Hypothesis 1a: Punishment consistent with team rules will be perceived as more fair to the punished athlete than will conditional punishment.

Hypothesis 1b: Punishment consistent with team rules will be perceived as more fair to teammates than will conditional punishment.

Hypothesis 1c: Consistent punishment will be more likely to deter future violations by the punished athlete than will conditional punishment.

Hypothesis 1d: Consistent punishment will be more likely to deter future violations by teammates than will conditional punishment.

Hypothesis 2: Punishment for severe violations will be perceived as more fair to the punished athlete than will conditional punishment.

Hypothesis 3a: Severe punishment will be more likely to deter future rule violations by the punished athlete than will punishment of moderate severity.

Hypothesis 3b: Severe punishment will be more likely to deter future rule violations by teammates than will punishment of moderate severity.

Hypothesis 4a: Automatic procedures will be perceived as less fair to the punished athlete than will group procedures.

Hypothesis 4b: Automatic procedures will be perceived as less fair to teammates than will group procedures.

Introduction

Organizational Justice:
- Organizational justice concerns employee perceptions of whether organizational practices are fair or unfair.
- Classically viewed as a two-component model consisting of distributive and procedural justice.
- Perceptions of organizational justice influence attitudes, emotions, and behavior.

Punishment and Perceptions Justice:
- Punishment is used by organizations to reduce undesirable behavior in the workplace while reinforcing accepted behavior.
- Punishment can deter misconduct in both the punished individual and observers.
- Justice perceptions related to punishment focus on severity, appropriateness, and consistency.
- Inconsistent use of punishment may lead to perceptions of unfairness and preferential treatment leading to negative employee emotions, attitudes, and behavior.

Method and Analysis

Participants:
- n = 204 intercollegiate athletes (187 female, 17 male, M_{age} = 19.7, SD = 1.39) recruited from an intercollegiate athletic tournament.

Procedure:
- Participants were provided with a 13-item questionnaire, and were asked to recall a critical incident regarding a punishment decision made for their team.
- Items asked participants to describe the violation, punishment, and who made the punishment decision in an open-ended format.
- Violations and punishments were coded according to a calibration study conducted previously. Consistency was coded as either (2 = Consistent, 3 = Inconsistent).
- Participants then responded to 7 items addressing perceptions of procedural and distributive justice to the player, team, and fans, as well as if they believed the punishment would deter future misconduct by the individual and teammates.

Results

Hypotheses

Analysis:
- A 2 (Violation Severity: moderate vs. severe) x 2 (Punishment Severity: moderate vs. severe) x 2 (Consistency of Punishment: consistent vs. not consistent) x 3 (Punishment Decision Maker: team captains/teammates vs. coach vs. both) factorial ANOVA was conducted.

Inclusion Criteria:
- Due to the number of comparisons conducted, a Bonferroni correction was used to adjust the studywise error rate. To meet inclusion criteria, effects had to be significant at the .007 level.

- In order to ensure results were also practically significant, only effects which accounted for > 5% (r^2 > .05) of the total variance were retained.

Discussion

- Full support for Hypotheses 1a and 1b
- Partial support for Hypothesis 2
- No support for Hypotheses 1d, 3a, 3b, 4a, 4b
- Results suggest that the consistency of punishment with team policy has a significant influence on justice perceptions.

References


