Personnel Review

Individual and organizational support: does it affect red tape, stress and work outcomes of police officers in the USA?

Yvonne Brunetto, Stephen T.T. Teo, Rod Farr-Wharton, Kate Shacklock, Art Shriberg,

Article information:
To cite this document:
Permanent link to this document:
http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/PR-12-2015-0319
Downloaded on: 17 April 2017, At: 16:00 (PT)
References: this document contains references to 0 other documents.
To copy this document: permissions@emeraldsight.com

Access to this document was granted through an Emerald subscription provided by emeraldsrm:393990 []

For Authors
If you would like to write for this, or any other Emerald publication, then please use our Emerald for Authors service information about how to choose which publication to write for and submission guidelines are available for all. Please visit www.emeraldsight.com/authors for more information.

About Emerald www.emeraldsight.com
Emerald is a global publisher linking research and practice to the benefit of society. The company manages a portfolio of more than 290 journals and over 2,350 books and book series volumes, as well as providing an extensive range of online products and additional customer resources and services.
Emerald is both COUNTER 4 and TRANSFER compliant. The organization is a partner of the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE) and also works with Portico and the LOCKSS initiative for digital archive preservation.

*Related content and download information correct at time of download.
Individual and organizational support: does it affect red tape, stress and work outcomes of police officers in the USA?

ABSTRACT

Purpose. To examine whether management supports police officers adequately, or whether police have to rely on their individual attributes, specifically psychological capital, to cope with red tape and stress. Work outcomes/consequences examined were discretionary power, affective commitment and turnover intentions.

Design/methodology/approach. A cross-sectional design using a survey-based, self-report strategy was used to collect data from 588 police officers in USA. Data were analysed using AMOS and a structural model to undertake Structural Equation Modelling.

Findings. Two significant paths were identified: (a) Path 1: management support to red tape to discretionary power to affective commitment and turnover intentions, and (b) Path 2: supervisor relationships to psychological capital to stress to affective commitment and turnover intentions. Further, management support predicted psychological capital, red tape and police stressors. Red tape increased police stressors and turnover intentions.

Research Limitations. The use of self-report surveys is a limitation, causing common methods bias. Using Harmon’s one factor post-hoc test, we were able to provide some assurance that common method bias was of no major concern.

Originality/value. As far as is known, this study is the first to examine, for police officers, how psychological capital impacts upon negative factors (stress and red tape) and enhances positive drivers for employees. Examining the impact of an individual attribute – PsyCap - provides an
important piece of the organizational puzzle in explaining the commitment and turnover intentions of police officers. By examining the impact of both organizational AND individual factors, there is now more knowledge about the antecedents of police outcomes.

**Article classification:** Research paper

**Key words:** Stress, Police, turnover, psychological capital, affective commitment, turnover,
INTRODUCTION

The public relies on its police to keep them safe, but is police management effective in managing police activities (including the resulting stress)? The study examined whether police management optimises police commitment, or whether police officers have to rely on their personal attributes to cope with work stress. Policing is arguably one of the most stressful public service occupations, with many studies reporting organizational stressors (such as red tape) and operational stressors (such as the constant threat of violence) negatively impacting upon police officers’ wellbeing and job performance (Vila, 2006; Vila and Moore, 2008). The public pays for poor police management in the form of high sick leave/absenteeism/workers compensation costs associated with stress-related illnesses. Yet, public-sector reform has done little to improve the management of police officers in their daily activities (for USA police, see Shane, 2010; for Australia police, see Brunetto, et al., 2014). There is little that can be done to reduce the operational stressors, since they relate to the nature of policing itself; however, some organizational stressors could be removed if the political and organizational determination existed (Bozeman, 2000; Pandey and Moynihan, 2006).

This study examines the impact of individual and organizational factors upon one organizational stressor – “red tape”, that many argue has no legitimate place in policing and is probably wasting resources and compromising police efficiency and effectiveness (Bozeman, 2000; Pandey and Moynihan, 2006; Shane, 2010). While research has examined the impact of organizational factors, no research has examined the impact of individual factors upon police officers’ perceptions of red tape. It seems likely that in the absence of better police management, police officers will be increasingly expected to rely on their individual attributes to cope with stress, although there is no evidence-based research examining this.
“Red tape” is one organizational stressor which that to have increased over time and refers to rules, procedures and regulations that are part of the organizational processes undertaken by employees, even though their original purpose no longer exists (Bozeman, 2000). Moynihan and Pandey (2007:43) argue it is often difficult for public-sector bureaucrats to identify real accountability measures (for example, measures that ensure perpetrators are treated justly) from those that “frustrate employees in achieving their goals” and increase stress levels. Poor organizational processes negatively impact employee performance and increase turnover intentions (Moynihan and Pandey, 2007) and clearly provide no buffer for police officers experiencing organizational stressors. Further, the impact of red tape for some public-sector employees, including police officers, in countries like Australia and the UK, is probably amplified because public-sector environments are increasingly characterised by higher workloads flowing from increased accountability, coupled with inadequate resourcing (Brunetto, et al., 2011). Therefore, red tape arguably sits on top of a large platform of organizational processes that needs to be negotiated successfully in order for such employees to do their job (Brunetto, et al., 2011). By contrast, Shane (2010) argues that police officers working at USA coalface have been largely unaffected by the introduction of new performance management processes, such as new accountability measures. However, they are affected by a lack of resources for meeting increased demand – hence the need for buffers.

There are two types of buffers that can mediate the extent to which organizational and operational stress negatively impacts upon police officers’ outcomes. In particular, individual resources (such as police officers’ psychological capital) and organizational resources (such as police officers’ perceived organizational support) can form protective “armour”, helping police officers reduce the impact of negative stressors. Psychological capital (PsyCap) is an individual
attribute that is defined as the perceived level of individual psychological-emotional resources an individual has to offset negative stressors (Luthans, et al., 2006). Notably, recent research found that high PsyCap is associated with lower stress and high work performance (Story, et al., 2013).

A second type of buffer against poor organizational processes can be provided by managers who are effective in the workplace. Social Exchange Theory (SET) identifies effective managers as those who have positive trust-building workplace interactions with subordinates that over time lead to mutually beneficial reciprocity in behaviors for the organization, subordinates and supervisors (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). The subordinate benefits because management provides a buffer from organizational stressors by providing him/her with adequate job resource support (help) and appropriate knowledge/information when required, in return for support for the manager’s decisions (Brunetto, et al., 2014). Hence, effective workplace relationships form the basis from which managers can provide social support for subordinates that ensures a buffer for employees against organizational stressors (Bolino and Turnley, 2009; Gächter, et al., 2010).

Typical workplace relationships that can provide a buffer for employees include the relationships between supervisors and employees (often captured using leader-member exchange [LMX]) and between management and employees (often captured using perceived organizational support [POS]). There is a body of knowledge about the potential benefits accruing for all stakeholders (such as employees, managers, the organization) from the formation of effective workplace relationships leading to a social resource that provides a buffer for stress and supports high work performance (Bolino and Turnley, 2009; Ilies, et al., 2007). However, poor public-sector management is characterised by poor workplace relationships between employees and managers and is a widespread phenomenon in hospital and police management in numerous countries including USA, Australia and England (Brunetto et al., 2011; 2014; Dick, 2011;
Diefenbach, 2009; Shane, 2010). One contributing factor is the prevalence of employees’ ambiguity about which organizational processes are required to achieve compliance in relation to a required safety or human rights obligation and/or desired organizational objective, and which processes serve no organizational purpose and are viewed by management as “burdensome and detrimental to organizational purposes” (Pandey and Scott, 2002: 565).

This paper examines whether individual and organizational factors impact police officers’ perceptions of stress and in turn, discretionary power. Discretionary power was identified by Lipski (1980) as a defining characteristic of public-sector employees in that they have power to “ration” scarce public goods. However, four decades of reforms have reduced employee discretionary power as the power of supervisors has increased in an attempt to increase accountability (Brunetto et al., 2011; Diefenbach, 2009). However, Scotti, et al. (2007) argue that it is crucial for employees (such as police officers) in workplaces where job demand exceeds supply, to have discretionary power to find new ways of delivering quality services to meet growing demand.

Using positive organizational behaviour is a relatively new discipline. However the potential gains from examining both organizational and individual factors is huge if the findings show that individual factors are important in reducing organizational stressors for one of the most stressful types of work – policing - because PsyCap is developmental, meaning that employees can be upskilled if needed (Luthans, et al., 2006). Also, Story, et al. (2013: 3) argue that researchers need to better articulate the benefits of positive concepts (such as PsyCap) to management practitioners in order to increase employee performance. To examine the case for police officers, the research question is:
RQ: What is the effect of individual (PsyCap) and organizational factors (POS and LMX) on police perceptions of stress and red tape, and in turn discretionary power, affective commitment and turnover intentions?

The remainder of the paper presents the theoretical framework informing a targeted literature review with relevant hypotheses for testing, followed by the results and discussion.

Positive Organizational Behaviour

The power of positive organizational behaviour for improving management is only now being examined. Scholars (such as Story et al., 2013; Luthans et al., 2006; Avey, et al., 2008; 2009; 2011) have undertaken research examining the impact of positive organizational behavioural concepts, such as PsyCap, upon employee performance. The argument is that employees possess some level of cognitive and emotional resources, which affect the extent to which they have coping mechanisms in place to deal with stressors (Avey, et al., 2011). In particular, research examining the impact of PsyCap upon reducing the negative influence of stressors and in turn, employee work outcomes, is still in its infancy (Story, et al., 2013; Luthans, et al., 2006), and more research is required to give managers evidence-based knowledge for better managing human resources and reducing OHS expenses associated with some medical absences associated with stress and increased wellbeing – all factors that increase organizational effectiveness.

Positive Organizational Behaviour variable: Psychological Capital (PsyCap)

PsyCap comprises “four psychological resources of hope, optimism, efficacy, and resilience” that have been found to have a positive impact on employees’ work practices and
outcomes (Avey, et al., 2011: 128). Avey, et al. (2009) define (a) self-efficacy as the extent to which an employee can motivate and mobilise personal qualities to successfully complete a task; (b) optimism as the extent to which an employee uses his/her power in creating positive outcomes; (c) hope as the extent to which an employee strategizes and believes in their ability to create positive outcomes; and (d) resilience as the extent to which employees can rebound from difficult situations. When an employee has high levels of these personal attributes, then s/he has the personal resources to shield themselves from stress (Story, et al., 2013).

In terms of past research, high PsyCap is associated with lower stress levels and higher levels of psychological wellbeing and organizational commitment (Avey, et al., 2011; Walumbwa, et al., 2011). Similar findings were expected in policing, by examining whether PsyCap indirectly impacts discretionary power by reducing stress. No research has examined the impact of PsyCap on red tape – hence, one contribution of the paper is to test whether high PsyCap is associated with low perceptions of red tape, because employees with high PsyCap have high self-efficacy and optimism and therefore are less likely to perceive work negatively as red tape. Importantly, lower stress is associated with higher work performance (Avey, et al., 2011; Walumbwa, et al., 2011).

**Police Stressors**

Stress refers to a “stimulus, response or interaction between the two” (Dewe, et al., 2010: 3). Stress in policing comes from operational and organizational stressors (McCreary and Thompson, 2006; Shane, 2010; Vila, 2006; Vila and Moore, 2008). McCreary and Thompson (2006) argue that the nature of policing is stressful because of the risk of being injured on the job. Other researchers identify the lack of resources as negatively impacting stress levels (Shane,
2010; McCreary and Thompson, 2006; Vila, 2006) and some identify the emotional nature of labour in policing from attending crimes against vulnerable groups (such as children, disabled) as another source of stress (Brunetto, et al., 2014). Also, Gächter, et al. (2010) argue the importance of social support in mediating the stress experienced by police officers.

In terms of antecedents, Avey, et al. (2009; 2011) found high PsyCap predicted low stress, and therefore similar results were expected in this research. Past research shows an inverse relationship between stress and affective commitment, and a direct relationship between stress and turnover intentions (Story, et al., 2012), with Imtiaz and Ahmad (2009) arguing that doctors’ stress increased because of poor working environment and organizational support, which affected job performance. These findings are expected for USA police officers. The study also examined whether stress predicts discretionary power. Previous research by Greco, et al. (2006) showed high workloads led to high stress levels for Canadian nurses and the “difficult” working conditions (including high stress and high burnout incidence) were associated with reduced job autonomy. A literature review suggests no research has specifically examined whether stress predicts discretionary power. However, based on Greco, et al.’s (2006) research, it seems likely that high stress would be associated with low discretionary power.

**Social Exchange Theory**

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is explains employee behaviour and outcomes within organizations (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) because it explains how everyday positive interactions between dyads form the basis of either mutual reciprocity in the workplace or poor employee work outcomes (Lavelle, et al., 2007). Shore, et al. (2009) refer to mutual reciprocity as an intangible “resource” that a basis for continued reciprocity in the workplace because of the
desire on the part of humans to respond favourably to positive interactions because of
behavioural drivers such as “obligation to repay an act of kindness with a similar act of kindness”
and in “gratitude for the positive treatment”. The SET variables that are relevant to police
management include perceived organizational support (POS) and supervisor-subordinate (leader-
member) exchange relationships (LMX), and outcomes such as affective commitment.

**Perceived Organizational Support**

POS captures the extent to which employees perceive that the organization supports them
in the workplace (Allen, et al., 2003; Eisenberger, et al., 1997). Using SET as a lens for
examining the policing context, the argument is that organizational management show their
support to employees in their actions and as such the employee response to effective management
is highly committed police officers (Brunetto, et al., 2014). On the other hand, when
management/command structure sets unrealistically high targets based on the inadequate supply
of resources; then it is likely that police officers will NOT perceive high levels of support. Police
officers in the USA have not been immune from the public-sector social services problem facing
many street-level bureaucrats - reduced per-capita funding and high workloads (Brunetto et al.,
2011, 2014; Diefenbach, 2009), which suggests that police work is negatively impacted by red
tape. However, Shane (2010) argues that there is poor performance management at the coalface
for police officers and therefore it is unclear whether police do perceive high levels of red tape.

In terms of past research, Liu, et al. (2013) identified that high POS was associated with
high PsyCap for Chinese male correctional officers and the same outcomes are expected from
this study because it examines police officers who have a similar organizational work context.
Additionally, Ambreen, et al. (2014) found POS mediated the relationship between discretionary
power and affective commitment for Pakistani university employees, while Ghaffaripour (2014) identified that high POS sets up positive environments, enhancing employees’ PsyCap. Therefore, this study expects to replicate these findings. While past research found POS predicted affective commitment and turnover intentions (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005), no research has examined the impact of POS upon police perceptions of red tape. Thus, high POS is expected to be associated with low perceptions of red tape.

**Leader-Member Exchange**

Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory argues that supervisors establish effective workplace relationships with some employees, but not all, and as such some employees receive adequate resources, information, time and control over their workloads as well as emotional support, participation in decision-making and access to interesting work assignments and other employees do not (Wang et al., 2005; Graen and Uhl-Bien, 1995). As such some develop mutual reciprocity in the way they share resources, knowledge and support and some do not. Those that do not develop instead, low quality supervisor-employee relationships which are based on contractual economic exchanges only (Mueller and Lee, 2002). The quality of LMX is important for public-sector managers to consider because Dulebohn, et al. (2012: 1744) argue in their meta-analysis that:

“...if leaders are seen as rewarding followers based on their performance, and stimulating them to perform beyond expectations with transformational leadership, a constructive relationship with their followers is very likely to emerge. In addition to insights on LMX quality, the results demonstrated that most of the variance in outcomes was explained through the mediating role of LMX.”
Based on SET, LMX predicts key employee consequences, including commitment and turnover (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005) and discretionary power (Brunetto, et al., 2011). Further, Tomaževič, et al. (2014) found strong agreement about the important role of supervisor relationships in supporting police officers’ job satisfaction in Slovenia. It is expected to replicate previous research and find LMX is positively associated with discretionary power. Previous research also identified that LMX predicts PsyCap (Story, et al., 2013); therefore it is predicted to find the same for police.

**Red Tape**

Red tape is a negative organizational outcome because it wastes employees’ time and therefore decreases organizational efficiency and effectiveness. It is defined as the “rules, regulations, and procedures that remain in force and entail a compliance burden but (do) not advance the legitimate purposes the rules were intended to serve” (Bozeman, 2000: 12). However, “red tape” remains a concept that is difficult to conceptualise because it is multi-dimensional and difficult to generalise and most previous research has focused on local government public-sector employees (Pandey, et al., 2002; 2006; Feeney, 2012) and there has been little research examining police officers’ responses to red tape. Despite the measurement issues, previous public-sector research suggests that high perceptions of red tape are associated with low organizational performance (Brewer and Walker, 2010; Pandey and Scott, 2002). Brewer and Walker (2010: 243) suggest that when management provides a buffer for employees, the negative impact of red tape was reduced and vice versa.

Additionally, high red tape is associated with low motivation and job satisfaction (Giauque, et al., 2012) as well as higher intentions to leave (Brewer and Walker, 2010).
Specifically, Giauque et al. (2012) examined relations between public-sector motivation and stress and found high job demands (especially from red tape workplace activities) were associated with high stress outcomes, using hierarchical regression analysis. Similar relationships are expected using SEM path analysis and as such, will add to the limited research examining the stressors of public-sector employees (Giauque, et al., 2012).

Further, the inverse link between discretionary power and red tape is well-established in USA public-sector settings (Brewer and Walker, 2010). Using SET theory, it is argued that if employees perceive high red tape, then relationships between employees and management are poor and therefore, employees would perceive decreasing discretionary power because they would not be able to control their work tasks. Hence, it is argued that high red tape is associated with low discretionary power and because research indicates that high discretionary power is associated with high affective commitment and low turnover intentions (Brunetto, et al., 2011; 2014), police findings are also expected to replicate previous findings.

**Discretionary Power**

In mainstream management research, the term used to describe the degree to which employees have power in the workplace, especially in relation to decision-making is called self-determination and/or autonomy (Kanter, 1993; Spreitzer, 2007), whereas within public-sector management research, the term is discretionary power (Adler and Asquith, 1993). Hence the terms are interchangeable. Because this paper is about public-sector employees – police officers - the term “discretionary power” is used. It is a function of structural discretionary power (capturing the extent to which organizational structures and processes enable optimal employee performance) and psychological discretionary power (which captures employees’ outcomes from
working within a particular organizational discretionary power context) (Spreitzer, 2007). This means that the structures in place (including management structures) affect employees’ perceptions of psychological discretionary power by affecting their access to resources, information and support (Brunetto, et al., 2011; Kanter, 1993). Discretionary power is important in employee conditions where demand for services exceeds the supply of resources, which is a common feature for public-sector employees delivering social services (police, nurses, social security) (Brunetto, et al., 2011; Scotti, et al., 2007). However, these same employee types have experienced discretionary power reductions while their supervisors’ discretionary power increased in order to increase employee accountability (Brunetto, et al., 2011; Diefenbach, 2009).

In terms of previous research, high discretionary power/autonomy is associated with high job satisfaction (Bartram and Casimir, 2007) and high affective commitment (Brunetto, et al., 2011). Similarly, high discretionary power is expected in this study to be associated with high affective commitment and low turnover intentions.

**Affective Commitment and Turnover Intentions**

Affective commitment refers to the extent to which employees identify with their workplace and are emotionally attached to it. Affective commitment is the strongest predictor of turnover intentions (Meyer and Allen, 1997). Brunetto, et al. (2011) found that for Australian police officers, high discretionary power was associated with high affective commitment. For English police officers, Dick (2011) found management support predicted affective commitment, and called for more research examining the antecedents of police officers’ affective commitment. Research by Brunetto, et al. (2012; 2014) identified links between affective commitment and turnover intentions for Australian police officers, and that wellbeing
predicted affective commitment. In other research, POS predicted affective commitment (Luchak and Gellatly, 2007; Reid, et al., 2008). Police officers experience higher than average turnover levels (Lynch and Tuckey, 2008), and police training costs are very high; therefore more research is needed to identify whether discretionary power is an antecedent of turnover intentions. It is expected that high discretionary power will predict high affective commitment and low turnover intentions, and high stress will be associated with low affective commitment and high turnover intentions.

The following hypotheses are proposed and are depicted in the path model (see Figure 1).

H1: There is an inverse relationship between POS and police perception of red tape.
H2: High POS is associated with high discretionary power.
H3: High POS is associated with high PsyCap.
H4: High LMX is associated with high discretionary power.
H5: High LMX predicts PsyCap.
H6: High PsyCap is associated with low red tape.
H7: High PsyCap is associated with low stress.
H8: High PsyCap is associated with high affective commitment.
H9: There is an inverse relationship between stress and police perception of discretionary power.
H10: High police stress is associated with low affective commitment.
H11: High police stress is associated with high turnover intentions.
H12: There is an inverse relationship between red tape and discretionary power.
H13: High red tape is associated with high police stressors.
H14: High red tape is associated with high turnover intentions.
H15: High discretionary power is associated with high affective commitment.

H16: There is an inverse relationship discretionary power and turnover intentions.

H17: High affective commitment is associated with low turnover intentions.

-------------------------------

Insert Figure 1 about here

-------------------------------

METHODS

The aim of this study was to examine the influence of organizational and individual support on police officers’ perceptions of red tape and stress, and also upon employee outcomes. For this, a cross-sectional design using a survey-based, self-report strategy was used to collect data from 588 police officers in the USA that are most engaged with the public.

Sample

Police officers are expected to attend training at least annually in the USA. Over a period of five months (January-May inclusive, 2013), police officers were invited to complete a survey during their training sessions. Police officers were provided with an envelope and asked to seal their surveys before placing them in a sealed box for collection by the researchers. The sample comprised 412 males, of which three were sergeants and 164 females, of which three were sergeants (12 respondents failed to provide such information). A large proportion of the respondents were rank-and-file police officers (non-sergeants). Of the group, 321 males and 83 females stated that they were married, four males and six females were living with a partner, 50 males and 45 females were single, 42 males and 25 females were divorced, and one male and two
females were widowed (10 respondents did not provide any information about their marital status).

**Measures**

Previously validated and reliable scales were adopted in this study. The questionnaire items (with the exception of demographical variables), were collected using a 6-point Likert scale where “1” = strongly disagree and “6” = strongly agree. Internal reliability coefficients ranged from 0.73 to 0.93. The dependent variable, intention to turnover, was measured with the three-item scale from Meyer, et al. (1993), including, ‘I frequently think about leaving my current employer’. LMX was measured using a seven-item uni-dimensional scale (LMX-7), developed by Graen and Uhl-Bien (1995), including, ‘My supervisor understands my work problems and needs’. POS was measured using six items of Eisenberger, et al.’s (1997) validated instrument, including, ‘there is openness and honesty between different grades in the department’. PsyCap was measured using the four subscales from Luthans, et al. (2006). Following earlier research, this construct was operationalized as a second order, latent variable, comprising four subdimensions of PsyCap (efficacy, hope, resilience, and optimism). Police stressors measured were the result of operational and organizational related factors (see McCreary and Thompson, 2006). Respondents were asked to indicate 20 items of work and organizational stressors. In the present study, confirmatory factor analysis resulted in two types of police stressors: ‘Leadership’ (six items, including ‘the feeling that different rules apply to different people (e.g., favoritism)’) and ‘Administrative’ (seven items; including, ‘excessive administrative duties’ and ‘too much computer work’) stressors. Discretionary power was measured using Spreitzer’s (1996) 3-item measure of self-determination, including, ‘I decide how I do my job’. Affective commitment was
measured with five items of Allen and Meyer’s (1990) scale, including, ‘I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization’.

However, there is continuing debate about the validity of the “Red Tape” measure in terms of its multi-dimensionality, the problems with the items/statements, and the conceptualisations of the measures (Feeney, 2012). A modified version of Bozeman’s (2000) conceptualisation was used. However, similar to other studies (see Feeney, 2012), the measure was somewhat poor with only two of four items used (‘A lot of the administrative and procedural rules we follow are a waste of time’ and ‘Many administrative and procedural rules reduce our ability to be effective’) to measure red tape in the policing context.

As the data were collected from a single respondent at one point in time, using the same research instrument, this type of research design might be affected by same-source variance (see Podsakoff, et al., 2003). To demonstrate that such bias has been considered, we followed the recommendation by Podsakoff, et al. (2003) to undertake several statistical remedies to check for common method variance. First, Harman’s single-factor test using SPSS was conducted. The unrotated factor analysis resulted in eight factors with eigenvalues greater than 1.0; the largest factor accounted for 32.1% of variance. This was followed by a common method factor analysis using AMOS. Comparison of the fit indices indicated that the model with common method variable had less goodness of fit with the data. Combined, these analyses assure that common method bias did not have a major effect on the findings.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and correlations are reported in Table 1. A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using AMOS 22 was undertaken for all multi-item measures (measurement
model). The composite reliability coefficients of the multi-item measures demonstrated good internal consistency. Subsequently, a structural model was then analyzed to determine the path coefficients for the hypothesized relationships.

As depicted in Figure 2, the hypothesized eight-factor model (i.e., LMX, POS, PsyCap, Red Tape, Police Stressors, Discretionary Power, Affective Commitment, and Intention to Turnover) had a good fit with the data ($\chi^2/df=2.526(352)$, RMSEA=.05, CFI=.96, TLI=.95, SRMR=.05). These indices satisfied recommended guidelines and demonstrated acceptable fit (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Based on the cut-off specified by Cohen (1988), the R-square of the dependent variable, turnover intentions, was 0.40, achieving a high effect size.

Results of the structural model are reported in Table 2, showing path coefficients and standardized regression weights. Four hypotheses (H6, H9, H13, and H16) were not supported; all others were supported.
While there is an expectation that police will keep the public safe, there appears to be no expectation that police management will be effective in managing police activities (nor the resulting stress). The study examined whether police management provides organizational support for police, or whether police have to rely on their individual attributes to cope with policing stress. The study found police officers were not particularly stressed from organizational or operational factors, which is surprising considering previous literature describes policing as a stressful occupation. Also, police had some PsyCap, and one explanation is that they appear to rely on their personal attributes to buffer them against stress. In particular, this paper examined the effect of individual and organizational support mechanisms on police officers’ perception of red tape and stress, and in turn discretionary power and affective commitment and turnover intentions. The findings confirmed the proposed model (see Figure 1) except for four paths. That is, findings confirmed that individual and organizational factors do significantly impact upon police officers’ perceptions of red tape and stress, and in turn discretionary power, affective commitment and turnover intentions (see Figure 2). Research has examined the impact of organizational factors upon red tape, discretionary power and other outcomes; however, there has been far less research examining the impact of individual support factors such as PsyCap on the outcomes of “first response” types of employees such as police.

In terms of organizational factors, this study examined POS and LMX. It is argued that management has the power to affect police officers’ objectives (and resources to achieve them) and the findings confirm that POS impacts police, but inversely. Previous research had identified that high POS was associated with high PsyCap and vice versa (Ghaffaripour, 2014), however, this study found police officers mostly had low POS perceptions, which negatively impacted their PsyCap. This means that if they were given the resources and support needed for their job, they
would most likely develop greater PsyCap. Secondly, previous research found that POS moderated the relationship between discretionary power (autonomy) and affective commitment (Ambreen, et al., 2014), and this study identified a similar relationship for USA police officers. Thirdly, it was hypothesized that high POS would be associated with low red tape, and the findings support this. However, the means indicate an inverse relationship, with relatively low POS predicting relatively higher red tape perceptions. Effective POS would be evidenced by achievable goals reported, with workable strategies and adequate resources to achieve those goals. However, the findings do not show effective POS.

Additionally, the study examined the impact of LMX upon PsyCap and discretionary power. As per previous research (Story, et al., 2013), this study found that LMX predicted USA police officers’ PsyCap. Brunetto, et al. (2011) had found LMX predicted police officers’ discretionary power in Australia, and these findings suggest similar results, with the means indicating officers perceived somewhat good relationships with supervisors (LMX) and some discretionary power.

In terms of individual factors, this study examined police officers’ PsyCap, “red tape” stress, police stress and affective commitment, finding some PsyCap, little stress from red tape, and some organizational commitment - similar to Avey, et al.’s (2011) results. Gächter, et al. (2010) argued for research that examined the impact of different types of social support for mediating police stress, and this study showed that PsyCap played a significant role in reducing police stress. Also, while previous research by Giauque, et al. (2012) identified high job demands (especially from red tape workplace activities) were associated with high stress outcomes, this study found no relationship between police officers’ red tape and stress. One explanation is that the measure of red tape was the problem. Another explanation is that the activities perceived as
red tape by police officers had the effect of impacting upon their discretionary power perceptions, because it involved more rules and accountability. However, because of the nature of the rules, it did not stress them.

It was also expected that stress would predict discretionary power, because Greco, et al. (2006) showed that Canadian nurses experienced high stress and low job autonomy. However, no relationship was found between red tape and discretionary power for police officers. Instead, officers reported high discretionary power, as is expected for any street-level bureaucrat. One possible explanation for the lack of relationship between red tape and discretionary power is Shane’s (2010) argument, that performance management had impacted senior management but not police officers. However, it must be highlighted that police officers’ performance management does not appear to include providing them with adequate support. This may be that, because of poor relationships between senior management and police officers, officers perceived they have the power to ignore some rules that other public-sector employees cannot because of, as argued by Shane (2010), a lack of effective performance management processes.

Also, low discretionary power was expected to be associated with turnover intentions. This was not supported, although discretionary power did predict affective commitment, which predicted turnover intentions, so it is likely that affective commitment mediates the relationship between discretionary power and turnover intentions. Another unsupported hypothesis is the relationship between PsyCap and red tape. Officers perceived some levels of PsyCap and red tape; however, the two were not statistically related. It was hypothesized that those with high PsyCap would have high self-efficacy and optimism, and therefore would be less likely to perceive the work negatively as red tape. This was not the case. One explanation could be that the measure used for red tape was inadequate (Freeney, 2012). Another explanation is that
perceptions of self-efficacy, resilience, hope and self-confidence do not impact upon red tape because some accountability measures and paperwork are accepted as part of policing.

In terms of implications of the study, the importance of providing social support for those negotiating policing tasks is well-established (Gächter, et al., 2010). However, the findings indicated these police officers did not experience effective management support. Instead, poor management increased officers’ perceptions of red tape, in turn, increasing their stress levels. This situation needs improving through training and development of managers and officers about what is perceived by officers as adequate support and resources. Further, if police officers have high personal attributes (high PsyCap), then they can buffer or counter the negative effects of stress. The important implication is that PsyCap can be developed, and therefore police management needs to enhance such attributes both in their own management and also in their officers. Otherwise, over time, these police officers will experience rising stress levels and incidences of stress-related diseases, with associated leave/workers compensation implications – which taxpayers (the public) fund. This means that poor police management is hidden, by the indirect nature of how stress-related costs are funded. A further implication is that because lower stress is associated with higher work performance (Avey, et al., 2011; Walumbwa, et al., 2011), police management should develop officers’ PsyCap and provided high levels of management support for them to do their work.

Finally, police management should enhance support to their officers (POS), because another positive consequence is decreased turnover intentions. This means that police managers need to ensure the provision of adequate resources and support to officers, to efficiently and effectively do their job. Additionally, as mentioned, high POS has the extra benefit of increasing PsyCap, thereby reducing police officers’ stress. In this study, officers perceived low POS levels,
reducing their ability to “police” effectively. This is not a viable long-term situation, and needs improving. The findings from this study provide new evidence-based knowledge from which to develop targeted strategies to improve the management of police and therefore enhance the performance of the police service.

**Limitations and Future Research**

One limitation was that police officers in only one USA city department were included. Further studies should include police from other USA cities and other countries to ensure the findings are not an aberration. Another limitation is the use of self-report surveys, possibly causing common methods bias. However, we were able to provide some reassurance that common method bias was not of major concern. Public management scholars such as Yang and Hsieh (2007: 866) noted that the threat of common method bias due to same source bias is “…not to invalidate relationships uncovered in studies employing self-reported data, but to marginally attenuate the strength of the findings” (citing Spector, 2006).

More research is required in conceptualizing and operationalizing a measure of red tape appropriate for public-sector employees, such as police officers and nurses. They are service employees who perform under high emotional strain when daily dealing with difficult work situations (see Hochschild, 1983). Hence, new research is needed to understand the specific context in which red tape could affect work outcomes. Also, future research should collect data from other sources (e.g., supervisors of the police supervisors), or use data collected from multiple time-periods to further minimize common method bias (see Podsakoff, et al., 2003).

**CONCLUSION**
SET and POB factors provided a useful lens for better understanding police officer outcomes. In particular, the findings suggest that together, the organizational and individual factors affected police officers’ commitment and turnover intentions. For example, there was a path between organizational relationship (POS) to red tape, and then to discretionary power, affective commitment and turnover intentions. A second path was from another organizational relationship (LMX) to an individual resource (PsyCap), then to stress, affective commitment and turnover intentions. Examining an individual attribute (PsyCap) provides an important piece of the organizational puzzle in explaining police officers’ commitment and turnover intentions. By examining the impact of both organizational AND individual factors, there is now more evidence-based knowledge about the antecedents of police outcomes.
REFERENCES


Table 1. Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. LMX</td>
<td>4.63</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. POS</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.46***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. PsyCap</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>.73</td>
<td>.40***</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Red Tape</td>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>1.29</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>-.21***</td>
<td>-.41***</td>
<td>-.26***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Police Stress</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>-.38***</td>
<td>-.39***</td>
<td>-.34***</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Disc. Power</td>
<td>5.06</td>
<td>0.86</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>.29***</td>
<td>.54***</td>
<td>-.24***</td>
<td>-.22***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Aff. Commit</td>
<td>4.19</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.38***</td>
<td>.49***</td>
<td>.44***</td>
<td>-.19***</td>
<td>-.30***</td>
<td>.47***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Int. to Turnover</td>
<td>2.23</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>.84</td>
<td>-.30***</td>
<td>-.36***</td>
<td>-.30***</td>
<td>.25***</td>
<td>.35***</td>
<td>-.31***</td>
<td>-.42***</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Scale for means: Range from 1 = Strongly Disagree, to 6 = Strongly Agree

N = 588

**p<.01; ***p<.001

Internal reliability coefficients of sub-dimensions of PsyCap were: .86 (Hope), .83 (Resilience), .72 (Optimism), and .78 (Efficacy).

Internal reliability coefficients of sub-dimensions of Police Stress were .84 (Leadership Stress) and .80 (Administrative Stress).
Table 2. Hypotheses and Standardized Regression Weights *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Estimate</th>
<th>Critical Ratio</th>
<th>Sig. level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1. POS → Red Tape</td>
<td>-0.44</td>
<td>9.17</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2. POS → Discretionary Power</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>3.47</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3. POS → PsyCap</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>7.73</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4. LMX → Discretionary Power</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5. LMX → PsyCap</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>7.49</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7. PsyCap → Police Stressors</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>8.59</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8. PsyCap → Affective Commitment</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>9.19</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10. Red Tape → Discretionary Power</td>
<td>-0.14</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11. Police Stressors → Intention to Turnover</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>2.90</td>
<td>**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12. Red Tape → Intention to Turnover</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>2.37</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14. Red Tape → Police Stressors</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>6.24</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15. Discretionary Power → Affective Commitment</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>9.30</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H17. Affective Commitment → Intention to Turnover</td>
<td>-0.53</td>
<td>11.45</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Only significant paths are reported
N = 588
*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001
Figure 1. Proposed Research Model
Note:  
N = 588  
Only significant paths are reported in the results model  
*p<.05; **p<.01; ***p<.001

Figure 2. Structural Model