the dependent variable, support for the principles of external procedural fairness—31%. A model that only comprises the background variables explains just 3% of the variation in support for external procedural fairness. The explained variation rises to 9% when the direct effect of perceived internal procedural justice is taken into account. Adding trust in citizens into the model further increases the explained variation to 31%.

The latter suggests that trust in citizens is an important factor in the explanation of fair policing. Perceived internal procedural justice is a factor enhancing trust in citizens, but the model in Figure 2 also indicates that much of the variation in the trust variable remains unexplained. Internal procedural justice seems to be one element of the explanation of trust in citizens, but theorization and research need to further complement the model with other relevant factors (see below for a more comprehensive discussion of this finding).

Limitations of the Study

There are several limitations to this study. First, as we analyzed cross-sectional data, inferences about causality had to be made with caution. Second, the survey assessed only perceptions and attitudes. There was no possibility in this instance of matching the survey data to the personnel records or observed activities of participating officers, so we did not have the ability to track other measures of their on-the-job behavior or of their treatment by their own organization. This was one of the important contributions of the Wheller et al. (2013) experiment in Greater Manchester, where study participants supplied their employee identification numbers. The researchers could later contact samples of victims served by randomly assigned trained and untrained officers, to gauge the effectiveness of training in the field. A larger study might also encompass direct field observations of officer behavior. Although there is research which suggests that officers' attitudes are predictive of their behavior (Dhont, Cornelis, & Van Hiel, 2010; Kop & Euwema, 2001), complementary observational studies could help to more precisely gauge the degree to which officers engage in fair policing. For example,

Jonathan-Zamir, Mastrofski, and Moyal (2013) observed very high levels of *voice* being exercised by officers during encounters with citizens, but not much *neutrality* and only mixed levels of *respect*.

Conclusions and Discussion

Fairness in Policing

A burgeoning number of studies have demonstrated the importance of perceptions of fair policing. It has been shown to foster trust in the police, police legitimacy, and several forms of cooperative and supportive behavior among members of the public (Jackson et al., 2012; Murphy et al., 2014; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2008; Van Craen & Skogan, 2015a). Yet, events in the United States during the 2014 to 2015 period reinforce older lessons that legitimate policing is hard to achieve. Reports of abusive behavior and the resulting legitimacy crisis facing police in many communities signal a need for reshaping the way police officers engage with the public. These developments should lead police and researchers to push beyond simply developing more aspects of procedural justice theory, to address the question of how procedural justice policing can be achieved in actual practice. The Skogan et al. (2015) report of the effectiveness of Chicago's effort included a quasi-experimental test of the short-term effects of training, and a survey assessment of its longer term consequences. The results suggest that training made officers more supportive of external procedural justice principles. Officers held more favorable views when they left the classroom and most of the effects of the training were found to persist once officers had returned to their duties.

In this article, we addressed a more ambitious strategy for promoting external procedural justice, one focusing on the reform of police organizations themselves. We investigated whether fair policing is plausibly related to fair supervision. We identified two mechanisms that explain how internal procedural justice can foster external procedural justice. The first mechanism is supervisor modeling. When officers experience their supervisors engaging in procedurally fair behaviors, they learn how they can engage in such behaviors themselves and that those behaviors are expected, valued, rewarded, and effective. These perceptions motivate officers to imitate their supervisors and behave in similar fashion. Besides reproducing positive behaviors, officers may also imitate supervisors' unfairness. Verbally aggressive behavior of supervisors, for instance, may lead officers to believe that such type of conduct is an appropriate way to exercise authority, make people comply, or solve problems. This encourages them to engage in similar behavior.

Second, we argued that fair supervision fosters fair policing by increasing officers' trust in citizens. Supervisors' behaviors function as important signals to officers about the moral standard of the society in which they work.

Supervisors are expected to play an exemplary role. If they are not fair and cannot be trusted, it may be interpreted as a cue that no one can be trusted. Instead, daily positive experiences with fair and lawful behavior of supervisors contribute to the belief that this is a common type of behavior and that most people can be trusted. The belief that most citizens can be trusted (or not), in turn, shapes the way officers deal with citizens. Police officers will be more inclined to listen to citizens' views or treat them with respect when they trust them. This second mechanism thus implies that trust in citizens partially mediates the relationship between internal and external procedural justice.

The results of our SEM of survey data confirm both mechanisms. We found a positive, persistent correlation between perceived internal procedural justice and support for external procedural justice, which suggests that supervisor modeling plays a role in shaping the level of fair policing. In addition, we found that perceived internal procedural justice correlates positively with officers' trust in citizens, and that their trust in citizens in turn is positively associated with support for external procedural justice. This suggests that fair supervision also indirectly contributes to fair policing, through increased trust in citizens.

These results and theoretical approaches add insights to the literature on police officers' attitudes and behaviors. In the criminological literature, much attention has been given to citizens' behavior, the traditional police culture, and peer influence as explanations of police officers' attitudes and behaviors. Studies carried out in different eras and countries have stressed that the way officers treat citizens depends on the degree to which citizens challenge their definition of the situation, their safety, their identity, and their authority (Easton, Ponsaers, Demarée, & Moor, 2009; Loftus, 2010; Van Maanen, 1974, 1978). Officers' identity and definition of authority, in turn, have been found to be a function of (their commitment to) the traditional culture of policing, and it has been shown that assessments of situations, policing styles, and reactions to confrontations and disrespect are learned from fellow officers (Haarr, 2001; Loftus, 2010; Van Maanen, 1974, 1978). In the past, many studies of police–citizens relationships have overlooked or played down supervisors' role in shaping the way officers think about and deal with citizens. The absence of direct supervision when officers patrol the streets and the autonomy officers have in carrying out their job may have led researchers to assume that supervisors can exert relatively little influence on how officers treat the public. Yet, we observe an increasing interest in the role supervisors may play in this respect, and more particularly in the link between supervisors' actions and the behavior of their officers. The study, on which we report here, is a contribution to the limited, yet growing, literature on the value of procedural justice in police organizations.

This literature suggests that internal and external procedural justice are indirectly linked through officers' compliance with rules and orders. Research has shown that fair supervision increases officers' compliance with supervisors and policies of the organization (Bradford et al., 2014; Tyler et al., 2007).

Furthermore, researchers have argued that compliance may involve (forms of) procedural fairness (Haas et al., 2015; Tyler et al., 2007). This mechanism has not yet been tested in all its aspects, but there is empirical evidence that seems to support it. A recent study of Haas et al. (2015) showed that perceptions of internal procedural justice are positively associated with officer endorsement of rules and regulations on the use of force (in Buenos Aires, where this is a significant problem). Research also suggests that the link between internal procedural justice, and the delivery of procedural justice on the street may be mediated by officers' identification with their organization and officers' self-legitimacy. Bradford and Quinton (2014) found that when police officers feel fairly treated by their organization they identify more strongly with it and establish a firmer sense of their own legitimacy. These factors, in turn, were found to enhance support for procedurally just policing. Bradford and Quinton's study further indicated that identification with the police organization and self-legitimacy are very strongly correlated, which has raised the question whether the former shapes the latter or whether these mediators are two aspects of the same thing. This question has yet to be answered.

Taken together, these studies suggest that the relationship between internal and external procedural justice is multifaceted. In this article, we have contributed to the challenge of understanding that link by testing two additional explanatory mechanisms. These mechanisms—supervisor modeling and indirect influence through trust in citizens—seem to have explanatory power and thus are helpful to advance cumulative scientific knowledge on this topic. The next steps to be taken are to test whether all four mechanisms—supervisor modeling, indirect influence through trust in citizens, indirect influence through compliance, and indirect influence through self-legitimacy or identification with the organization—are at work in different cultural and political contexts, and to scrutinize how the various mediating variables relate to each other. Up to now, studies in Argentina, the United Kingdom, and the United States each have tested different mechanisms. Further progress, therefore, can be made by replicating studies in different contexts and testing several mechanisms simultaneously. Likewise, it may be valuable to examine another type of modeling: How supervisors are seen to interact with members of the public may influence officers' attitudes and behavior toward citizens as well. Such analyses may reveal that the total impact of supervisors' behavior is bigger than the effects that have been demonstrated by the current studies. However, more research is also needed on the relative impact of supervisors, fellow officers, and citizens on police officers' procedural (un)fairness. Future studies should include the influence of each of these actors in a single analysis (recently, researchers have taken steps in that direction: Bradford & Quinton, 2014; Tankebe & Meško, 2015). Influences of different actors may reinforce each other, yet research may also reveal undercutting mechanisms (for instance, fellow officers may undermine the good work that supervisors do). Our study indicates that trust in citizens is a major factor in

the explanation of officers' (support for) procedural fairness, so we can gain additional insights by studying how citizens and fellow officers, together with supervisors, shape trust in the public. Demonstrating and disentangling this underlying complexity is an interesting challenge.

Trust in Supervisors

Some of the mechanisms that we discussed may have to be refined. We already mentioned that the relationship between identification with the police organization and self-legitimacy needs to be clarified. Furthermore, we should consider the role of trust in supervisors. We have presented a conceptual model that links internal procedural justice directly to trust in citizens. However, in the discussion of this mechanism, we have argued that if supervisors are not fair *and cannot be trusted*, it may be interpreted as a cue that nobody can be trusted. This means that officers' trust in supervisors could be viewed as a factor that mediates the relationship between internal procedural fairness and officers' trust in citizens. Moreover, it has been argued that trust in supervisors mediates the relationship between internal procedural justice and compliance with supervisors and policies of the organization (Haas et al., 2015; Van Craen, 2016a). Future research could make valuable contributions to the literature by embodying a process of empirically testing these claims.

In the study on which we report here, we have taken a small step in that process. However, in our data, trust in supervisors was not empirically distinguishable from perceived internal procedural justice. CFA revealed a very strong correlation between these two latent variables ($r = .90$), suggesting inadequate discriminant validity (for the operationalization of trust in supervisors, see Appendix). Moreover, the goodness-of-fit statistics of a SEM model in which trust in supervisors was included as a mediating variable indicated that this model fitted the data a little less well than the model that we have discussed earlier (RMSEA = 0.05; CFI = 0.92). This was not completely unexpected. Haas et al. (2015) reported similar findings, based on a survey in Buenos Aires that used similar indicators of trust in supervisors and internal procedural justice, and that ran simultaneously with the Chicago survey.

These empirical indications seem to suggest that trust in supervisors does not flow from perceived internal procedural fairness but instead that they are two aspects of the same thing. Yet, currently, we do not have enough empirical evidence to make this conclusion. Such a conceptualization differs from the one proposed by prominent theoretical frameworks that have been developed in the organizational psychology or management literature (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt et al., 2001, 2013), and the criminological literature on (external) procedural justice and citizens' trust in the police (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2005). We note, however, that it is in line with other versions of procedural justice theory that have been used in criminological research on police-citizen

relationships. According to one view, trusting the motives of the police is one of the components of perceived procedural justice (Mazerolle, Antrobus, Bennett, & Tyler, 2013; Tyler, 2004). Another approach has merged the concepts of “perceived procedural fairness” and “trust in the police” into the concept of “trust in police procedural fairness” (Hough et al., 2010; Jackson et al., 2012).

To some extent, additional empirical research will be helpful to assess the value of these different theoretical approaches and to disentangle the relationship between officers’ trust in supervisors and other relevant factors. Yet, probably, we will also have to acknowledge that support for each of the versions is related to empirical approaches and methodological choices. One can use broad or narrow definitions and operationalizations of (internal or external) procedural justice; one can use specific or general definitions and operationalizations of trust; researchers can use exploratory factor analysis and ordinary regression analysis to analyze data or CFA and SEM; researchers can use different criteria to interpret statistical tests (there is for instance much discussion about the cutoff points for poorly fitting CFA and SEM models). Depending on these choices, evaluations of theoretical approaches may yield different results. We should keep this in mind and not jump to conclusions when we assess theoretical frameworks.

Implications for Practice

This study indicates that officer support for the principles of external procedural justice can be enhanced when supervisors practice what they preach. By engaging in procedurally fair behavior themselves, leaders can show that they mean what they say, demonstrate their commitment to fair policing, and demonstrate to officers how they can put it into practice. A question for practice is, can they do this? Procedural justice training has been aimed at field officers, but it is likely that supervisors and managers need at least as much training in dispensing internal procedural justice. This is often not what they grew up with. Preaching and training will have to be backstopped by organizational practice, if they are to be believable. Talk about fair treatment of citizens will be dismissed as hypocritical if officers believe that their leaders do not really mean it. The practices to be reformed could range from better two-way communication between the rank-and-file and their superiors, to greater fairness in job assignments, transparency in promotions, and fair disciplinary processes. A fair policing from the inside out approach to promoting external procedural justice could require a reshaping of overly hierarchical organizational structures, a broader implementation of participative and transactional leadership styles, and the eradication of cronyism and discrimination from decision-making.

Such reforms probably will have to fit within a broader process that aims at transforming the organizational culture. For the set of assumptions, values, and norms that managers and supervisors share may strongly influence their

behaviors toward officers. Whitener, Brodt, Korsgaard, and Werner (1998), for instance, state that certain cultural values and norms, more than others, engender managerial trustworthy behavior. Organizational culture may encourage or discourage managerial trustworthy behavior through the structuring of general patterns of communication, coordination, and decision making. We note that Whitener et al.'s conceptualization of managerial trustworthy behavior is closely related to our conceptualization of internal procedural justice (for a discussion of both concepts, see: Van Craen, 2016a). One can thus expect that organizational culture shapes the degree of internal procedural justice as well. This is not hard to imagine. Shared negative perceptions of ethnic minorities, for instance, are likely to influence the recruitment of ethnic minority group members and their chances of getting a promotion. Put differently, they will shape supervisors' and managers' level of neutrality. Another illustrative example is the (quasi-)military culture. Organizations characterized by this culture are not likely to promote leadership based on the principles of voice and accountability. All this means that a fair policing from the inside out approach may require a reshaping of the organizational culture that guides managers' and supervisors' behaviors. Once this culture has been transformed, supervisors can help ensure that it penetrates police officers' occupational culture.

Together, these fairly radical changes from within would increase the likelihood that attempts to improve the quality of police-citizens interactions are successful and enduring.

Appendix

Operationalization of trust in supervisors:

- I have reason to be distrustful of my supervisors
- My supervisors can be trusted to make the right decisions (reversed)
- It is naive to trust the goodwill of supervisors

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The authors disclosed receipt of the following financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article: This research was supported in part by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation and the Joyce Foundation. Maarten Van Craen was supported by the Research Foundation - Flanders (FWO). The opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not represent the views of Northwestern University/University of Leuven or the supporting foundations.

References

- Agnew, R. (1992). Foundation for a general strain theory of crime and delinquency. *Criminology*, 30(1), 47–87.
- Bandura, A. (1971). *Social learning theory*. New York, NY: General Learning Press.
- Bradford, B., & Quinton, P. (2014). Self-legitimacy, police culture and support for democratic policing in an English constabulary. *British Journal of Criminology*, 54(6), 1023–1046.
- Bradford, B., Quinton, P., Myhill, A., & Porter, G. (2014). Why do ‘the law’ comply? Procedural justice, group identification and officer motivation in police organizations. *European Journal of Criminology*, 11(1), 110–132.
- Cohen-Charash, Y., & Spector, P. E. (2001). The role of justice in organizations: A meta-analysis. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 86, 278–321.
- Colquitt, J. A., Conlon, D. E., Wesson, M. J., Porter, C. O. L. H., & Ng, K. Y. (2001). Justice at the millennium: A meta-analytic review of 25 years of organizational justice research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 425–445.
- Colquitt, J. A., Scott, B. A., Rodell, J. B., Long, D. M., Zapata, C. P., Conlon, D. E., & Wesson, M. J. (2013). Justice at the millennium, a decade later: A meta-analytic test of social exchange and affect-based perspectives. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 98(2), 199–236.
- Dhont, K., Cornelis, I., & Van Hiel, A. (2010). Interracial public-police contact: Relationships with police officers’ racial and work-related attitudes and behavior. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 34, 551–560.
- Easton, M., Ponsaers, P., Demarée, C., & Moor, L. G. (2009). *Multiple community policing: Hoezo? Ghent, Belgium: Academia Press*.
- Haarr, R. N. (2001). The making of a community policing officer: The impact of basic training and occupational socialization on police recruits. *Police Quarterly*, 4, 402–433.
- Haas, N., Van Craen, M., Skogan, W. G., & Fleitas, D. (2015). Explaining officer compliance: The importance of procedural justice and trust inside a police organization. *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, 15(4), 442–463.
- Hough, M., Jackson, J., Bradford, B., Myhill, A., & Quinton, P. (2010). Procedural justice, trust and institutional legitimacy. *Policing: A Journal of Policy and Practice*, 4(3), 203–210.
- Jackson, J., Bradford, B., Hough, M., Myhill, A., Quinton, P., & Tyler, T. R. (2012). Why do people comply with the law? Legitimacy and the influence of legal institutions. *British Journal of Criminology*, 52, 1051–1071.
- Jackson, J., Bradford, B., Stanko, B., & Hohl, K. (2013). *Just authority? Trust in the police in England and Wales*. Abingdon, England: Routledge.
- Jonathan-Zamir, T., Mastrofski, S. D., & Moyal, S. (2013). Measuring procedural justice in police-citizen encounters. *Justice Quarterly*, DOI:10.1080/07418825.2013.845677.
- Kop, N., & Euwema, M. C. (2001). Occupational stress and the use of force by Dutch police officers. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 28(5), 631–652.
- Loftus, B. (2010). Police occupational culture: Classic themes, altered times. *Policing & Society*, 20(1), 1–20.
- Mastrofski, S. D., & Ritti, R. R. (1996). Police training and the effects of organization on drunk driving enforcement. *Justice Quarterly*, 13, 291–320.
- Mazerolle, L., Antrobus, E., Bennett, S., & Tyler, T. R. (2013). Shaping citizen perceptions of police legitimacy: A randomized field trial of procedural justice. *Criminology*, 51, 33–63.

- Mihalic, S. W., & Elliott, D. (1997). A social learning theory model of marital violence. *Journal of Family Violence, 12*(1), 21–47.
- Muller, R. T., Hunter, J. E., & Stollak, G. (1995). The intergenerational transmission of corporal punishment: A comparison of social learning and temperament models. *Child Abuse & Neglect, 19*(11), 1323–1335.
- Murphy, K. (2013). Policing at the margins: Fostering trust and cooperation among ethnic minority groups. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, 8*, 184–199.
- Murphy, K., Mazerolle, L., & Bennett, S. (2014). Promoting trust in police: Findings from a randomised experimental field trial of procedural justice policing. *Policing and Society, 24*, 405–424.
- President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing. (2015). *Final report*. Washington, DC: Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.
- Roberts, K., & Herrington, V. (2013). Organisational and procedural justice: A review of the literature and its implications for policing. *Journal of Policing, Intelligence and Counter Terrorism, 8*(2), 115–130.
- Robertson, J. L., & Barling, J. (2013). Greening organizations through leaders' influence on employees' pro-environmental behaviors. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 34*, 176–194.
- Rothstein, B., & Stolle, D. (2008). The state and social capital: An institutional theory of generalized trust. *Comparative politics, 40*(4), 441–459.
- Ruiz-Palomino, P., & Martínez-Cañas, R. (2011). Supervisor role modeling, ethics-related organizational policies, and employee ethical intention: The moderating impact of moral ideology. *Journal of Business Ethics, 102*, 653–668.
- Skogan, W. G., & Meares, T. L. (2004). Lawful policing. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 593*, 66–84.
- Skogan, W. G., Van Craen, M., & Hennessy, C. (2015). Training police for procedural justice. *Journal of Experimental Criminology, 11*, 319–334.
- Sunshine, J., & Tyler, T. R. (2003). The role of procedural justice and legitimacy in shaping public support for policing. *Law & Society Review, 37*, 513–547.
- Tankebe, J. (2008). Police effectiveness and police trustworthiness in Ghana: An empirical appraisal. *Criminology & Criminal Justice, 8*, 185–202.
- Tankebe, J., & Meško, G. (2015). Police self-legitimacy, use of force, and pro-organizational behavior in Slovenia. In G. Meško & J. Tankebe (Eds.), *Trust and legitimacy in criminal justice. European perspectives* (pp. 261–277). Cham, Switzerland: Springer International Publishing.
- Terrill, W., Paoline, E. A. III, & Ingram, J. (2011). *Final technical report draft: Assessing police use of force policy and outcomes*. East Lansing: Michigan State University.
- Tyler, T. R. (2004). Enhancing police legitimacy. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 593*, 84–99.
- Tyler, T. R. (2005). Policing in black and white: Ethnic group differences in trust and confidence in the police. *Police Quarterly, 8*, 322–342.
- Tyler, T. R. (2011). *Why people cooperate. The role of social motivations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Tyler, T. R., Callahan, P. E., & Frost, J. (2007). Armed, and dangerous (?): Motivating rule adherence among agents of social control. *Law & Society Review, 41*(2), 457–492.

- Tyler, T. R., & DeGoey, P. (1996). Trust in organizational authorities. The influence of motive attributions on willingness to accept decisions. In R. M. Kramer & T. R. Tyler (Eds.), *Trust in organizations: Frontiers of theory and research* (pp. 331–355). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Tyler, T. R., & Huo, Y. J. (2002). *Trust in the law. Encouraging public cooperation with the police and courts*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Uslaner, E. M. (2004). Trust and social bonds: Faith in others and policy outcomes reconsidered. *Political Research Quarterly*, 57, 501–507.
- Van Craen, M. (2016a). Understanding police officers' trust and trustworthy behavior: A work relations framework. *European Journal of Criminology*, 13(2), 274–294.
- Van Craen, M. (2016b). Fair policing from the inside out. In M. Deflem (Ed.), *The politics of policing: Between force and legitimacy* (Vol. 21, pp. 3–19). Sociology of crime, law, and deviance, Bingley, England: Emerald.
- Van Craen, M., & Skogan, W. G. (2015a). Trust in the Belgian police: The importance of responsiveness. *European Journal of Criminology*, 12(2), 129–150.
- Van Craen, M., & Skogan, W. G. (2015b). Differences and similarities in the explanation of ethnic minority groups' trust in the police. *European Journal of Criminology*, 12(3), 300–323.
- Van Maanen, J. (1974). Working the street: A developmental view of police behavior. In H. Jacob (Ed.), *The potential for reform of criminal justice* (pp. 83–130). Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.
- Van Maanen, J. (1978). The asshole. In P. K. Manning & J. Van Maanen (Eds.), *Policing: A view from the street* (pp. 221–238). Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear Publishing Company.
- Warren, P. Y. (2010). The continuing significance of race: An analysis across two levels of policing. *Social Science Quarterly*, 91, 1025–1042.
- Weiss, H. M. (1977). Subordinate imitation of supervisor behavior: The role of modeling in organizational socialization. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 19, 89–105.
- Westmarland, L. (2010). Dodgy customers? Can the police ever trust the public? *Policing*, 4, 291–297.
- Wheller, L., Quinton, P., Fildes, A., & Mills, A. (2013). *The Greater Manchester police procedural justice training experiment: Technical report*. London, England: The College of Policing.
- Whitener, E. M., Brodt, S. E., Korsgaard, M. A., & Werner, J. M. (1998). Managers as initiators of trust: An exchange relationship framework for understanding managerial trustworthy behavior. *Academy of Management Review*, 23(3), 513–530.
- Yang, K. (2005). Public administrators' trust in citizens: A missing link in citizen involvement efforts. *Public Administration Review*, 65, 273–285.

Author Biographies

Maarten Van Craen is a postdoctoral researcher at the Leuven Institute of Criminology (University of Leuven, Belgium). His research is supported by the Research Foundation – Flanders (FWO). Van Craen's research interests include police–citizens relationships and work relationships within police

organizations. His work has appeared in journals such as *Justice Quarterly*, *Journal of Experimental Criminology*, *European Journal of Criminology*, and *Criminology & Criminal Justice*.

Wesley G. Skogan is the author of a number of books on policing and the editor of the National Research Council's report *Fairness and Effectiveness in Policing*. He was the winner of the 2015 Distinguished Achievement Award in Evidence-Based Crime Policy from the Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy.