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EYES WIDE OPEN: PERCEIVED EXPLOITATION AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

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

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

To date, organizational behavior research has lagged behind other social sciences in seeking to understand how employees respond to an exploitative employment relationship. Although its potential has been recognized—for example, researchers have used fear of exploitation as an explanation for why employees may not follow the norm of reciprocity in

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their exchange relationships (e.g., Shore, Bommer, Rao, & Seo, 2009), and have discussed the potential for organizations' human resources practices to be exploitative (Cobb, 2016)—theorizing about exploitation is conspicuously absent in the organizational behavior literature.

Yet, exploitation has a long and rich history in other disciplines. In particular, the work of sociologists and industrial relations scholars has illuminated the rise in exploitation among particular groups and communities in society. The raison d'être of trade unions has been to prevent and curb management's potential to exploit its workers (Kelly, 1998), and industrial relations research has examined the route by which the exploited (contracted workers, self-employed workers, migrant workers) fight exploitation through organizing (Agarwala, 2016). Labor law changes have also helped "blunt the most brutal forms of exploitation" (Friedman & Lee, 2010: 514), and the role of consumer pressure and nongovernmental organizations—such as Green America's latest campaign to highlight the work-related diseases affecting those workers in "smartphone sweatshops" (Green America, 2015)—have also received academic attention (Pines & Meyer, 2005; Snyder, 2010).

The exploitation of migrant workers represents a visible strand of empirical research. One factor that increases the vulnerability of this group of workers to exploitation is the absence of citizenship rights (Wilkinson, 2014; Zamudio, 2004). Wilkinson (2012), drawing on two qualitative studies of several hundred migrant workers in the United Kingdom, documented accounts of routine, systematic, and widespread exploitation covering escalating debt, illegal deductions and systematic underpayment, substandard accommodation, and unsafe working conditions: "A woman started out with £149 as her net wage, and by the time all the illegal deductions had been taken from that she was left with £19" (Wilkinson, 2014: 503). A similar picture has been portrayed of migrant mushroom pickers in Northern Ireland (Potter & Hamilton, 2014), with deleterious consequences for the physical and mental health of these workers. One migrant worker said: "We are nothing. We are less than dog[s] because we have nothing" (McQuade, Wilkinson, Skrivankova, Craig, & Gaus, 2007: 38–39). As Wilkinson (2014: 508) noted, "for the vast majority of migrant workers, the only realistic coping strategy. . .is to put particular instances of abuse and exploitation down to experience and seek, through word of mouth, to move on to a better gangmaster or employer."

The absence of a measure of exploitation has hampered investigations of exploitation by sociologists in social stratification. As noted by Sakamoto and Kim (2010: 20), "despite its importance, exploitation has not been adequately investigated by any sociologist using statistical data since the time of Karl Marx." The authors defined exploitation in the labor market as "the extent to which the earnings of various groups in the labor force are underpaid relative to the market values of their productivities" (Sakamoto & Kim, 2010: 20). Using data for U.S. manufacturing industries from 1971–1996, the authors found that women, Hispanics, African Americans, and blue-collar workers are substantially underpaid relative to their contributions to productivity, and the trend indicates that exploitation is rising. Their analysis found that the only occupational category that is substantially overpaid is that of managers.

To this end, our study complements and extends sociological and industrial relations work by investigating exploitation from the individual's perspective, rather than as structural properties of groups or employment. We also counterbalance and extend prior employee–organization literature and research, which has largely emphasized positive relationships in which negative events may occur. As an individual-level phenomenon, we consider emotional reactions as playing a crucial role in understanding the consequences associated with the perception of organizational exploitation. Building upon Lazarus's (1991) contention that there is little empirical distinction between mood and acute emotions, we test our argument that acute, episode-specific emotions are also associated with longer-term appraisals of an individual's exploitative relationship with the organization.

We begin with a brief history of the roots of exploitation in political economy, sociology, and philosophy in the writings of Marx (1932/1970) and his contemporaries, such as Weber (1922/1968) and Durkheim (1893/1997), as well as later scholars such as Etzioni (1961), Parsons (1967), Moore (1972), and Kelly (1998), to provide the foundation and context for our theory of the effects of employees' perceptions that their organizations are exploiting them. More recent work that has touched on workplace exploitation is briefly reviewed prior to framing our own theory of exploitation in the employee–organization relationship literature. Drawing on these literatures, we define exploitation in the context of the employee–organization relationship and develop a measurement scale, which we evaluate

and validate using three independent studies (the two studies designed to develop the scale are described in Appendix A, and the validation study is presented in the methods section). We then propose an emotion-centered theory of the effects of perceived exploitation and test this in two field studies.

LITERATURE TOUCHING ON EXPLOITATION

A Historical View of Exploitation

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

Weber (1922/1968) offered an alternative view of structural exploitation based on status. He proposed that exploitation may be based on status affiliations, and thus made way for a conceptualization of exploitation that is not dependent on Marx's class structure, but can also occur in any society where status plays a role, or where other asymmetric power differences exist. Durkheim (1893/1997) believed that in a meritocracy, class will lose its innate meaning and power differences will stem from differences in hereditary dispositions and distributions of talent. Durkheim viewed this division of labor as a natural law; however, he warned that it is not necessarily a moral law. Marx, Weber, and Durkheim all saw exploitation as arising from structural power asymmetries in relationships, a point emphasized by more recent scholars who have noted that it is not profit per se that indicates exploitation of labor, but that exploitation is possible any time there is differential power in relationships (Yoshihara & Veneziari, 2013). We draw on these early theorists' premises about the effects of exploitation on employee attitudes and behavior in our theoretical predictions.

Toward a Working Definition of Perceived Exploitation

Although these theories originated a long time ago, and since then employment law has attempted to curb exploitative practices (e.g., minimum wage regulations), changes in the global economy and technology platforms over the past three decades have increased external pressures, which have led organizations to seek new and different opportunities to exploit employees—for example, new forms of work. In 2017, 3.8% of total U.S. employment was reported to hold contingent jobs (including gig economy workers), and over 10% of total employment was reported to have alternative work arrangements, including independent contracting, on-call work, temporary agency work, and contracted work (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018a). The rise in this type of employment leaves a significant proportion of workers facing insecurity. Even traditional employment contracts are being reengineered by companies to bypass employment law and cut wages (LeRoy, 2017). Recently, Wells Fargo forced employees to sell unsuitable products to their friends and families and then fired them when they had no more personal contacts to misuse (Morris, 2016). Similarly, Scholz (2012) described the various degrees of exploitation of workers in today's digital industries: working long hours as a contractor and so not being covered by employment law protections, having no job security, organizations unilaterally cutting benefits or compensation, and other adverse working conditions. The detrimental physical and psychological health effects of such conditions have also been documented (e.g., Moen, Kelly, & Lam, 2013; Siegrist et al., 2004). Indeed, Petriglieri, Ashford, and Wrzesniewski (2018) noted that the

chronic uncertainty experienced by gig economy workers lead to individuals' anxiety and frustration, and to societal issues such as social unrest. Researchers have also noted the health risks to construction workers in countries such as the United States and United Kingdom due to exposure to hazardous materials and operating potentially dangerous equipment, which takes advantage of the many unregistered, nonunionized subcontractors (Snashall, 2005). The medical profession is another area in which exploitation can be found. Doctors often do not receive fair and robust contracts (Lecky, 2008), a trend that worsens as governments try to reduce health care costs manifested in reduced income, shrinking clout with insurers, and increased time requirements (Lecky, 2008; Leigh, 2014). Many physicians view these changes as exploitative as they find themselves powerless to fight back, particularly because strikes are seen by many as morally unjustifiable (e.g., Ogunbanjo & Knapp van Bogaert, 2009). Exploitation of people working for organizations is not solely relevant to a bygone era, but remains important in light of the changing nature of work.

The early theorists defined exploitation as work compelled by survival needs in which others use their positions to extract unfair advantage from their relationships with those doing the work. This is consistent with conventional definitions: "The action or fact of treating someone unfairly in order to benefit from their work" (The Oxford English Dictionary Online, 2015), and taking advantage of an individual or situation for one's benefit (Friedman, 1994). The latter definitions do not specify whether exploitation is perceptual, or a structural objective condition, nor whether such treatment is a transient incident or captures a relationship, and have not explored the effects of exactly who the exploiting party is. Therefore, in order to focus on employees' experience of organizational treatment we offer the following definition of exploitation, as *employees' perceptions that they have been purposefully taken advantage of in their relationship with the organization, to the benefit of the organization itself*. Each element in this definition draws from past works in other disciplines. First, as for the idea of subjectivity, perceptions of exploitation rather than exploitation as an objective condition are consistent with Moore's (1972: 457) argument that,

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

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

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

Employee Exploitation in Organizational Research

Most of the research touching on workplace exploitation in organizational behavior has focused on interpersonal exploitation, rather than organizational exploitation of employees, as evidenced by the literature on abusive supervision (e.g., Tepper, 2000), narcissistic leadership (e.g., Rosenthal & Pittinsky, 2006), exploitative leadership (Schmid, Verdorfer, & Peus, 2017), and sexual harassment (Fitzgerald et al., 1988). In contrast to the research on negative interpersonal behaviors, research on employee–organizational relationships has tended to emphasize positive or neutral relationships,

treating negative events as occurring within an overall positive relationship (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008). This skewed focus can be partly explained by the neoclassical assumptions underpinning our field and the dominance of social exchange theory as theoretical foundations for our research (Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2004). Nevertheless, we draw on research within the employee–organization relationship literature that touches on negative aspects of the relationship: psychological contract breach (Robinson, Kraatz, & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1995), low perceived organizational support (e.g., Allen, Shore, & Griffeth, 2003; Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990), distributive injustice (e.g., Greenberg & Colquitt, 2013), and initial theorizing about types of perceived negative employee–organizational relationships. Table 1 compares these concepts with perceived exploitative relationships (PERs).

Psychological contract research has treated breach and violation as events that disrupt a hitherto positive employee–organizational relationship, and that may or may not be intentional by the organization (e.g., Dulac et al., 2008; Morrison, & Robinson, 1997), in contrast to negative relationships captured by PERs. Second, perceived organizational support captures employees' global beliefs concerning the extent to which the organization supports them

TABLE 1
Comparison between Perceived Exploitation and Constructs in the Employee–Organization Relationship Literature that Address Mistreatment by the Organization

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

based on benevolent organizational intentions (e.g., Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). The benevolence underpinning perceived organizational support (even in low levels) sits in opposition to the intentional exploitation for organizational gain inherent in PERs. Finally, PERs are conceptually similar to perceptions of distributive injustice in the workplace (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). Employees not receiving the outcomes they thought were fair could well be perceived as exploitation if they felt that this was based on an intent to exploit them. However, these two concepts are different because distributive injustice is an event appraisal rather than an appraisal of the relationship with the organization in its entirety. Consequently, distributive injustice may occur in an overall positive relationship, as such perceptions can be offset by procedural and interactional justice (Bobocel & Holmvall, 2001). PERs, however, are appraisals of the overall employee–organizational relationship. Of course, this appraisal of the relationship might be spurred by a particular event or events, such as distributive injustice, which, in turn, primes employees to interpret other events as consistent with the exploitative appraisal. Indeed, Proudfoot and Lind (2015: 373) noted that justice serves as an indicator that an employee is "safe from exclusion and exploitation," suggesting that distributive injustice may eventually give rise to perceptions of an intentionally exploitative relationship.

We build and extend the two initial attempts to address fundamentally negative employee–organizational relationships. Perceived organizational obstruction (Gibney, Zagenczyk, & Masters, 2009) captures employees' perceptions of the organization as hindering and obstructing their goals and posing a threat to their well-being. However, organizations may not intentionally obstruct employees' goals, and if employees' personal goals are contrary to the interests of the organization, the organization may be justified in doing this and so the action is not exploitative. Perceived organizational cruelty (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012) captures employees' perceptions of contemptuous, disrespectful, and inhumane treatment from the organization. In contrast to a perceived exploitative relationship's requirement of intent to benefit the organization at the employee's expense, perceived organizational cruelty can encompass a wide range of inhumane acts that might not serve a clear purpose to the organization and so are not necessarily intentional (Shore & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). It is the combination of perceived intentionality behind the organization's actions and the overall view of the relationship by employees as a negative one that differentiates perceived exploitation from these other constructs.

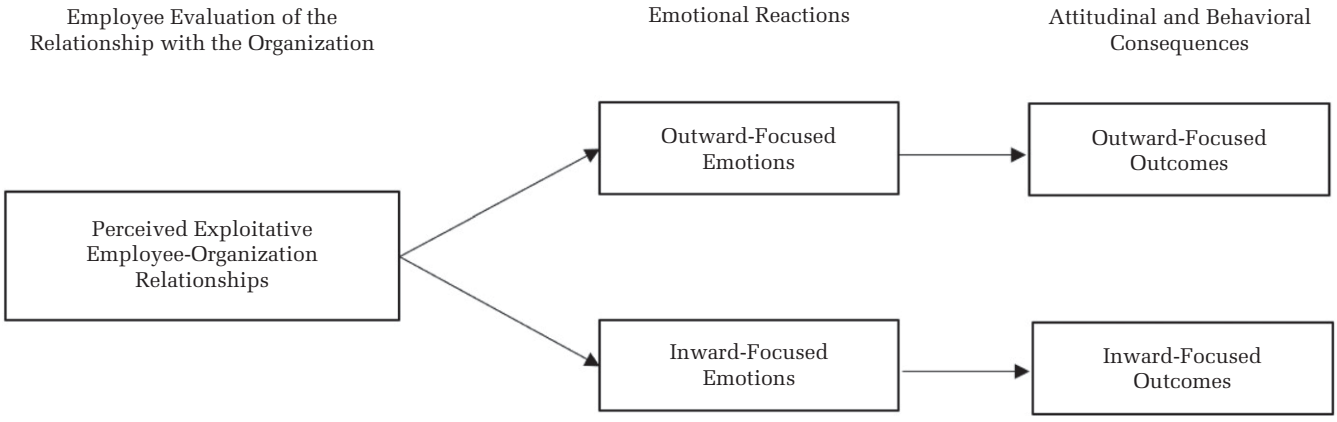
A THEORY OF THE EFFECTS OF EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF EXPLOITATION

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

Emotional Reactions to Perceived Exploitation, and their Differential Effects

The need to vent emotions (Lazarus, 1991) and act upon them has a biological foundation, which serves as the purpose of communicating our needs efficiently (Panksepp, 1992; Plutchik, 1980). In organizational behavior scholars have distinguished between mood and discrete emotions, yet the empirical research in psychology does not support the core distinction between moods and emotions—that the former is less intense and longer lasting than the latter. Lazarus (1991: 48) summarized this research, noting that moods can be short-lived and acute emotions can be felt intensely or mildly: "I am inclined to interpret both moods and acute emotions to the way one appraises relationships with the environment." We build on this work in psychology to argue that appraisals of an exploitative relationship

FIGURE 1
Conceptual Model of the Consequences of Perceived Exploitative Employee–Organization Relationships



with the employing organizations can lead to acute emotional responses, which, unless subsequent observations suggest the exploitative episode was an isolated incident, are expected to be sustained over time.

Negative experiences have a pronounced role in evoking negative emotional reactions (Taylor, 1991), and these tend to be more influential compared to positive experiences (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Finkenauer, & Vohs, 2001; Labianca & Brass, 2006). Psychological distress can elicit strong emotional reactions (Baumeister et al., 2001; Spencer & Myers, 2006), and these emotions can serve to relieve this psychological distress (Aquino, Tripp, & Bies, 2006). Two discrete groups of negative emotions have been studied in the organizational and psychology literatures: anger and hostility, and shame and guilt (Strawson, 2008), corresponding to outward- or inward-focused affective responses, respectively (Falomir-Pichastor, 2011). The causal reasoning framework (Martinko, Gundlach, & Douglas, 2002) not only helps explain these differences between the two sets of emotions, but also accounts for why PERs might lead to such different emotions: it proposes that a disparity in emotional reactions is due to the attributions that individuals make, such that they tend to blame others when they make an external attribution for failure or negative outcomes, and blame themselves when they make internal attributions for failure or negative outcomes (Gilbert & Miles, 2000). When internal attributions are made for negative events, the result is often negative evaluations of the self (e.g., Martinko & Gardner, 1982). Such individuals are therefore more likely to refrain from behaviors directed at external targets (Martinko et al., 2002). Why some individuals react to distress with outward-focused emotions and others react with inward-focused emotions or some combination of the two is beyond the scope of this paper. Rather, of central interest here is whether these differently focused emotions will have different organizational behavior consequences.

Anger and hostility. These emotions, which are often viewed as synonymous (see Eckhardt, Norlander, & Deffenbacher, 2004; Spielberger, Jacobs, Russell, & Crane, 1983), consist of "feelings that vary in intensity, from mild irritation or annoyance to fury and rage" (Spielberger et al., 1983: 162). Drawing on the relational model framework (Tyler, 1994: 852), we propose that perceptions of an exploitative relationship will lead employees to feel anger and hostility toward their organizations because exploitation poses a threat to "the sense of self-respect that people acquire through treatment with respect and dignity." Such a threat to one's self-respect can result in psychological distress (Spencer & Myers, 2006), often followed by the emotional response of anger and hostility, which allows the relief of such distress (Aquino et al., 2006) essentially through the rejection of the diminishing treatment and the preservation of one's self-respect via self-empowerment (Ellsworth & Gross, 1994). Indeed, these adaptive emotions have been empirically linked to high levels of self-assurance, physical strength, and bravery (Izard, 1991), supporting the empowering function of anger and hostility. We thus expect that exploitative relationship perceptions will result in anger and hostility for many employees.

Hypothesis 1. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee–organization relationship are positively related to their anger and hostility.

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

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

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

Outward-Focused Emotions and Employee Reactions

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

Revenge. Revenge refers to instances in which the victim becomes a perpetrator and tries to injure or harm the other (Michalak, 2010). This definition has roots in social exchange theory, whereby exchanges in which employees believe they are being intentionally harmed, such as perceived exploitative employee–organization relationships, are likely to prompt employees to negatively reciprocate through retaliatory behavior, such as posting anonymous criticisms of the employer online. This assumption is rooted in one of the tenets of social exchange theory whereby the norm of reciprocity applies not only to return of benefits, but also to the return of injuries (Gouldner, 1960). Therefore, acts of revenge are an outward-focused action against the source of harm—the organization, in this case. The motivation behind acts of revenge is therefore an attempt to "even the score" (Miller, 2001) as a way of reestablishing control (Bennett, 1998). For instance, manifestations of revenge include behaviors such as theft (e.g., Greenberg, 2002), sabotage (Giacalone & Greenberg, 1997), violence (Folger & Skarlicki, 1998), and publicly embarrassing the employer (Tripp, Bies, & Aquino, 2007). The motives behind such retaliatory actions have been interpreted in various ways, ranging from punishing the target

(e.g., Greenberg, 1996) to emotion-reducing expression and ventilation (Robinson & Bennett, 1997). In addition, Leith and Baumeister (1996) showed that negative affect increases an individual's propensity toward risk-taking behaviors, such as revenge. Thus, revenge serves as a means of expressing anger.

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

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

Hypothesis 4. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee–organization relationship are negatively related to employees' work engagement, partially mediated by their anger and hostility.

Turnover intentions. Researchers have maintained not only that leaving the organization might represent a way to reduce a sense of inequity (Carrell & Dittrich, 1978) in search for better prospects, but that searching for another job can also be a way to reduce the negative emotions and the distress (i.e., anger and hostility) associated with negative events (Harlos, 2010), in the same way that thoughts of revenge do by creating a satisfying sense of righting a wrong. Empirical data indeed support the contention that emotions of anger can lead to intentions to leave the organization. The sources of anger are not only rooted in negative interpersonal treatment (Booth & Mann, 2005; Harlos, 2010), but also in negative treatment from the organization. For instance, O'Neill, Vandenberg, DeJoy, and Wilson (2009) found that perceptions of low organizational support led to anger, and consequently to turnover intentions, among employees. Thus, anger following exploitative treatment from the organization can lead to the proactive search for another job, which is an outward-focused action in response to the outward-focused emotion of anger.

Hypothesis 5. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee–organization relationship are positively related to employees' turnover intentions, partially mediated by their anger and hostility.

Organizational commitment. Organizational commitment has been defined as "the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974: 604). Such commitment involves adopting the organization's goals and values, willingness to employ effort for and on behalf of the organization, and desire to remain an organizational member (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1982). Organizational commitment is an outward, or organization-focused commitment to continuing the relationship with the organization (Barclay et al., 2005). Further, it has been associated with employee compliance, and prosocial behaviors (e.g., Bozeman & Perrewé, 2001; O'Reilly & Chatman, 1986). Meyer and Allen (1991) maintained that employee commitment can be seen as a result of reciprocation for organizational rewards or costs that it incurs in providing employment (e.g., job training). The hypothesized inverse relationship between PERs and organizational commitment is proposed because if employees believe that the organization is exploiting them, and they react with anger and hostility, they are less likely to commit to this exploitative organization. Indeed, research has shown that positive affect and cognitions (such as commitment) and negative emotions (such as anger) directed at the same source are mutually exclusive (Diener & Iran-Nejad, 1986), such that if employees feel angry or hostile toward the organization, then they cannot simultaneously feel committed to it.

Hypothesis 6. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee–organization relationship are negatively related to employees' organizational commitment, partially mediated by their anger and hostility.

Inward-Focused Emotions and Employee Reactions

When individuals experience inward-focused or self-directed negative emotions for a distressing circumstance (Martinko et al., 2002), feelings of shame and guilt may arise because these emotions address the discrepancy between an ideal self and actual selves (Lewis, 1971). We propose that the inward-focused emotions of shame and guilt lead to different employee reactions compared to outward-directed ones. These reactions may include employee burnout, employee silence, and psychological withdrawal. Partial mediation is expected because for each reaction there exists substantial literature demonstrating other causes, and we would not expect perceived exploitation-fueled emotions to be the sole drivers. We focus on this specific group of outcomes as there is an indication in the literature that they are causally linked to negative job conditions, which can result in negative self-evaluation and feelings of low personal accomplishment (Jackson, Schwab, & Schuler, 1986).

Burnout. Researchers have modeled burnout as resulting from employees' sense of lack of personal accomplishment, negative self-image, reduced self-confidence, and consequent depersonalization from the work and job, which cause role stress over not meeting their own expectations, and consequently burnout (e.g., Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Gil-Monte, Peiró, & Valcárcel, 1998; Maslach, 1982). According to these approaches, depersonalization is a coping strategy to deal with the underlying unpleasant emotions of shame and guilt due to the diminished personal accomplishment and self-blame, which consequently lead to burnout (e.g., Chang, 2009). While burnout borne out by a sense of depersonalization and its emotional causes might be rooted in individual factors, organizational factors, such as inappropriate job demands, have also been identified (Chang, 2009). Therefore, employees' perceptions of exploitation may elicit a process by which shame- and guilt-prone individuals blame themselves for their diminished accomplishment or for not meeting their own personal goals, resulting in burnout. Burnout is characterized by inward-focused attributes, such as cognitive and emotional deterioration (Gil-Monte, 2012); therefore, we view burnout as a self-directed outcome of perceived exploitation. In other words, burnout is a likely outcome of shame- and guilt-fueled perceptions of exploitation.

Hypothesis 7. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee–organization relationship are positively related to employees' burnout, partially mediated by their shame and guilt.

Silence. Employee silence entails withholding ideas, information, and opinions that could lead to improvements in the workplace (Van Dyne, Ang, & Botero, 2003). Individuals who experience shame and guilt about allowing themselves to be exploited by their organization are more likely to remain silent than to actively voice their grievances, because silence is a result of fear of vulnerability, embarrassment, or retaliation (Fontenot-Premeaux & Bedeian, 2003; Rochat, 2003; Van Dyne et al., 2003). Silence is a risk-averse defensive strategy rooted in self-protective behavior, which is more likely to occur among individuals who display characteristics of the shame- and guilt-prone individual—those with higher self-awareness, lower self-esteem, and a negative self-evaluation (Cordes & Dougherty, 1993; Fontenot-Premeaux & Bedeian, 2003).

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

Psychological withdrawal. In our context, withdrawal behaviors involve psychologically removing oneself from unsatisfying working conditions (e.g., daydreaming) (Lehman & Simpson, 1992). They can also include reducing investment, time, and resources devoted to work (Taris, Horn, Schaufeli, & Schreurs, 2004). Withdrawal is a passive and self-focused inward reaction to shame and guilt, which reduces the aversive emotions by disassociating oneself from the relationship without the risks of actions taken against the organization or leaving the job. Researchers who have examined psychological and cognitive processes that lead to withdrawal have found that withdrawal entails self-criticism and self-attack, and as such are shame-based behaviors (Yelsma, Brown, & Elison, 2002). Accordingly, psychological withdrawal is an inwardly focused outcome of perceived exploitation.

Hypothesis 9. Employees' perceptions of an exploitative employee–organization relationship are positively related to their psychological withdrawal, partially mediated by their shame and guilt.

METHODS

Overview of Studies

We conducted two field studies to test this theory of the effects of employees' perceptions that their organizations are exploitative. The first study was a sample of construction workers (Study 1), and the second sampled medical doctors in their residencies at two time periods (Study 2). In this early stage of perceived exploitation research, we chose samples in which we expected to find employees who might perceive their organizational relationships as exploitative. Construction workers depend on their general contractors for future work, and medical residents must complete their residencies in their current workplaces or lose their specializations. Indeed, in both settings there are highly physical work demands and occupational health risks (Kaminskas & Antanaitis, 2010). While some of our hypotheses were tested in both studies, others were tested in only one in order to keep the survey short, because construction workers completed the survey during their lunch break in the canteen, and to facilitate doctors' completing two surveys. Table 2 summarizes the measured variables in each study.

In addition, three separate studies were conducted to develop and validate the new PERs scale; descriptions of the two scale-development studies and their results appear in Appendix A and the third validation study is described below.

VALIDATION STUDY

The main purpose of this validation study was to assess the construct validity of PERs in terms of its convergent, discriminant, incremental, and criterion-related validities (e.g., Hinkin, 1998) in order to support our contention that the concept of perceived exploitative employee–organization relationships is distinct from related constructs. We also utilized this sample to conduct an exploratory factor (EFA) analysis to examine the structure of PERs.

TABLE 2
Variables Measured According to Study

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

Respondents and Procedure

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

Measures

Unless otherwise stated, all scales used to measure the constructs used a 7-point Likert scale (where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly agree").

Perceived exploitative employee–organization relationships: We used the 14-item scale developed from the initial two studies, described in Appendix A (items appear in Table A1; α = .96).

Perceived organizational support, psychological contract breach, distributive justice: To demonstrate that PERs are empirically distinct from related constructs we measured the following:

Perceived organizational support: We used Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, and Lynch's (1997) 8-item short version (Baranik, Roling, & Eby, 2010; Eisenberger et al., 1986). A sample item is "My organization shows little concern for me" (α = .93).

Psychological contract breach: We used Robinson and Morrison's (2000) five-item global measure for this variable. A sample item is "I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions." Items were measured on a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") (α = .94).

Distributive justice: This variable was measured using a 4-item scale (reverse coded) used by Colquitt (2001). A sample item is "My outcome is not justified given my performance." Items were measured on a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") (α = .96).

Abusive supervision and perceived supervisor support: We also included two scales that capture supervisory treatment to test whether respondents differentiate between treatment from the supervisor and treatment from the organization. We thus measured:

Abusive supervision: We used Tepper's (2000) 15-item scale to measure this variable. A sample item is "My supervisor puts me down in front of others." Respondents were asked to rate the frequency of their supervisor's behavior on a scale from 1 ("I cannot remember him or her ever using this behavior with me") to 5 ("He or she uses this behavior very often with me") ($\alpha = .95$).

Perceived supervisor support: We used Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades's (2002) 4-item scale. A sample item is "My supervisor cares about my opinions" ($\alpha = .93$).

Anger and hostility, and shame and guilt: The dependent variables in the validation tests included:

Anger and hostility: This was measured using three items adapted from Weiss, Suckow and Cropanzano (1999). Respondents were asked to state how they felt (e.g., angry, hostile) about an object or event. This measure allows adaptation (for an example of a past adaptation, see Barclay et al. [2005]). In this study, a sample item is "I feel angry about the way I am treated by my organization" ($\alpha = .95$).

Shame and guilt: We used the State Shame and Guilt Scale (Marschall, Sanftner, & Tangney, 1994). A sample item is "My organization makes me feel like I'm a bad person." Items were measured on a frequency scale ranging from 1 ("never") to 5 ("very often") ($\alpha = .90$).

Turnover intentions and organizational commitment: Two hypothesized variables were included for the discriminant and criterion-related validity tests. These included:

Turnover intentions: We used Landau and Hammer's (1986) 3-item scale. A sample item is "I am actively looking for a job outside my organization" ($\alpha = .94$).

Organizational commitment: We measured this variable using Bozeman and Perrewé's (2001) 9-item adaptation of Mowday, Steers and Porter's (1979) Organizational Commitment Questionnaire. A sample item is "I feel very little loyalty to this organization" (reversed). Items were measured on a scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") ($\alpha = .91$).

We also measured age and gender to use as control variables. However, age did not correlate with PERs in this sample ($r = .01$, n.s.), and while gender did correlate significantly with PERs ($r = .17$, $p < .05$), its inclusion did not change the results.

TABLE 3
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Validation Study

Variable	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Perceived exploitative relationships	2.80	1.50									
2. Perceived organizational support	4.83	1.30	–0.77**								
3. Psychological contract breach	2.30	0.94	0.65**	–0.63**							
4. Distributive injustice	2.75	1.15	0.78**	–0.70**	0.58**						
5. Abusive supervision	1.56	0.80	0.70**	–0.53**	0.45**	0.55**					
6. Perceived supervisor support	5.04	1.41	–0.68**	0.74**	–0.50**	–0.52**	–0.54**				
7. Anger and hostility	2.67	1.75	0.82**	–0.74**	0.69**	0.67**	0.65**	–0.63**			
8. Shame and guilt	1.99	0.69	0.61**	–0.58**	0.45**	0.45**	0.51**	–0.53**	0.64**		
9. Turnover intentions	3.26	2.01	0.71**	–0.72**	0.57**	0.65**	0.50**	–0.57**	71**	71**	
10. Organizational commitment	3.48	0.91	–0.66**	0.78**	–0.63**	–0.68**	–0.41**	0.63**	–0.63**	–0.59**	–0.70**

Note: $n = 186$.
** $p < 0.01$

Results

The descriptive statistics and intercorrelations of the validation study variables are reported in Table 3.

The correlation analysis supports convergent, discriminant, incremental, and criterion-related validities. To support the discriminant validity of PERs, we conducted principle component analyses, and all PERs items loaded on their appropriate factor when comparing PERs item loadings with all the nontarget variables in the model (all loadings were at least .50 on the target factor and cross-loadings on other factors were lower by at least .12). PERs were significantly correlated with all the variables in the expected direction. While the correlation of PERs with the emotional variables, particularly anger and hostility, is noticeably strong, it is below .85, which is the conventional cut-off criteria for suspecting overlap between constructs (Hinkin, 1998).

As a robustness test we ran partial correlations, and PERs were still significantly related to anger and hostility and shame and guilt even when controlling for perceived organizational support ($r = .65$, $p < .01$), psychological contract breach ($r = .71$, $p < .01$), distributive injustice ($r = .69$, $p < .01$), abusive supervision ($r = .68$, $p < .01$), and perceived supervisor support ($r = .73$, $p < .01$). Moreover, the results of a regression analysis show that PERs explain 72% of the variance in anger and hostility and 45% of the variance in shame and guilt, which is well above the comparatively small variance explained by the other variables (the highest variance in these emotions explained by another variable was 5%). These results point to the usefulness and incremental validity of PERs.

Discussion of Validation Study

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

STUDY 1: CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

Respondents and Procedure

We obtained access to a U.K. construction organization and recruited participants onsite. Respondents were offered a lottery ticket with a chance to win a cash prize in return for their participation. After a week, 248 surveys had been collected, of which 219 were fully completed. Of these respondents, 14 (6%) were female, which reflects the population of this setting (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2018b), and the mean age was 32.7 ($SD = 12.78$). The sample was comprised predominantly of manual laborers ($n = 211$, or 96%), and the remaining respondents were either administrative staff or engineers.

Measures

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

We also measured additional variables, described below. Unless otherwise stated, all scales used to measure these constructs used a five-point Likert scale (where 1 = "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree").

Revenge. We measured this variable using Aquino et al.'s (2006) 4-item scale, which is based on Wade's (1989) revenge subscale (presented in McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown, & Hight, 1998). A sample item is "I got even with my organization" ($\alpha = .91$).

Work engagement. We measured work engagement using the Utrecht work engagement scale short version (Schaufeli et al., 2006). A sample item is "When I get up in the morning I feel like going to work" ($\alpha = .91$).

Psychological withdrawal. We used Lehman and Simpson's (1992) measure to assess psychological withdrawal on a frequency scale ranging from 1 ("never") to 7 ("very often"). A sample item is "I daydream" ($\alpha = .83$).

We also collected measures of age and gender to use as control variables. Gender did not correlate with PERs ($r = .05$, n.s.), and while age did correlate significantly with PERs ($r = .03$, $p < .05$, including it as a control did not change the results.

TABLE 4
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 1

Variable	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Perceived exploitative relationships	3.16	1.41						
2. Anger and hostility	2.90	1.65	0.68**					
3. Shame and guilt	2.18	0.58	0.58**	0.50**				
4. Revenge	1.65	1.01	0.20**	0.13*	0.31**			
5. Engagement	3.47	0.76	–0.28**	–0.19**	–0.33**	–0.08		
6. Turnover intentions	3.37	1.61	0.47**	0.52**	0.37**	0.22**	–0.24**	
7. Psychological withdrawal	3.20	1.34	0.31**	0.20**	0.40**	0.14*	–0.48**	–0.23**

Note: $n = 219$.
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$

Results

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

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

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

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

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

Discussion

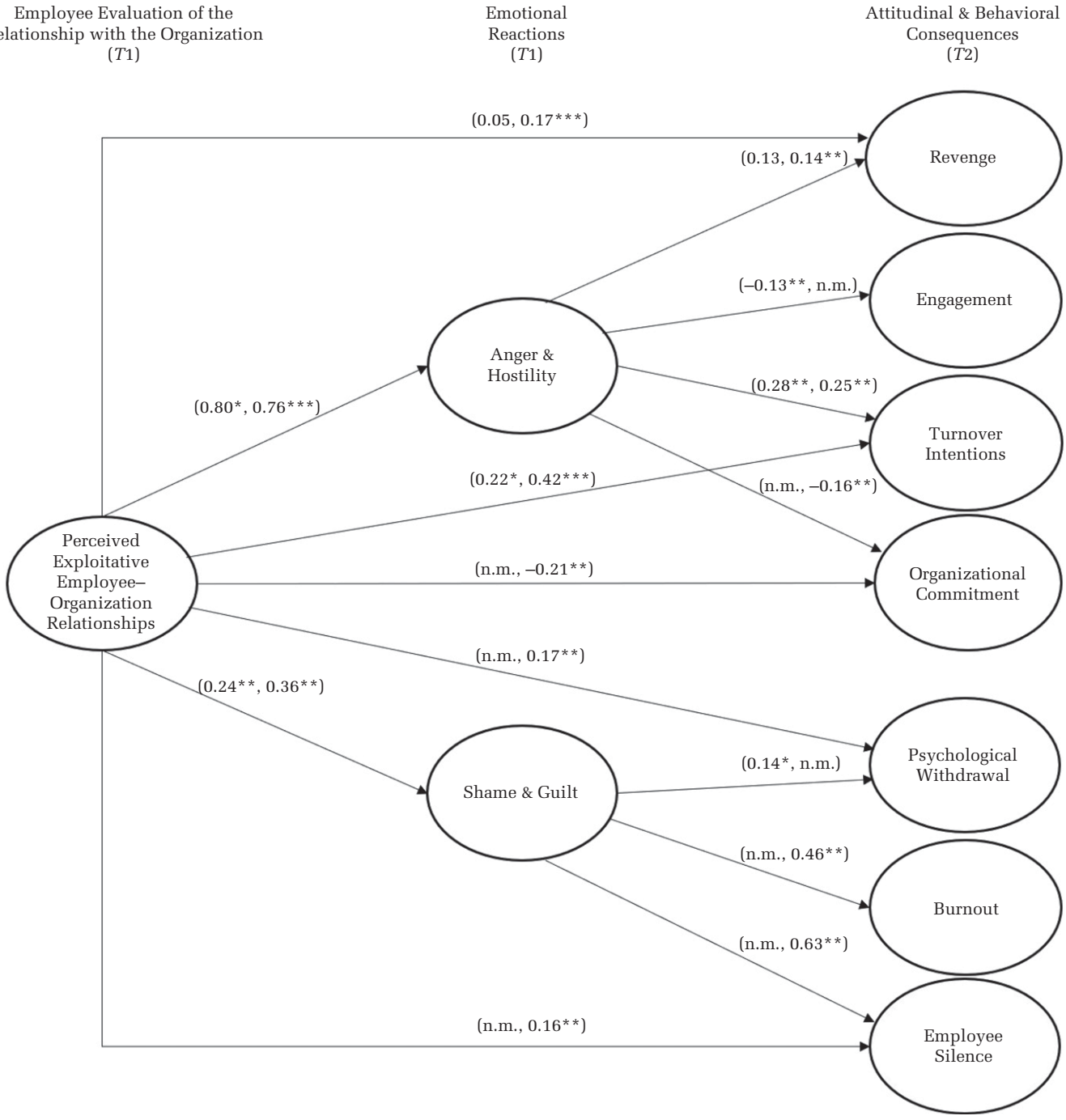
The results of Study 1 support our theory that perceived exploitative employee–organization relationships are associated with the emotions of anger and hostility as well as shame and guilt, and that these different emotions partially mediate the relationship between PERs and the outward focused actions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

Interestingly, respondents in this sample were more likely to report anger and hostility than shame and guilt. We examine this as well as replicating some of Study 1's relationships using time-lagged data in a sample of medical residents and extend the range of hypothesized outcome variables tested in Study 2.

STUDY 2: MEDICAL RESIDENTS

Study 2 provided the opportunity to replicate and extend some of the findings from Study 1 in a

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



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

* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$
*** $p < 0.001$

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

Model	$\chi^2(df)$	χ^2/df	$\Delta\ \chi^2(df)$	RMSEA	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	SRMR
1. With mediation	6.58(2)*	3.29	—	0.10	0.99	0.99	0.02
2. Without mediation	23.72(2)**	11.86	17.14	0.22	0.92	0.92	0.08

Notes: RMSEA = Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. CFI = Comparative Fit Index. TLI(NNFI) = Tucker Lewis Index or Non-Normed Fit Index. SRMR = Standardized Root Mean Square Residual.

* $p < 0.05$

** $p < 0.01$

different sample with different characteristics (in terms of age, gender, education, industry, and geographic location).

Respondents and Procedure

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

Measures

Perceived exploitative employee–organizational relationships, anger and hostility, and shame and guilt were measured at Time 1 (α = .95, .88, and .86, respectively). The outward-focused outcomes of revenge, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions were measured at Time 2 (with α = .96, .84, and .88, respectively), using the same scales described previously.

Burnout. Burnout was measured at Time 2 using 16 items comprising the Oldenburg Burnout Inventory, a sample item being "There are days when I feel tired before I arrive at work." Responses ranged

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

Independent Variable		Mediator Variable		Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	*SE*	*P*
PERs	→	Anger and hostility	→	Psychological withdrawal	–0.04	–0.13	0.04	0.09	0.336
PERs	→	Shame and guilt	→	Revenge	–0.02	–0.09	0.03	0.07	0.384
PERs	→	Shame and guilt	→	Work engagement	0.01	–0.09	0.12	0.12	0.739
PERs	→	Shame and guilt	→	Turnover intentions	0.24	–0.25	0.74	0.08	0.303

Note: PERs = Perceived exploitative employee–organization relationships.

from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") ($\alpha = .89$).

Employee silence. Employee silence was measured at Time 2 using five items adapted by Tangirala and Ramanujam (2008) from Van Dyne et al.'s (2003) employee silence scale, a sample item being "I chose to remain silent when I had concerns about [my hospital]." Responses ranged from 1 ("never") to 5 ("very often"), with an $\alpha = .90$.

Our control variables, age and gender, did not correlate with PERs ($r = -.11$, n.s. and $r = .11$, n.s., respectively) so were not controlled in the analysis.

Results

The descriptive statistics and correlations of the Study 2 variables are reported in Table 7.

In this study we continued to test the hypotheses via SEM using AMOS software (Arbuckle, 2012), version 21.0. The indirect effects were also tested using the previous bootstrapping technique (Preacher & Hayes, 2004).

The β coefficient results of the structural model are shown in Figure 2. As expected, those who perceived their employer to be exploitative were significantly more likely to report anger and hostility (Hypothesis 1) ($\beta = .76$, CI [.60, .84], $p < .01$) and shame and guilt (Hypothesis 2) ($\beta = .36$, CI [.34, .41], $p < .01$). Furthermore, anger and hostility partially mediated the relationship between perceived exploitation and the outward-focused revenge (Hypothesis 3) ($\beta = .14$, CI [.07, .20], $p < .01$), turnover intentions (Hypothesis 5) ($\beta = .25$, CI [.12, .38], $p < .01$), and organizational commitment (Hypothesis 6) ($\beta = -.16$, CI [–.21, –.12], $p < .01$). We also found that shame and guilt partially mediated the relationship between perceived exploitation and inward-focused burnout (Hypothesis 7) ($\beta = .46$, CI [.28, .62], $p < .01$) and employee silence (Hypothesis 8) ($\beta = .63$, CI [.43, .85], $p < .01$). A comparison between a mediated and nonmediated model (shown in Table 8) revealed that the model with mediators provided a significantly better fit for the data than did the model without mediators, in support of the hypothesized partial mediation effects.

Following an SEM robustness test we found no evidence of cross-over results. As shown in Table 9, outward-focused emotions were not associated with the inward-focused outcomes, and the inward-focused emotions were not associated with the outward-focused outcomes. This replicates Study 1 and provides additional confidence in our theorizing, suggesting that the results are not a consequence of capitalizing on common method variance.

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

Discussion

Study 2 partially replicated and extended the findings of Study 1. As in Study 1, the direct relationships between perceived exploitation and the emotions of anger and hostility, and shame and guilt, and the indirect effect of perceived exploitation on employee revenge and turnover intentions through these emotions, were supported. Likewise, it appears that respondents tended to report the more outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility rather than inward-focused shame and guilt. Here, too, this finding may be the result of employees' under-reporting shame and guilt, or this may be broadly characteristic of the samples in this study. The

TABLE 7
Descriptive Statistics and Correlations for Study 2

Variable	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Perceived exploitative relationships	3.25	1.36							
2. Anger and hostility	3.08	1.56	0.79**						
3. Shame and guilt	2.37	0.47	0.44**	0.46**					
4. Revenge	1.30	0.61	0.35**	0.33**	0.31**				
5. Turnover Intentions	2.34	1.49	0.52**	0.60**	0.44**	0.35**			
6. Organizational Commitment	3.22	0.61	–0.62**	–0.61**	–0.40**	–0.32**	–0.49**		
7. Burnout	2.81	0.60	0.52**	0.57**	0.65**	0.35**	0.60**	–0.57**	
8. Employee silence	2.47	0.76	0.27**	0.24**	0.46**	0.08	0.20**	–0.19*	0.40**

Note: $n = 139$.
* $p < 0.05$
** $p < 0.01$

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

Model	$\chi^2(df)$	χ^2/df	$\Delta\ \chi^2(df)$	RMSEA	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	SRMR
1. With Mediation	70.14(20)*	3.51	—	0.14	0.89	0.85	0.09
2. Without Mediation	438.24(76)*	5.76	368 (56)	0.19	0.55	0.52	0.18

* $p < 0.05$

replication of the findings in a markedly different sample from Study 1 supports the generalizability of the findings; perceptions of exploitation are present among men and women, among those with higher education and those with limited education, among those with more and with less prestigious jobs, and across different cultures and countries. This study also extended Study 1 by uncovering the indirect effect of perceived exploitation on organizational commitment, burnout, and silence and by a time separation of the measurements in order to attenuate common method bias and to lend additional support to our theorizing. Moreover, the outward-focused emotions of anger and hostility explain the outward-focused outcomes, and the inward-focused emotions of shame and guilt explain the inward-focused outcomes and not vice versa, supporting our model and the importance of discrete emotions in understanding subsequent attitudinal and behavioral consequences.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

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

Theoretical Contributions

The findings presented here contribute to several literature streams. First, we provide a complementary perspective to that provided in the industrial relations and sociology literature on the conceptualization and empirical investigation of exploitation. We offer a conceptualization of exploitation that goes beyond underpayment of tangible earnings (Sakamoto & Kim, 2010) to include a broader set of treatments by the organization. In contrast to the focus on a particular category of employees—migrants—we found reports of exploitation across

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

Independent Variable		Mediator Variable		Parameter	Estimate	Lower	Upper	*SE*	P
PERs	→	Anger and hostility	→	Burnout	0.05	–0.01	0.11	0.03	0.114
PERs	→	Anger and hostility	→	Employee silence	0.00	–0.07	0.08	0.05	0.938
PERs	→	Shame and guilt	→	Revenge	0.03	–0.15	0.21	0.11	0.826
PERs	→	Shame and guilt	→	Turnover intentions	0.33	–0.06	0.72	0.24	0.189
PERs	→	Shame and guilt	→	Organizational commitment	–0.01	–0.15	0.16	0.09	0.978

Note: PERs = Perceived exploitative employee–organization relationships.

several jobs, industries, and socioeconomic strata, including highly educated professionals. Capturing individual-level perceptions of exploitation and its consequences acts as a counterbalance to the overemphasis in the sociological literature on exploitation as a structural condition, and in organizational behavior literature on greater organizational performance and efficiency. Here, we demonstrated across a range of settings that employees' perceptions that their organizations are exploiting them is far from an historical anomaly, even in the countries sampled here (United States, United Kingdom, and Israel), which have regulated employment protection. Whether exploitation is something employees know they must suffer temporarily to achieve their career goals (as for our studied medical residents), whether it is a feature of markets over which employees feel neither they nor their employers exert much control (as for our construction workers), or whether it is designed into relationships in which workers are highly dependent (such as contractors or gig economy workers), perceptions of exploitation are real and are associated with emotional reactions, which can explain a diverse array of worker reactions that have long been negatively associated with organizational performance. While our studies focused on "traditional" employees, future research might address perceptions of organizational exploitation among contractors, or temporary or migrant workers, and also in settings where perceptions of exploitation may not be expected or visible. Further, we studied only employee attitudes and intentions; although these have been shown to be predictors of employee actions, future research should seek to extend the study of perceived organizational exploitation to its effects on employee actions.

Second, our findings contribute to the increasing research attention to emotions at work, drawing on research in psychology that has found that the current distinctions in the organizational behavior literature between moods and discrete emotions are not viable. We would expect that negative assessments, such as being in an exploitative organizational relationship, would foster even stronger emotional reactions than the more frequently studied positive experiences at work, and so suggest that the role of emotions is particularly important to the study of employees' negative workplace experiences. Here, we drew on affective events theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) and proposed that perceived exploitation would lead to outwardly and inwardly focused emotions that could account for the different effects of perceived organizational exploitation on employee reactions that have documented negative implications for employees and their organizations. Few studies have examined the influence of emotional reactions to how one is treated by one's organization, and the few that have have stressed the outward-focused emotions (Barclay, et al., 2005; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007). We demonstrated the importance of inward-focused emotions, and found that the inward-focused emotions, although less frequently reported by the studied employees, nevertheless did explain employee burnout, silence, and psychological withdrawal. This work suggests a need to revisit much of the earlier research on constructs central to organizational behavior research, such as turnover intentions, organizational commitment, silence, and withdrawal, and view them as not just cognitive assessments but also as emotionally driven ones.

The findings that shame and guilt were less frequently reported than anger and hostility in both studies also suggests a need to further explore the underlying cause of these differing emotional reactions. One potential explanation is that shame and guilt are more cognitively complex than other basic emotions, such as anger, because they require the presence of self-consciousness and self-awareness (Tracy & Robins, 2004) and are consequently less common. Another possibility is the influence of characteristics specific to these samples. For instance, Mosquera, Manstead, and Fischer (2000) found cultural differences in the tendency to report shame. Future research might move beyond studying one emotion at a time and look at why people may have differing emotional reactions to their workplaces.

Third, our findings deepen our understanding of the consequences of negative employee–organization relationships by extending our knowledge beyond what is known (e.g., Gibney et al., 2009) to include emotional reactions and their effects on attitudinal and behavioral intentions. Nonetheless, the associations found here, while important, do not exhaust the range of potential effects of exploitative employee–organization relationships. In finding support for all of the hypothesized relationships (except for revenge, which was found in Study 2 but was a nonsignificant trend in Study 1) between perceived exploitative organizations and diverse employee reactions, the view that perceived exploitation can yield a potentially large range of attitudinal and behavioral intentions is reinforced. This is important, because it suggests that perceived exploitation can not only impact the strength of

employee reactions, but also foster different types of reactions with different consequences. As Rozin and Royzman (2001: 296) stated, "negative entities are more varied, yield more complex conceptual representations and engage a wider response repertoire." Undeniably, the reactions to perceived exploitation found here vary in their degree of outwardly directed (e.g., revenge, turnover intentions, and organizational commitment) or inwardly directed (e.g., employee burnout, silence, and psychological withdrawal) harm, but all potentially have an impact on individuals' well-being and organizational performance (Vandenberghe, Bentein, & Stinglhamber, 2004). We hope this work can spur additional research on the important problem of the consequences of organizational exploitation of workers.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

A primary limitation of these studies is common methods bias (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), which we addressed in several ways. First, common method bias produced by item context, such as order effects and priming effects, was mitigated in all three studies by counterbalancing the question order. Second, the effect of self-report bias was alleviated through a temporal separation of measurements of the independent and dependent variables in Study 2, and testing the alternative claim that all emotions mediated all relationships. In addition, we found that emotions were associated with the predicted attitudes and behavioral intentions, and not the ones we did not predict, which would not have been the case if common method bias was driving the results. Finally, we reran the SEM tests in Studies 1 and 2 including a common latent factor, and found that common method bias did not significantly impact the results.

Another limitation pertains to generalizability, which was addressed by using distinct studies sampling a variety of employees and industries. The largely consistent results across the range of sampled occupations and industries provides some confidence in the generalizability of the findings. A third potential limitation is the three months separating the measurement points in Study 2. This was chosen to manage attrition rates, as many of the medical residents would be moving from their residencies to fellowships or permanent posts in the near future.

A promising future line of research would be to study the evolution of PERs. Do such perceptions develop gradually over time, as positive employee–organizational relationships do (Labianca & Brass, 2006)? Alternatively, do they develop through a much faster process via a "Popeye" effect (McLean Parks & Kidder, 1994), or a "phase-shift" (Lind, 2001), in which one event is so extreme, or accumulated injustices or wrongdoings reach such a threshold, that they lead to an abrupt change in cognition and behavior? Further, are certain employers' approaches to their employee relationships, such as quasi-spot contracts or under-investment in employees (Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997), more likely to foster employee perceptions of exploitation? Further, the early theorists proposed that exploitation is the result of structures of employment or asymmetric dependence (Marx, 1932/1970). However, if such asymmetry is highly institutionalized and normative, it may not result in employees' perceptions of exploitation. In addition, certain jobs may be more susceptible to exploitation than others, and we selected our settings because we had reason to believe that we would find perceptions of exploitative relationships there. Those working in the gig economy, such as contract workers (Pearce, 1993) and migrant workers (Wilkinson, 2014), are an increasing proportion of the workforce. While many of these workers may welcome the related freedom and autonomy, others may feel they have no choice but to take these jobs without security or predictable earnings. We encourage future research to explore whether such workers do perceive themselves to be exploited to the same extent (or more so) than the employees sampled here, and what the potentially detrimental consequences are for them and their organizations. Supervisors may also play a role in the development of perceived organizational exploitation. Prior research has found that supportive supervisors contribute to a positive perception of the employee–organization relationship and perceived organizational support (Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006). Future research could explore whether the converse holds true: Do employees generalize from an exploitative supervisor to perceiving their organization as exploitative?

Future research could also examine buffers to the development of PERs, such as the attraction of the work itself—whether it is buildings that will stand for decades, or saving lives. These employees may hold professional obligations that they can separate from how they are treated by their organizations, or that may mitigate their reactions to an exploitative relationship. After all, employees with a sense of calling are willing to make sacrifices in favor of their chosen line of work to pursue their passion (see Bunderson and Thompson, 2009).

Although we focused on emotions to explain the consequences of PERs, additional explanations could include depletion of resources and thwarted psychological needs. Being in an exploitative relationship is likely to provoke a series of energy-consuming cognitive processes (sense-making and rumination), thus leading to resource depletion that, in turn, affects employee behavior. Perceived exploitation could also thwart an individual's needs, such as a need for control, as it challenges the contingencies between one's actions and outcomes (Glass & Carver, 1980), leading to negative employee responses.

Finally, we examined several behavioral consequences of perceived exploitation, though others can be explored. Cohen, Blake and Goodman (2016) found that turnover intentions and actual turnover are distinct, and have distinct predictors. While we found that perceived exploitation predicts turnover intentions, in the future researchers could examine whether such intentions translate into action. Perceived exploitation may also have adverse health outcomes for employees, borne out by their feelings of powerlessness, normlessness, and social isolation (Dean, 1961). Siegrist (1996), Siegrist, Peter, Junge, Cremer, and Seidel (1990), and Seigrist, Wege, Pühlhofer, and Wahrendorf (2009) found support for adverse health effects when rewards from the organization fall short of employees' perceptions of their contributions. Such potential personal consequences of exploitation also help expand the field of organizational behavior beyond its dominance by organization-serving research. Lastly, mobilization, social movements and collective action have been traditionally tied to exploitation (Brewer, 1987), and considering the role that perceived exploitation plays in such efforts may be a fruitful path for future research.

Practical Implications

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

CONCLUSIONS

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

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APPENDIX A
SCALE DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Scale development is based on two studies (with the validation study presented in the paper). We first generated items for the pool of potential scale items, employing a snowball sample of working professionals. We then conducted a content validity assessment using a student sample to eliminate conceptually inconsistent items. Finally, we assessed the psychometric properties of the perceived exploitative employee–organizational relationships scale on a sample of construction workers (reported in the main body).

Study A1: Item Generation and Scale Development

Scale items were generated using a mixed-methods approach because although a theoretically grounded conceptual definition exists, there was limited empirical knowledge of the subject (Hinkin, 1995, 1998). The deductive items were generated based on our definition of PERs, such that the items captured at least one of the main characteristics of the definition: a *perception* of an *intent* to take advantage of others to the *benefit of the organization*.

In addition, an open-ended questionnaire was administered electronically to 10 working professionals employed in different professions (e.g., lawyer, banker) using a snowball technique that generated 124 exploitative incidents and was stopped when saturation was reached. Respondents were asked to reply to two open-ended questions: "In your opinion, what constitutes an exploitative relationship between the organization and its employees?" and "Give an example or examples of situations in which you think your organization exploited you or your colleagues?" Of the respondents, 60% were male and the mean age was 40 (SD = 7.64). Participants had been employed in their jobs for an average of 8.25 years (SD = 5.29). We performed a content analysis on the 124 incidents of exploitation provided by the respondents following procedures recommended by Hinkin (1995), and categorized each incident based on the type of benefit yielded to the organization. The incidents of exploitation gathered from the working professionals' sample were then converted into items, while keeping the wording intelligible, avoiding double-barreled statements, and avoiding reverse-scored items (Hinkin, 1998). We obtained 39 items from the researcher-generated inductive and executive-generated deductive approaches combined, and chose a 7-point response scale to allow for greater response variability.

Study A2: Content Validity Assessment

The second scale development study consisted of an item-sort task, conducted to assess content validity (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991; Hinkin, 1998) so as to eliminate conceptually inconsistent and repetitive items. Two independent panels, one expert panel of five graduate students studying employment relations and organizational behavior in a large U.K. university, and 14 undergraduate and graduate students in a variety of fields from a large U.S. university, were recruited. Of the respondents, 58% (n = 11) were female, and the mean age was 23.9 (SD = 2.88).

Respondents were provided with construct definitions and the corresponding scale items and asked to categorize each item with its best matching construct. We included

perceived organizational support, psychological contract breach, distributive injustice and perceived organizational obstruction, as well as PERs. Although some constructs are defined positively and others negatively, we advised respondents that these constructs can range from high to low, and that some measures included reverse-worded items.

All measures were on a 1–7 "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" scale, except for distributive justice that used a 1–5 scale. We measured perceived organizational support using Eisenberger et al.'s (1997) 8-item short version. We measured psychological contract breach using a 5-item global measure (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). We measured distributive justice with a 4-item scale by Skarlicki, Folger and Tesluk (1999). We measured perceived organizational obstruction using a 5-item scale developed by Gibney et al. (2009). We used the proportion of substantive agreement (PSA, the proportion of respondents that assigned an item to the posited construct), and the substantive validity coefficient (CSV, which reveals whether an item is unintentionally tapping into another construct by assessing the extent to which an item was assigned to its intended construct more than to any other construct) (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991).

The CSV cut-off was obtained via a test of statistical significance (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991), according to which the critical value of .5 is used to determine which items should be deleted. The test is binomial, such that the null and alternative hypotheses are: Hypothesis 0: $P(a) < .5$; Hypothesis 1: $P(a) > .50$, whereby PSA is the probability that the measure is assigned to its posited construct (Anderson & Gerbing, 1991). We found that $m = 14$ (at 14 the probability of the number of correct assignments is smaller than .05). The formula for calculating the critical value for CSV is $(2m/N) - 1 = (2 \times 14/19) - 1 = .47$. Thus, any item with a CSV value larger than .47 is statistically significant. Therefore, items with PSAs larger than .75 *and* CSVs larger than .47 were retained (Hinkin, 1995). The resulting scale consisted of 14 items (presented in Table A1), all of which were significantly assigned to the PERs construct alone, and not the conceptually similar perceived organizational support, psychological contract breach, distributive injustice or perceived organizational obstruction.

Study A3: Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Internal Consistency Assessment

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

Discussion: Scale Construction Studies

The scale development studies suggest that employees do experience exploitation of varying levels and that the PERs scale is stable and reliable. Further evidence of construct validity is provided in the validation study and in Studies 1 and 2 via the successful tests of its expected role in the theoretical nomological network of the hypotheses tested in the body of this paper.

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

TABLE A1
Scale Items with their PSA and CSV Values

Perceived Exploitative Employee–Organization Relationship Items	PSA	CSV
1. As long as I work in my organization, it will keep taking advantage of me.	0.84	0.74
2. My organization will never stop using me.	0.95	0.89
3. This is not the first time my organization has taken advantage of me.	1.00	1.00
4. My organization takes advantage of the fact that I need this job.	0.89	0.79
5. My organization forced me into a contract that unilaterally benefits the organization.	0.79	0.68
6. I am a modern-day slave.	0.89	0.79
7. My organization mistreats me because I am dependent on it.	0.84	0.74
8. My organization uses labor contract loopholes to avoid adequate compensation.	0.79	0.58
9. My organization uses the fact that I need this job to avoid compensating me adequately.	0.95	0.89
10. My organization intentionally undercompensates me because it knows that I am desperate for this job.	0.95	0.89
11. My organization expects me to be available to work at any time without extra pay.	0.79	0.58
12. My organization doesn't provide me with job security as it wants to be able to fire me at its convenience.	0.84	0.79
13. My organization uses my ideas for its own personal benefit without acknowledging me for them.	0.84	0.79
14. My organization doesn't care if it harms me, as long as it benefits from my work.	0.84	0.74

Note: PSA = proportion of substantive agreement, CSV = substantive validity coefficient.

TABLE A2
Comparison of Measurement Models in Construction Workers' Sample

Factors	$\chi^2(df)$	χ^2/df	RMSEA	CFI	TLI (NNFI)	SRMR
1. Factor	134.62(65)*	2.07	0.07	0.98	0.96	0.03
2. Factors	401.22(76)*	5.28	0.14	0.90	0.88	0.06
3. Factors	380.89(74)*	5.15	0.13	0.91	0.89	0.06
4. Factors	380.92(74)*	5.15	0.13	0.90	0.89	0.06

Note: $n = 219$.
* $p < 0.05$