

REFLECTIVE ESSAY

My intellectual curiosity about workplace phenomena began as an undergraduate. With a major in psychology and a minor in management, I was exposed to the related topics of social psychology and organizational behavior. After graduating, I worked for a couple of years in order to gain firsthand exposure to organizational life, and this exposure only heightened my desire to study and understand the underpinnings of employee well-being and success. That desire led me to the University of Florida, where I completed my graduate studies, and finally to Michigan State University, where I served as an Assistant Professor from 2007 to 2011 and have served as an Associate Professor (with tenure) since 2011.

My scholarly work to date falls within two interconnected streams: the role of mood and emotion (or affective processes) in the workplace, and the role of organizational justice (or fairness) in the workplace. In the simplest terms, my research focuses on understanding what makes for a “good” or “bad” workday, as well as uncovering the consequences of “good” and “bad” days for employees and their organizations.

For example, regarding moods and emotions, I have conducted numerous studies on their predictors and outcomes in work settings. These studies, which track workers in field settings over a brief period of time (e.g., a three-week period) and collect multiple measurements for each worker, have revealed many key findings. They have illuminated day-to-day factors eliciting positive and negative moods, such as work events, interpersonal treatment from supervisors, attempts to control emotional displays to please customers, perceptions of work family conflict, sleep quality the previous night, and engagement in helping behaviors. They also have illuminated day-to-day consequences of experiencing positive and negative moods, such as help

versus harm of coworkers, withdrawal from work duties, assessments of satisfaction and conflict at work and at home, and the extent to which managers treat their employees fairly. Importantly, these studies have shown how the above relationships vary in strength according to various enduring characteristics of employees, such as their gender or personality.

I also have extended my work on mood and emotion to consider the ways in which coworkers might feel, at a collective level, toward a given employee, and how those collective feelings might influence the treatment that employee receives. For example, I have examined what makes an employee more or less “popular” among his/her peers and how that popularity affords the employee advantageous treatment, not only from that employee’s peers, but also from that employee’s supervisor. I also examined the give and take of helpful and harmful behaviors among social networks of employees, with that give and take predicated on the emotions that a given employee elicits during interactions with his/her coworkers.

Regarding organizational justice or fairness, I have conducted numerous studies examining the consequences of being treated unfairly at work (e.g., stealing), including the identification of individual differences influencing the strength of reactions to unfair treatment. These studies have revealed that an employee’s personality can affect sensitivity to mistreatment, with some employees being much more likely, and other employees being much less likely, to perceive and react to instances of mistreatment.

The importance of fairness to employee well-being led me to question why injustices occur in the first place. In attempting to answer this question, I examined whether characteristics of employees, such as their charisma, are associated with the fairness of the treatment they receive. I also published a theoretical model explicating the motives that managers may have when behaving fairly or unfairly toward subordinates, and I published a subsequent empirical

investigation that supported many of my theoretical model's propositions. Finally, in an integration of my work tracking employees' well-being over a brief period of time with my work on organizational justice, I ask the question as to whether managers who are "consistent jerks" are less stressful to work for than managers who are interpersonally fair one moment and interpersonally unfair the next (answer: they are).

To facilitate my research, I have been a principal investigator or co-principal investigator for two funded grants that totaled \$500,000, and I am a co-principal investigator on a grant submission currently being reviewed by the NSF. Given the increasing importance of grants to various stakeholders of MSU, I plan to continue to focus on grants as part of my scholarly activities.

In reflecting upon the preceding work, as well as work in which I currently am engaged and plan to be engaged in the future, I see myself as a scholar who has developed (and will continue to develop) a reputation for illuminating employee well-being by uncovering the day-to-day role of mood and emotion in the workplace as well as factors driving the fair and unfair treatment of employees. To date, these particular areas have been understudied, and thus my research has been at the relative forefront.

My scholarly record thus far demonstrates that I have made good progress with respect to developing a reputation. In terms of quantity, to date I have authored or coauthored 30 peer-reviewed articles (22 of which would be considered published in "top-tier" outlets) and two book chapters. I also have been a part of 31 presentations at academic conferences. In terms of impact, my work has been cited over 1,500 times in Web of Science and over 3,500 times in Google Scholar. For my research, I have received several early to mid-career awards, including the Academy of Management's Cummings Scholarly Achievement Award (2015), the Society for

Industrial and Organizational Psychology's Distinguished Early Career Contributions Award (2014), and the Broad College's Withrow Endowed Emerging Scholar Award (2011). I derive a great deal of enjoyment from the overall process of research and collaboration, and thus I plan to continue this level of productivity.

In addition to making positive contributions through research, I have striven to contribute through service. Externally, since 2013 I have been an Associate Editor for one of the most prestigious journals in my field (*Academy of Management Journal*). I also serve (or have served) on the editorial boards of prestigious journals (e.g., *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*), and I frequently review for other journals. My time as an Associate Editor has also provided me with opportunities to participate in workshops at various universities (e.g., Singapore Management University, Imperial College, London) on how to publish, and I have enjoyed these outreach activities.

Internally, since 2012 I have served as the management department's doctoral program director and representative for the college's doctoral programs committee. The mentoring of doctoral students is an enriching aspect of my job, and I take every opportunity to help with their training. Indeed, 11 of my publications are with current or former MSU students. I have chaired two students' dissertations, who both placed in institutions classified as RU/VH, and I have served on the dissertation committees of 10 other students, including students outside of my department. Beyond my efforts with the doctoral program, I have taken part in a variety of other activities that support the college, such as being a member of the first inaugural Broad Integrative Fellows Program and serving on faculty hiring committees.

With regards to teaching, since 2007 I have been the lead instructor for MGT 315, a core undergraduate class that consists of nearly 500 students each semester. In that setting, I have

sought ways to increase student engagement, through, for example, the creation of group activities in recitation sections that apply knowledge gained from the large lecture. I also have taught smaller sections of MGT 315 in the summer, and I successfully launched an online version of my course for distance students. Beyond undergraduates, I have taught a doctoral seminar on research methods each spring since 2012, and I have taught in the executive development program when opportunities have presented themselves. Each audience has commented favorably on my instruction; indeed, many students from my research methods seminar have remarked that mine is the most useful class they took in their doctoral program.

Overall, as I have transitioned from student to Assistant Professor to Associate Professor, and as I contemplate my future, my goal is to continue to broaden the ways in which I can contribute to the department, college, and the university as a whole. This not only includes continuing to produce impactful research at a high level, but it also encompasses an increasing focus on grant writing, recruitment, training, and placement of doctoral students, the incorporation of current, innovative teaching methods, and service both internally in order to help the department and college fulfill their broader missions as well as externally in order to help the field of management as a whole.

In thinking about my life as a scholar up to this point, I feel that the path that brought me to where I am currently is relatively clear, as is the path that I will take in the future. I have grown tremendously as a scholar since my initial interest in organizational behavior was sparked, and Michigan State University has played a significant role in my intellectual development. It has been a great partnership over the years, and it is one that I hope will continue for many years to come.