

Abstract

The present thesis consists of two studies that focused on secondary students' justice perception in educational settings. Study 1 examined students' justice experiences through 680 secondary students' retrospective reports of their just and unjust experiences in school. Results showed that punishment, assessment, and interpersonal treatment were the most frequently reported issues. Students used both equity and equality rules in their justice perception. They regarded positive interpersonal treatment as fair and were concerned with procedural elements such as consistency, accuracy, and bias suppression. They felt angry, disappointed, disgusted, and helpless in unjust situations but happy, interested, and enjoyable in just situations. Passive and non-confrontational strategies were primarily used to cope with unjust experiences. Some of the results formed the basis for the development of the justice scales used in Study 2. Study 2 investigated the association between justice perception and students' attitudes and behavior with 857 students. Justice perception was found to be significantly associated with students' academic performance, academic motivation, perceived legitimacy of school rules, self-report delinquency, conduct grade, evaluations of teachers and school, relationships with teachers, and satisfaction with school life. The effect of justice perception on academic achievement was found to be mediated by academic motivation, and that of compliance to school rules was mediated by perceived legitimacy of school rules. Interactional justice (i.e., fairness of interpersonal treatment) was found to be a more

powerful predictor of the above dependent variables than procedural (i.e., fairness of the procedures for carrying out an allocation decision) and distributive justice (i.e., fairness of the outcomes). The reasons for the differential importance of different types of justice perception were discussed and examined. Conceptualization of interpersonal treatment as a special kind of distributive justice received empirical support. Finally, future research was suggested and practical implications for school management were discussed.