ADDED BENEFITS: THE LINK BETWEEN WORK-LIFE BENEFITS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR

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Countering arguments that employee benefits are unrelated to both worker performance and perceived organizational support, I developed and estimated a model that links work-life benefits to organizational citizenship behavior directly, through obligations incurred as a result of social exchange, and indirectly, through enhanced perceptions of organizational support. Significant, positive relationships were found between workers' assessments of the usefulness of work-life benefits and three measures of organizational citizenship. Although perceived benefit usefulness contributed to perceived organizational support, perceived organizational support did not in turn foster organizational citizenship as measured in this study.

Adopting work-family benefits, such as supports for child care and elder care, has largely been viewed as a practical response to the increasing proportion of women in the work force. Osterman's (1995) study of a representative sample of U.S. firms revealed, however, that the implementation of work-family benefits has little to do with whether companies rely heavily on female labor or experience problems with absenteeism and turnover. Instead, the adoption of work-family programs is better accounted for by companies' use of "high-commitment work systems" that depend on worker input and loyalty for success. Osterman pointed out that these new work systems are "potentially linked to work/family benefits because, for the new work systems to function, they require high levels of employee commitment to the enterprise and depend on employee initiative and employee ideas" (1995: 685). The potential may be there, but research has yet to address the issue of whether work-family supports have the added benefit of promoting active participation and initiative on the part of individual employees.

In fact, according to traditional theories of organizational behavior, work-family benefits, and benefits in general for that matter, should not affect the performance of workers. At best, benefits are considered extrinsic job characteristics that may pro-

mote job satisfaction but not job performance. At worst, benefits are likened to organizational "snake oil," used to placate workers who might otherwise push for changes in job design (Herzberg, 1968). Developments in social exchange theory, however, support the possibility that work-family benefits may promote employee participation and initiative; workers may feel obligated to exert "extra" effort in return for "extra" benefits. Moreover, advances in the conceptualization of organizational citizenship behavior help identify nontraditional aspects of performance most likely to show the effects of obligations incurred as a result of workers' experiences with available benefits.

In this article, I draw on developments in theory and practice to make the case for anticipating a relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and workers' experiences with what human resource professionals now call a work-life benefit package. Such a package includes typical workfamily benefits, such as supports for child care, and other benefits that support workers' personal wellbeing and professional development, such as a fitness center, psychological counseling, and tuition reimbursement. I estimate a model specifying how workers' experiences with work-life benefits may be related to organizational citizenship behavior with data from lower-level workers employed at a medium-sized manufacturing firm known for its generous benefit plan.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Advances in Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory identifies the conditions under which people feel obligated to reciprocate when they benefit from some person's, or some

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entity's, actions. These obligations are loosely defined and produce "balance sheets" that are not easily reconciled, thereby accounting for relationships that endure times of marked imbalance in the benefits accruing to exchange partners (Blau, 1964; Coleman, 1972; Emerson, 1976; Gouldner, 1960).

Scholars have recently revisited early writings on social exchange because of renewed interest in understanding and improving the quality of the relationship between workers and employers and in promoting types of performance—prosocial behavior, organizational citizenship behavior, and extrarole performance—that are not well explained by models of motivation based on the mechanisms of economic exchange (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Moorman, 1991; Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; VanDyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). These new efforts provide fresh evidence that the basic tenets of social exchange theory hold in the workplace, that "positive, beneficial actions directed at employees by the organization and/or its representatives contribute to the establishment of high quality exchange relationships that create obligations for employees to reciprocate in positive, beneficial ways" (Settoon et al., 1996: 219).

Moreover, these recent efforts address subtleties of the theory left unexamined in an earlier era. Most notably, several scholars have picked up on Gouldner's (1960) observation that complementarity, or a balance between the partners engaged in a social exchange, can be achieved when there is a currency of reciprocity with a similar, though not an identical, significance to both partners and each partner targets attempts to reciprocate toward the other partner. Studies based on these refined notions of complementarity have demonstrated two things: First, workers differentiate between multiple partners of exchange in the workplace—coworkers, supervisor, organization—and aim their efforts to reciprocate toward a particular partner; other exchange partners may benefit, but to a lesser extent (Becker, 1992; McNeely & Melingo, 1994; Moorman, 1991; Reichers, 1986). Second, the currency of exchange is different depending on the partner; workers tend to use different behaviors and attitudes to repay their obligations to their organizations versus their coworkers or supervisors (Moorman, 1991; Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997).

This line of inquiry suggests that, to the extent an expanded menu of employee benefits elicits the obligations of employees, efforts to reciprocate should be directed more at the organization than at coworkers or supervisors, because employee benefits are a matter of organizational policy. And the

nature of the reciprocation should be of similar significance to the organization. That is, employees should be motivated to give something extra back to their organization in return for extra benefits.

One subtlety of theories of social exchange that has not been incorporated in recent empirical work is Gouldner's (1960) caveat that although the norm of reciprocity is universal, it is not unconditional. He pointed out the importance of avoiding the "Pollyanna Fallacy," which suggests that all people will be thankful for well-intentioned actions and will invariably demonstrate their gratitude through acts of reciprocity. Instead, valued things have relative, but not absolute, value (Emerson, 1987; Gouldner, 1960). The same action can engender different obligations depending on the extent to which the individual targeted by the action values it. Thus, this tenet of social exchange theory indicates that a firm's employee benefits are not a constant, even when all employees are covered by the same plan, since workers may value the same benefits differently, subsequently incurring different obligations to the organization. Workers are especially likely to vary in how useful they find a benefit plan that includes work-life benefits both in terms of helping themselves personally and professionally and in terms of helping members of their families. The more useful workers find the extra benefits provided by a company, the more they should want to give something extra back to it.

Organizational Citizenship as the Currency of Reciprocity

The notion of giving something extra back to an organization fits well with research on nontraditional aspects of performance referred to in the literature generally as extrarole behavior and more specifically as organizational citizenship behavior (Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Schnake, 1991; Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983), prosocial behavior (cf. Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; George, 1991; Puffer, 1987), or spontaneous organizational behavior (George & Brief, 1992; Katz, 1964; Katz & Kahn, 1978).

According to George and Brief (1992), all of these types of extrarole behavior refer to the additional things people do at work that are beneficial to the organization but that individuals are not mandated to do. For example, workers choose throughout the day whether to help coworkers, to share insights on improvements, and in general, to do what is needed to help their organization perform smoothly and productively. Several researchers have argued that extrarole behavior is especially suitable material for reciprocity because workers have much discretion in performing it, whereas traditional, in-role

behaviors such as productivity are primarily a function of work processes and worker abilities (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Moorman, 1991; Organ, 1988). The proposition that nontraditional aspects of performance are the currency of reciprocity is supported by research indicating that although workers' attitudes about the workplace—satisfaction, perceived equity, and commitment—may be weakly related to productivity, they are strongly correlated with extrarole behaviors, at the organizational as well as the interpersonal level (see Organ and Ryan [1995] and Schnake [1991] for a review of this research).

Advances in the conceptualization of organizational citizenship behavior per se help pinpoint those extrarole behaviors most likely to show the effects of obligations incurred as a result of workers' experiences with work-life benefits. Drawing on earlier work by Graham (1991), Van Dyne, Graham, and Dienesch (1994) developed categories of organizational citizenship based on theories of civic citizenship and integrating frameworks from philosophy, political science, and social history. Their three categories, obedience, loyalty, and civic participation, make up what they called an "active citizenship syndrome" wherein workers are engaged in responsible workplace participation.

Van Dyne and her coauthors noted that "civic citizenship concerns the behaviors of individual citizens that have ramifications for the state, not interpersonal behaviors that have consequences for interpersonal relationships" (1994: 794). When applied to the workplace, the vantage point of civic citizenship leads to an emphasis on behavior that contributes to the larger organization. Thus, this conceptualization of citizenship helps identify behaviors that may best show the effects of workers' experiences with benefits because, as explained above, the resulting obligations should be targeted more at the organization than at coworkers and supervisors. Of special interest to this study is the category of civic participation that includes behaviors, such as attending nonrequired meetings and sharing ideas with others, that function to keep workers informed of organizational strategies and to engage them in efforts to improve the organization.

Hypothesis 1. The more useful workers find work-life benefits, the more likely they are to engage in citizenship behavior at both the organizational level (indicated by attending non-required meetings and submitting suggestions for improvement) and the individual level (assisting coworkers and supervisors with job responsibilities).

Hypothesis 2. Perceived benefit usefulness will be more strongly associated with organizationlevel citizenship behavior than with interpersonal citizenship behavior.

The Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

Scholars have suggested that the nature and strength of obligations incurred through a social exchange depend on the quality of the relationship between the partners in the exchange (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986; Van Dyne et al., 1994). This premise is supported by studies that identify a variety of attitudes and attributions that mediate the relationship between organizational citizenship behavior and its antecedents, including organizational fairness (Konovsky & Pugh, 1994; Moorman, 1991; Organ & Konovsky, 1989), commitment (Shore & Wayne, 1993), job satisfaction (Organ & Lingl, 1995; Moorman, 1991; Smith et al., 1983), and a covenantal relationship—one in which the worker identifies with the organization and holds similar values (Van Dyne et al., 1994). Konovsky and Pugh (1994) described these mediating variables as "macromotives" that provide the foundation for social exchange by setting the tone for the relationship between exchange partners.

One macromotive that seems especially relevant to understanding how workers' experiences with work-life benefits may affect their citizenship behavior is perceived organizational support. Studies by Eisenberger and his colleagues (e.g., Eisenberger et al., 1986; 1990) have indicated that workers tend to personify organizations, developing a general attitude concerning "the extent to which the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being" (Eisenberger et al., 1990: 51). Settoon and coauthors pointed out that "high levels of perceived organizational support are thought to create obligations within individuals to repay the organization" (1996: 220; emphasis added). And researchers investigating the effects of employer supports for workers' personal lives have speculated that work-family benefits can enhance workers' perceptions of organizational support (Grover & Crooker, 1995; Kossek, 1989).

The proposition that work-life benefits may contribute to perceived organizational support is at odds, however, with current conceptualizations based on signaling theory. Theorists have argued that an organization's actions enhance perceptions of organizational support to the extent they signal to a worker that he or she is particularly valued by the organization and that this only occurs when the action is both discretionary and directed at the individual worker

(Eisenberger et al., 1986; Wayne et al., 1997). Citing arguments developed by Shore and Shore (1995), Wayne and her colleagues went so far as to assert that "benefits available to all employees regardless of performance (e.g., retirement benefits) would not be associated with POS [perceived organizational support]" (1997: 88), presumably because they do not signal to the worker that he or she is particularly valued.

Research has yet to provide evidence, however, that workers' perceptions of organizational support are only sensitive to actions targeted specifically at them as individuals and are unaffected by organizational policies and practices targeted at them as members of a particular organizational constituency, such as workers who have caretaking responsibilities for children or for elderly parents. Benefits targeted to a particular group of workers could signal to the members of the group that the organization does indeed recognize and value their contributions. As argued earlier, workers are likely to vary in how useful they find a benefit package that includes work-life benefits; as a result, some workers are likely to feel better supported by the organization than are others. Thus, there is reason to suspect that workers' experiences with benefits are indeed related to how supportive they deem their organization.

The empirical evidence subsequently linking perceived organizational support to citizenship behavior is mixed. In a study of hospital workers, Settoon and colleagues (1996) found that perceived organizational support was unrelated to organizational citizenship behavior. But their measure captured citizenship behavior in terms of interpersonal helping. On the other hand, Wayne and colleagues (1997) found a strong relationship between perceived organizational support and supervisors' ratings of workers on an index that included both individual-level and organization-level measures of citizenship. And a study of manufacturing employees by Eisenberger and colleagues (1990) found that perceived organizational support was positively related to the constructiveness of anonymous suggestions for improving the organization. Thus, theoretical understandings and empirical evidence give reason to expect that enhanced perceptions of organizational support foster citizenship behavior, especially at the organizational level.

Hypothesis 3a. Perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between perceived benefit usefulness and organizational citizenship behavior. Hypothesis 3b. Perceived benefit usefulness will be positively associated with perceived organizational support.

Hypothesis 3c. Perceived organizational support, in turn, will be positively related to organizational citizenship behavior.

Hypothesis 3d. The mediating role of perceived organizational support will be stronger for organization-level citizenship behavior than for interpersonal citizenship behavior.

Control Variables

Scholars have been hesitant to acknowledge a causal relationship between worker attitudes and worker performance, searching for third factors that may render observed associations spurious (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Organ & Konovsky, 1989; Smith et al., 1983). Relationships between worker attitudes and different types of nontraditional performance such as citizenship behavior have proven more robust than relationships between worker attitudes and traditional types of performance (for a review of these studies, see Organ and Lingl [1995] or Schanke [1991]). Assessing alternative explanations for the relationships explicated in the hypotheses will contribute to this growing knowledge on the robustness of relationships linking worker attitudes-in this case, perceived benefit usefulness and perceived organizational support—to nontraditional performance.

Positional factors. One alternative explanation for an observed relationship between workers' experiences with work-life benefits and their citizenship behavior would be that an employee's position in an organization determines both her or his reactions to organizational policies and participation in the workplace (Rousseau, 1978). Van Dyne and her coauthors (1994) noted that social economic status is strongly related to participation because status tends to be associated with greater control over life conditions, the skills needed to participate, and a heightened sense of responsibility to contribute to the collective. Status is also likely to be related to workers' appraisals of work-life benefits because workers of different statuses are likely to vary in the resources they have available outside the workplace and in their ability to effectively use available benefits. Thus, it is desirable to assess whether relationships hold when taking into consideration characteristics of workers that indicate their status and position in an organization.

Extent of benefit use. According to the proposed model, it is workers' appraisals of how useful they find work-life benefits that drives their perceptions

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of organizational support and citizenship behavior. As explained above, social exchange theorists have argued that this relationship exists because the extent to which actions induce obligations depends on the value individuals attach to them. It may be, however, that it is more simply a matter of "the more you get, the more you give." Thus, a competing explanation is that the more benefits workers use, the more supportive they perceive the organization to be, and the more likely they are to participate in the workplace—regardless of how valuable they find the company's benefits.

Supervisor support. Another competing explanation is that it is not workers' experiences with work-life benefits per se that promote perceived organizational support and, ultimately, workplace participation, but workers' relationship with their supervisors. Although there may not be a causal relationship between the two, how useful workers find their benefits and how supportive they consider their supervisors to be are likely to be correlated, and both are likely to contribute to percepof organizational support. Wayne and colleagues (1997) found that perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange—one indicator of a high-quality worker-supervisor relationshipwere reciprocally correlated and were both in turn related to citizenship behavior. Thus, it is important to control for supervisor support when assessing the extent to which benefit usefulness contributes both to perceived organizational support and to citizenship behavior.

Past performance. The possibility of reverse causation is frequently lamented by researchers investigating the antecedents of organizational citizenship behavior (Moorman, 1991; Organ & Lingl, 1995; VanDyne et al., 1994). In this study, it is possible that the organization-level citizenship behaviors studied could have caused perceptions of organizational support and benefit usefulness rather than vice versa. Specifically, providing the opportunity to submit suggestions and to attend meetings on quality improvement could signal to workers that the organization cared about them. In this study, data on submitting suggestions and attending nonrequired meetings were gathered from administrative records two to three years after workers' experiences with benefits and the organization were assessed via a questionnaire. Thus, one cannot conclude that these later behaviors caused workers' earlier perceptions of benefits and the organization.

Nonetheless, it may be that earlier citizenship behavior, and earlier performance in general, helped establish workers' perceptions of the organization and its benefits. That is, the extent to which workers

were participating in change efforts and were reviewed favorably by their supervisors might have helped establish workers' perceptions of the supportiveness of the organization and its benefits at the time of the survey. In order to take into account the possibility that earlier performance and citizenship behavior caused workers' perceptions of the organization and its benefits, I controlled for both workers' supervisor ratings at the time of the survey and whether or not workers had submitted a suggestion for improvement during this earlier time period.

METHODS

Research Site

The site for this study was Fel-Pro, Inc., an engine gasket manufacturing firm located in the Midwest. It employed about 2,000 workers, none of whom were unionized. Fel-Pro has been named one of the ten best companies in America to work for (Levering & Moskowitz, 1993) and has been rated at the top of Working Mother's list of the most responsive companies. Data came from a questionnaire administered in 1991, from records of participation in a formal suggestion program (1990–91 and 1993–94), and from lists of attendance at lunchtime quality meetings during a six-month period in 1994. I connected the survey and administrative data by coding the surveys with a number assigned to workers selected for the study.

Sampling Procedures

Questionnaires were mailed to the homes of a random sample of 884 employees: 667 workers (424 blue-collar workers and 243 white-collar workers) and 217 supervisors and managers. Blue-collar workers, people of color, and women were oversampled. The study was conducted under the auspices of a university, and the questionnaires were returned directly there; moreover, the company sent a letter expressing support for the study to all workers.

Nonrespondents were contacted by telephone and mail to encourage their participation. All respondents were paid \$10 for returning their completed questionnaires; ten were randomly chosen to receive a \$50 gift certificate from a local grocery store. These efforts yielded an overall response rate of 67.9 percent.

For this article, the sample was narrowed to include only lower-level workers because the suggestion program and the lunchtime meetings targeted them. Supervisors and managers were encouraged to make recommendations through different chan-

nels; data from their surveys have been used to address issues of supervisor support (Hopkins, 1994) and variations in the use of benefits (Lambert, 1995, 1998). The survey response rate among lower-level workers was 64 percent, representing 428 individuals, of whom 191 were women, 237 were men, and 15 were part-time employees. The sample used in the analyses reported here includes the 325 full-time, lower-level employees (of whom 186 were men and 139 were women) who responded to the 1991 survey and were still with the company when the second round of performance data was collected in 1994-95. The loss of 88 employees between these two time periods is consistent with Fel-Pro's annual turnover rate of 10 to 12 percent.

Sample

The employees included in the sample ranged widely in occupation, from assembly-line workers and clerical workers to engineers and chemists. More generally, 52 percent were blue-collar factory workers, and 48 percent were white-collar office workers. On average, the respondents had 13 years of formal schooling and had been with the company 7.3 years. In terms of race and ethnicity, 13.5 percent were African American, 26.8 percent were Hispanic, 4.3 percent were Asian American, and 53.4 percent were Caucasian. Forty-two percent were women. The majority (72 percent) were married and had children (71 percent).

Organizational data were gathered on all those selected for the study (both nonrespondents and respondents). Analyses indicated that the response rates were significantly (p < .01) different for bluecollar workers in the factory (51.4 percent) and white-collar workers in the office (86.4 percent). Among office workers, the response rate did not vary significantly by race or gender. Among factory workers, the response rate for Caucasian men was 65.9 percent, and the response rates for African American and Hispanic men were only 44.9 percent and 39.4 percent, respectively. Among women working in the factory, Hispanics had a relatively low response rate (45.7 percent) when compared to Caucasians (64.7 percent) and African Americans (68.2 percent). Thus, the data underrepresent the experiences of blue-collar workers, especially Hispanic men and women and African American men.

Measures

Basic model components. Perceived benefit usefulness was assessed with four items developed for this study and designed to capture what the com-

pany's benefits had done to help a worker and his or her family. These items were developed from discussions with workers; existing measures of benefit satisfaction were too general to capture the themes that emerged from discussions. The items measure the extent to which the company's supports made it easier for workers to balance their work and family responsibilities, helped them through difficult times, provided them with benefits they could not otherwise afford, and helped their children do things they would not have been able to do otherwise.

Perceived organizational support was assessed with nine survey items from Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) ten-item index. The excluded item asks about help given by the company; it was dropped a priori because of its similarity to the concept of benefit usefulness. The resulting index reflects the extent to which workers believe the organization is committed to them, is proud of their accomplishments, and does its best for them.

Interpersonal helping was a four-item index that captures the frequency with which respondents said they helped their coworkers or supervisors with job responsibilities. The four items come from a measure developed by Organ and Konovsky (1989) and Smith et al. (1983). Other items on this index were excluded because they seemed more applicable to organization-level citizenship (for instance, attending events that contributed to the company's image); unfortunately, there were not enough items targeted specifically at the organization to also construct a self-report measure of organization-level citizenship.

Submission of suggestions was a dichotomous variable indicating whether respondents submitted any suggestions for process or product improvement during a two-year period (1993–94); the suggestions need not have been implemented. The actual number of suggestions was not used because the data were heavily skewed; about 47 percent of the respondents had not submitted any suggestions. Information on suggestions was gathered from administrative records tracking employee participation in a formal suggestion program.

Fel-Pro's suggestion program was a mature one, having been in operation since 1986, when workers were trained in total quality management techniques and methods. Participation had increased over the years to the point that the program received over 4,000 suggestions in 1992. Employees received a free lunch at the company cafeteria every time a suggestion was accepted for implementation and \$150 when five suggestions had been accepted. Those submitting suggestions could win

tickets to local events through raffles held throughout the year.

Attendance at quality meetings was a dichotomous variable indicating whether workers attended at least one meeting during a six-month period in 1994. Again, the actual number of meetings attended was not used because data were heavily skewed—about 59 percent of the respondents had not attended a meeting. Information on attendance came from sheets on which workers signed in as they entered the room where the meeting was held. The lunchtime quality meetings were introduced in 1993 to provide an opportunity for continuing education in quality methods and a forum for employee presentations on quality-related topics. Considerable organizational effort went into recruiting participants for these meetings, although workers told us that they did not feel singled out to attend. These meetings occurred during workers' regularly scheduled breaks. Participants brought their own lunches; the company provided soft drinks and cookies. Small gifts were raffled off at the end of the meeting.

Control variables. Observations of and discussions with employees and managers suggested that four qualities were related to the status of lower-level workers in this particular company: their race (Hispanic vs. Caucasian, African American vs. Caucasian), gender, seniority (measured in years), and whether they worked in the factory or in the office (blue-collar vs. white-collar). Relevant data were obtained from administrative records.

Benefit use was measured by summing the number of benefits respondents indicated that they or anyone in their immediate families had used during their tenure at the company. Respondents were asked about the following 20 benefits: an on-site child care center, elder care referral service, emergency care for a child, emergency care for an adult, tuition reimbursement, income tax service, wellness massage, fitness center, subsidized sports club membership, weight loss program, smoke cessation program, legal information service, psychological counseling, drug treatment, a fund for civic groups, a matching gifts program, and a summer day camp, tutoring, summer employment, and scholarships for workers' children.

Supervisor support, composed of eight items from the survey, assessed workers' perceptions of the personal and family-related support they received from their supervisors; two items were developed for this project, and the others come from the Michigan Assessment of Organizations Questionnaire (Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, & Klesh, 1983) and the Families and Work Institute (1993).

Two measures were used to control for *prior performance*; both came from 1990–91 administrative

records. One was a dichotomous variable indicating whether respondents had submitted at least one suggestion for product or process improvement. The other was a supervisor's overall rating of a worker's performance, standardized separately for office and factory workers because different evaluation forms were used for the two areas.

Analyses

The primary method of analysis was structural equation modeling. A generalized least squares (GLS) fitting function was used in estimating the structural model because two of the endogenous variables (submission of suggestions and attendance at a quality meeting) were dichotomous. Because this procedure requires more cases per estimated parameter than the usual maximum likelihood solution, the measurement model (that is, the paths between survey items and constructs) and the structural model (the paths between the constructs) were not estimated simultaneously. Instead, I first conducted a confirmatory factor analysis to hone the measurement model; resulting composite indexes were constructed for inclusion in the structural models.

Two commonly-used fit indexes that are robust to sample size are reported when assessing the results of the confirmatory factor analysis: Jöreskog and Sörbom's (1989) adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) and Bentler's (1993) comparative fit index (CFI). The fit indexes used in assessing the structural model are particularly appropriate to models employing a generalized least squares fitting function: Bentler's (1993) corrected comparative fit index (CCFI) and the root-mean-square residual (RMSR). T-statistics identify the significance of individual paths in the fitted models.

The general protocol was to estimate the measurement and structural models for separate subsamples of men and women, minorities and non-minorities, and workers with and without children because the strength of the relationships could vary for these subsamples. Because of the overwhelming similarity of results obtained in estimating both the measurement and structural models on the subsamples of interest, I estimated the final models on the sample as a whole. The following sections summarize the general procedures followed when the whole sample was employed to estimate both the measurement and structural models.

Measurement model. Following the suggestions of Anderson and Gerbing (1988), I conducted confirmatory factor analyses to establish that the loadings of items on latent constructs were significant and that each construct was unidimensional and

empirically distinct from the others. Nonsignificant paths from constructs to indicators were dropped. This occurred for only two paths; the benefit usefulness index was thus reduced from six to four items. When evaluating the validity of the measurement model, I assigned item means to respondents without children on the item that asked whether benefits have helped workers' children "do things they wouldn't have been able to do otherwise." This item was simply excluded when calculating the mean score on the final index for workers without children. Additional analyses revealed no differences in the substantive results when the index included only the three items pertinent to all respondents. The fourth item, the one pertaining to children, was nevertheless retained in the index because of its relevance to assessing the value of work-life benefits; that is, workers may value worklife benefits because of their relevance to family members other than themselves.

The final step of Anderson and Gerbing's protocol is to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis that includes all the items used to measure the full model, including the control variables. This model fitted the data well (AGFI = .90, CFI = .93) and met established criteria for distinctiveness; for instance, items loaded significantly on only one construct.

Table 1 reports the results of a confirmatory factor analysis of the items used to construct the composite indexes employed in the structural model. The response set for all indexes except interpersonal helping is "strongly agree" (4), "agree," "disagree," and "strongly disagree"; the response set for interpersonal helping is "often" (4), "sometimes," "rarely," and "never." I averaged the ratings on survey items to construct each index instead of weighting each item by its factor loading; factor loadings limit potential replication because they are sample-specific. Table 2 contains descriptive statistics for all the indexes and control variables included in the ensuing analyses.

Structural model. Estimations of the structural model are derived from the Lee, Poon, and Bentler (1992) approach to structural modeling with continuous and categorical data that is incorporated in the EQS program (Bentler & Wu, 1995). I constrained both the error variances of all the constructed indexes (to 1-alpha × variance) and the paths from the latent variables to the indexes (to the square root of alpha) in an effort to take measurement error into account (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1982; Settoon et al., 1996); the results are substantively identical, although attenuated, when adjustments for measurement error are not made.

The basic theoretical model was estimated with all the control variables included; that is, each control variable was allowed to cause perceived organizational support, submitting a suggestion, attending a meeting, and interpersonal helping and to covary with each of the other control variables and with perceived benefit usefulness.

RESULTS

Estimating the Proposed Theoretical Model

Table 3 presents the results of the structural equation modeling; both the RMSR (.03) and the CCFI (.99) suggest good model fit. It was not possible to control for race because of problems with model identification. Most people of color held blue-collar jobs; controlling for both race and blue-or white-collar status resulted in a matrix that was not positive-definite.

The findings support the prediction (Hypothesis 1) that perceived benefit usefulness is positively related to citizenship behavior; benefit usefulness is significantly related to submitting a suggestion, attending a quality meeting, and interpersonal helping. The findings provide weak support for Hypothesis 2, which states that perceived benefit usefulness will be more strongly associated with organization-level citizenship than with interpersonal citizenship; the coefficient between benefit usefulness and interpersonal helping (.40) is almost as large as the one between benefit usefulness and suggestion submission (.46) and is larger than the coefficient between benefit usefulness and attendance at a quality meeting (.18).

In assessing findings on the extent to which perceived organizational support mediates the relationship between benefit usefulness and citizenship, it is important to note that the findings are consistent with Hypothesis 3b, which states that the more useful workers find available benefits, the more supportive they perceive their organization to be; benefit usefulness is positively and significantly related to perceived organizational support. However, there is only one significant relationship between perceived organizational support and the measures of citizenship behavior, and that relationship is the opposite of what was hypothesized: the more workers perceived the organization as supportive, the less likely they were to submit suggestions for improvement. Thus, the data do not support Hypothesis 3c, which states that perceived organizational support fuels citizenship behavior, either at the organizational level (Hypothesis 3c) or the interpersonal level (Hypothesis 3d).

A priori multivariate Wald tests were used to assess whether model fit would be maintained if either the indirect or direct relationships were

TABLE 1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis of Multiple-Item Subjective Measures^a

Subjective Measures	,
Variable	Factor Loading ^b
Perceived benefit usefulness	
Fel-Pro's benefits have helped my children do things they wouldn't have been able to do otherwise.	.65
Fel-Pro's benefits have helped me get through some bad times.	.59
Fel-Pro's benefits make it easier for me to balance my work and personal life.	.37
If I had to pay for them myself, I couldn't afford most of the benefits and services Fel-Pro provides.	.27
Perceived organizational support Fel-Pro strongly considers my goals	.50
and values. Fel-Pro values my contribution to the	.50
company. Fel-Pro takes pride in my	.47
accomplishments at work. If Fel-Pro could hire someone to	47
replace me at a lower salary, it would do it. (reversed)	
Fel-Pro really cares about me. If given the chance, Fel-Pro would take	.47 44
unfair advantage of me. (reversed) Fel-Pro is willing to help me when I	.37
need a special favor. If I asked, Fel-Pro would change my	.33
working conditions if at all possible. Fel-Pro would ignore any complaint from me. (reversed)	25
Interpersonal helping	
Which best describes how often you do the following:	
Help other employees with their work when they have been absent.	.55
Help my co-workers when they have too much to do.	.52
Take the initiative to help orient new employees to my department.	.46
Assist my supervisor with his/her duties.	.45
Supervisor support	•
My supervisor is concerned about me as a person.	.64
is helpful to me when I have a family or personal emergency.	.61
feels each of us is important as an individual.	.60
is helpful to me when I have a routine family or personal matter to attend to.	.57
is concerned about the way we workers think and feel about things.	.56
is understanding when I have personal or family problems which interfere with my work.	.51
appears to know a lot about company policies that help employees manage their family responsibilities.	.45
keeps the things we tell him/her confidential.	.42
Model χ^2	600.5
df	246 <.001
p AGFI	.91
CFI	.91

n = 325

dropped from the model. These tests indicated that dropping the direct paths between benefit usefulness and the measures of citizenship would significantly (p < .001) reduce model fit by substantially increasing the model chi-square. Dropping the paths between perceived organizational support and both attending a meeting and interpersonal helping, however, would not detract significantly from model fit, and model fit would decline only slightly (p = .09) were the path from perceived organizational support to submitting a suggestion deleted. Thus, although benefit usefulness contributes to perceptions of organizational support, these perceptions do not, in turn, make a unique contribution to citizenship behavior as measured in this study.

Extent of Benefit Use

It was not possible to employ benefit use as a control variable in assessing the proposed model due to problems with model identification. Benefit use—the number of benefits respondents and their family members had used during the workers' tenure with the company—is only moderately correlated with workers' perceptions of benefit usefulness (r = .25, p < .01), indicating that appraising the value workers place on work-life benefits is more complicated than simply identifying their rate of utilization. In order to provide some insight into the extent to which it is important to assess the value workers place on work-life benefits when specifying their effects, the proposed model was estimated with "benefit use" replacing "benefit usefulness."

Benefit use was not significantly related to either submitting a suggestion or attending a quality meeting; it was positively and significantly related to the measure of interpersonal helping, though (findings are not reported in a table). Benefit use was also significantly and positively related to perceived organizational support. And perceived organizational support was still negatively related to submitting a suggestion and unrelated to both attending a quality meeting and interpersonal helping. In general, the relationships between model components are weaker than those found when benefit usefulness is included in the model. The CCFI is, however, high (.97), and the RMSR is also adequate (.04). Overall, these results provide additional evidence that experiences with work-life benefits are related to both perceived organizational support and citizenship behavior. The weaker and nonsignificant relationships found in the model employing benefit use give some reason to believe that assessing workers' appraisals of

^b All loadings are significant at $p \le .01$.

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Means, Standard Deviations, Reliabilities, and Correlations among Variables^a TABLE 2

Variable	Mean	s.d.	1	2	33	4	5	9	7	8	6	10	11
1. Perceived benefit	3.28	0.55	(.70)									:	
2. Perceived organizational	3.02	0.46	.37**	(.87)									
3. Interpersonal helping	2.99	0.60	.22**	.15**	(89)								
4. Submission of	53.5		90.	13*	.11*								
suggestrons 5. Attendance at quality meeting ^b	41.2		.03	90.	.03	.22**c							
6. Woman ^b	42.8		.19**	.12*	.01	11*	.05						
7. Blue-collar ^b	52.0		.11*	.01	23**	.14*	08	02					
8. Seniority	7.38	6.71	.21**	.03	.03	04	.03	02	12*				
Benefit use	3.39	2.60	.25**	.15**	.19**	.05	.05	*10	- 26**	40**			
 Supervisor support 	2.99	0.59	.25**	.46**	.22**	12*	.01	50.	-12*	50	 դ. *	(00)	
 Previous suggestion submission 	49.5		.01	04	.07	.43**	.22**c	05	13*	.07	.19**	.02	
12. Previous supervisor rating	0.03	1.0	.04	.05	.07	.07	90	90.	01	.13*	.16**	80.	.08

* n=325. Cronbach's alphas appear on the diagonal for multiple-item measures. ^b For dichotomous variables, the value shown is the percentage of "yes" responses. ^c Polychoric correlations between dichotomous variables. *p<.05

TABLE 3
Results of Structural Equation Modeling of Perceived Benefit Usefulness, Perceived Organizational
Support, and Organizational Citizenship Behavior^a

	Endogenous Variables			
	Perceived Organizational Support	Organizational Citizenship Behavior		
Variable		Submission of Suggestions	Attendance at Quality Meeting	Interpersonal Helping
Perceived benefit usefulness	.25 (.09)**	.46 (.09)**	.18 (.04)**	.40 (.08)**
Perceived organizational support		13 (.06)*	.07 (.06)	03 (.12)
Control variables				
Blue-collar	.01 (.08)	01 (.06)	13 (.04)**	35 (.08)**
Woman	.06 (.07)	26 (.06)**	04 (.03)	17 (.07)*
Seniority	03 (.08)	31 (.07)**	11 (.04)*	19 (.08)*
Supervisor support	.39 (.06)**	39 (.09)**	19 (.06)**	.03 (.11)
Previous suggestion submission	04 (.06)	.48 (.06)**	.25 (.03)**	.09 (.05)
Previous supervisor rating	03 (.07)	.13 (.07)*	04 (.06)	.11 (.06)
Model fit indexes				
Ynan-Bentler AGLS χ^2	29.02			
df	3			
p	<.01			
RMSR	.03			
CCFI	.99			

 $^{^{}a}$ n = 325. Standard errors are in parentheses.

work-life benefits, rather than just their use of these benefits, can add to understanding of how work-life benefits are related to citizenship behavior.

DISCUSSION

In this article, I have attempted to establish a theoretical context for investigating the proposition that work-life benefits can encourage employee participation. Developments in social exchange theory and in recasting organizational citizenship behavior as an instance of civic citizenship provided a foundation upon which to formulate specific hypotheses linking workers' experiences with work-life benefits to organization-level citizenship behavior—specifically, participation in the workplace. The findings support the basic premise of social exchange theory as applied to the workplace, that positive actions on the part of an organization propel workers to reciprocate in beneficial ways. In this case, the more useful workers perceived the company's work-life benefits to be in terms of helping them and their families, the more likely they were to submit suggestions for improvement, to

voluntarily attend meetings on quality methods, and to report that they assisted others with their job duties.

The findings provide limited support, however, for additional specifications based on refined notions of complementarity between social exchange partners. Most notably, the findings do not support the premise that workers target their reciprocation efforts toward a particular exchange partner and that, in the case of benefits, they target their organization more than their coworkers or supervisors. It may be that work-life benefits create a generalized sense of obligation to the workplace, which includes the company as well as coworkers and supervisors. Another possibility is that workers in this study viewed helping others as contributing to the company's overall well-being; all the items capturing interpersonal helping focused on helping others with their job duties. Perhaps a measure of interpersonal helping that included items pertaining to more personal kinds of helping would be useful in distinguishing workers' efforts to repay obligations to coworkers from their efforts to repay their organization. Items might ask about the extent

^{*}p < .05

^{**}p < .01

to which one helps coworkers advance in the organization, provides support when they have personal problems, and helps them balance work and personal responsibilities by, for example, making it possible for them to leave early to take care of family matters.

The results do provide support, albeit limited, for the proposition that the obligations engendered by work-life benefits depend on how much workers value them. In the model employing a measure of how many benefits workers had used rather than a measure of how useful workers found the available benefits to be, benefit use was unrelated to both submitting a suggestion and attending a quality meeting. Nonetheless, benefit use was positively and significantly related to interpersonal helping, suggesting that additional research is needed to identify the extent to which it is necessary to assess the value workers place on work-life benefits when evaluating their effects.

Puzzling Findings: The Relationship Between Perceived Organizational Support and Citizenship

The most perplexing findings pertain to the potential mediating role of perceived organizational support in explaining how work-life benefits come to affect citizenship behavior. The indirect relationships connecting benefit usefulness to the measures of citizenship through perceived organizational support are either the opposite of what was anticipated or not statistically significant. That is, the more supportive workers perceived the organization to be, the less likely they were to submit suggestions for process and product improvement; the relationships between perceived organizational support and both attending a quality meeting and helping others on the job were nonsignificant.

The negative and nonsignificant relationships between perceived organizational support and the measures of citizenship behavior are of special concern because, as can be seen from this article's literature review, they run counter to findings from other studies. Some of them also run counter to the bivariate relationships between perceived organizational support and the measures of citizenship reported in Table 2. Before attempting to make sense of these findings, it is important to have confidence that they are not merely an artifact of the analytic method employed, structural equation modeling. To address this possibility, I also analyzed the data using regular regression methods, predicting separately (1) suggestion submission (using logit regression), (2) attendance at a quality meeting (logit regression), and (3) interpersonal

helping (least squares regression). The findings replicated those reported in Table 3 obtained using structural equation modeling, including the significant, negative relationship between perceived organizational support and submitting a suggestion. In light of these additional analyses, it is unlikely that the relationships observed in this study—unanticipated and anticipated—are solely due to the statistical method employed.

One possible explanation for the unanticipated relationships between perceived organizational support and the measures of citizenship behavior is that perceived organizational support does not necessarily produce the obligation to reciprocate, as scholars have postulated. It may be that the more supported the workers studied here felt, the more they took the organization for granted and thus, the less obligated they felt to take the extra steps of making formal suggestions for improvement and attending quality meetings. Researchers should attempt to directly measure the extent to which workers feel obligated to different exchange partners in future work, using a question such as "I feel I owe my (company/supervisor/coworkers) a lot." In this way, the mechanisms of social exchange could be empirically assessed rather than assumed.

Another possibility is that workers who felt supported by the organization saw less of a need for improvement and thus were less likely to submit suggestions. It may also be that obligations to the organization reflected in enhanced perceptions of organizational support were reciprocated through behaviors and attitudes not investigated in this study. For example, the effects of perceived organizational support may show up in workers' commitment to an organization and in their intentions to remain there, as Wayne, Shore, and Liden (1997) found.

The Benefits of Benefits

Even though perceived organizational support did not foster organization-level citizenship as hypothesized, the findings provide evidence that work-life benefits can have beneficial effects. Contrary to recent arguments made in research on perceived organizational support, benefits contributed to such perceptions. Even after I controlled for gender, occupation, tenure, prior performance, and supervisor support, I found that the more valuable workers found the work-life benefits available to them, the more supportive they viewed their organization as being. Thus, the results suggest that, as hypothesized, a benefit package that workers find useful can enhance their perception that their organization cares about them.

Moreover, contrary to traditional theories of organizational behavior, the results suggest that benefits may also contribute to job performance, at least when performance is broadened to encompass organizational citizenship behavior. Regardless of their gender, occupation, tenure, and prior performance and the supportiveness of their supervisor, the more useful workers found available work-life benefits, the greater the frequency of their helping others at work and the more likely they were to submit suggestions for product and process improvement and to attend quality meetings. Thus, the data suggest that an expanded benefit plan can promote citizenship behavior independently of whether it also increases workers' perceptions of the overall supportiveness of a company.

Strengths, Weaknesses, and Future Directions

Although the measure of benefit usefulness employed in this study begins to get at the value workers place on work-life benefits, more theoretical and empirical work is needed to identify and measure specific aspects of workers' experiences with these benefits that invoke the norm of reciprocity. Moreover, factors in addition to perceived organizational support may mediate the relationship between workers' experiences with work-life benefits and citizenship behavior; as noted above, clearly more direct measures of incurred obligations are needed to test this key mechanism of social exchange.

The significant relationship between benefit usefulness and perceived organizational support suggests modifications in how signaling theory is currently used to explicate the antecedents of perceived organizational support. Earlier, I argued that work-life benefits can serve a signaling function, even though they are targeted toward groups of workers with common characteristics (parents, for example) rather than toward individuals. Extending this logic, it could be that benefits can signal to workers that they are valued even when they themselves cannot take advantage of certain benefits or when the benefits are equally useful to everyone. There is some empirical evidence to support this proposition. Employing data from a nationally representative sample of Americans, Grover and Crooker (1995) found that workers in firms that provided key family-responsive policies were more committed to their organizations than workers in firms that did not provide these key benefits, even when workers who could not themselves benefit from the policies (for instance, those without young children) were compared. In future work, researchers should assess the extent to which work-life benefits contribute to perceived organizational support by signaling to workers that their organization values its employees, regardless of the extent to which workers personally profit from available benefits.

Much work also remains to be done in terms of empirically assessing the relationship between worklife benefits and citizenship. Although in this study, I was able to address a number of competing explanations, there may be confounding factors that were not controlled for here; for example, job design (not controlled in this study) remains central to workers' reactions to a host of workplace initiatives as well as to their ability to balance work and family demands (Bailyn, 1993; Lambert, 1997; Van Dyne et al., 1994). Moreover, as Organ and Ryan (1995) pointed out, using self-report data on citizenship behavior is problematic because correlations with job attitudes are often inflated owing to common method variance. In this study, workers' appraisal of benefit usefulness was strongly associated with the measure of interpersonal helping that came from the workers themselves, suggesting that this association may be inflated. It would be useful to determine whether the results of this study are replicable when coworker or supervisor ratings of interpersonal helping are employed.

The Importance of Organizational Context

It is quite plausible that the relationships assessed vary with organizational context, a possibility that could not be tested with data from one company. Eisenberger, Fasolo, and Davis-La Mastro (1986) speculated that organizational programs attributed to an organization's own disposition are likely to build perceptions of support, whereas the same programs are unlikely to do so if they are ascribed to outside pressure. In this case, the company, Fel-Pro, had a long history of social responsibility and of adopting innovative human resource policies. Many other companies have to be pushed to adopt even a modicum of workplace supports. In these companies, the indirect effects of work-life benefits may be negligible because they may not contribute to workers' perceptions that the organization cares about them. Moreover, to the extent work-life benefits become commonplace, direct effects may decline as workers come to view them more as a right than a privilege (Organ & Lingl, 1995). Workers may think it unnecessary to exert extra effort when work-life supports are no longer deemed extra benefits.

Thus, studies are needed that compare the experiences of workers in different organizations and over time to determine how work-life benefits vary in the value workers attach to them and in their relationship to citizenship behavior. Multiple-site studies are also needed in order to allow the full range of variation on the variables comprising the

proposed model; in the current study, the distributions on both benefit usefulness and perceived organizational support are likely to have been skewed positively because so few companies provide as many supports as Fel-Pro did.

The need for in-depth case study remains as well. Grover and Crooker (1995) lamented that their nationally representative sample did not allow them to be sure that the differences in worker attitudes they ascribed to working in a firm that provides family-responsive policies were not really caused by other differences between firms that have adopted such policies and firms that have not. In-depth case study in effect controls for the larger organizational context and character, enhancing prospects of isolating how benefits per se affect workers. It also facilitates the examination of the underlying processes linking workplace supports to worker behavior.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that there is much to be gained from investigating the relationship between work-life benefits and organizational citizenship behavior. In terms of practice, the findings provide evidence of a link between the value lower-level workers place on a benefit package that includes work-life supports and their participation in efforts to improve their organizations. In terms of theory, investigating the processes connecting workers' experiences with work-life benefits to different types of organizational citizenship behavior provides an unusually tangible forum for addressing subtleties in social exchange theory and for extending knowledge of the antecedents of both nontraditional work performance and perceived organizational support. Investigating the "added benefits" of work-life packages is especially important today as employers struggle to implement work systems that require the active and willing participation of workers at all levels and workers struggle to balance the often overwhelming demands of work and personal life.

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