



## The moderating role of prior exposure to aggressive home culture in the relationship between negative reciprocity beliefs and aggression

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### ABSTRACT

Drawing upon the General Aggression Model (Anderson & Bushman, 2002) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1973), we examined the role of prior exposure to aggressive home culture as a moderator of the effects of negative reciprocity beliefs on aggression. We tested this notion in two studies comprised of 170 student–parent dyads and 144 employee–co-worker dyads. Results suggest that negative reciprocity beliefs and prior exposure to aggressive home culture were positively related to self-reported physical aggression (Study 1) and co-worker rated workplace aggression (Study 2). In addition, individuals with low and high negative reciprocity beliefs engaged in greater levels of physical and workplace aggression under conditions of high but not low prior exposure to aggressive home culture.

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### 1. Introduction

Individual differences are powerful predictors of aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Bandura, 1973; Berkowitz, 1993; Bettencourt, Talley, Benjamin, & Valentine, 2006; Huesmann, 1988). Indeed, a recent study reported that individual differences accounted for over 60% of the variance in predicting workplace aggression (Douglas & Martinko, 2001). In the research reported here, we examine the interactive effects between individual differences in negative reciprocity beliefs and prior exposure to aggressive home culture in predicting aggression among young adults attending university in the Philippines (Study 1) and among adults in the workplace (Study 2).

Negative reciprocity refers to a unitary set of beliefs favoring retribution as a response to mistreatment (Gouldner, 1960). In his seminal paper, Gouldner (1960) further described negative reciprocity as a norm in which “the emphasis is placed not on the return of benefits but on the return of injuries” (p. 172). This principle is best exemplified by the biblical injunction “a life for a life, an eye for an eye ... a bruise for a bruise” (Exodus 21:23–25). Individuals vary on their beliefs regarding the appropriateness of negative reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). For example, not all individuals retaliate. Some may believe it is more appropriate to “turn the other cheek”. Such individuals would be low in negative reciprocity beliefs.

We expected individual differences in negative reciprocity to be positively associated with increased aggression. Indeed, there is empirical evidence to support this proposition. For instance, those who hold strong negative reciprocity beliefs are more likely to use retaliation than avoidance (McLean Parks, 1998). Another study found that participants who strongly believed in negative reciprocity reported more anger and engaged in increased retaliation when ridiculed than those low in negative reciprocity beliefs (Eisenberger, Lynch, Aselage, & Rohdieck, 2004). Similarly, Mitchell and Ambrose (2007) found that the relationship between abusive supervision in the workplace and supervisor-directed deviance (i.e., acting rudely toward, or gossiping about the supervisor) was stronger among subordinates who strongly endorsed the negative reciprocity norm than those who endorsed the norm to a lesser degree. Thus, based on the literature presented above, we hypothesized that:

**Hypothesis 1.** *Negative reciprocity will be positively related to aggression.*

A substantial body of evidence demonstrates that exposure to violence and aggression increases risk for aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Bandura, 1973). In a classic experiment, Bandura, Ross, and Ross (1963) found that exposure to human and filmed aggressive models doubled aggressive behavior in children relative to those who were not exposed to aggressive models. Social learning theory (Bandura, 1973) explains this phenomena by positing that people learn aggressive behaviors through processes such as reinforcement and modeling. Frequent exposure to aggression during childhood conveys a message that aggressive behavior is an acceptable means of resolving interpersonal conflicts as well as increasing

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one's tolerance for violence (Huesmann & Guerra, 1997). It also gives children the opportunity to develop cognitive scripts regarding acts of interpersonal aggression (e.g., how to hit, what to hit with, when to hit) which carry over into adulthood especially when aggression results in positive outcomes (Mihalic & Elliott, 1997). Aggressive behavior is maintained because scripts become automatically activated and positive consequences are expected from these behaviors.

The General Aggression Model (GAM; Anderson & Bushman, 2002), which subsumes earlier theories of human aggression, provides a complementary view of the effects of violence exposure on aggression. According to the GAM, prior exposure to aggression increases aggressive personality over time by biasing how people think, feel, and interpret situations. Specifically, exposure to violence can increase aggressive personality by increasing the automaticity of aggressive scripts, positively biasing attitudes and beliefs towards aggression, and desensitization. Furthermore, exposure to violence can increase the tendency for individuals to perceive the world in a hostile manner (Dodge & Crick, 1990).

Research suggests that aggression is learned and transmitted through the family environment (Cappell & Heiner, 1990; Chermack & Walton, 1999). For example, Chermack and Walton (1999) found that both observed and received family aggression was associated with aggression in dating and marital relationships. Moreover, received aggression predicted aggression in other interpersonal relationships as well (e.g., strangers, friends, co-workers, and bosses). Collectively, these results are thought to occur because children spend a significant amount of time with family members whom children hold in high regard (e.g., parents) and are considered role models. Frequent aggressive interactions among family members offer increased opportunities for modeling aggressive behavior. Modeled aggressive behavior is then maintained through support and tolerance, consequently creating the norm that aggression is highly valued and encouraged (Bandura, 1973). Thus, a home environment marked by aggressiveness becomes a sub-cultural training ground for aggressive modes of responding (Bandura, 1973). Indeed, studies have shown that people who grew up in aggressive-prone environments are predisposed to aggression in their adult lives (Douglas & Martinko, 2001; Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967). Based on these theoretical and empirical considerations, we predicted that:

**Hypothesis 2.** *Prior exposure to aggressive home culture will be positively related to aggression.*

We also expected prior exposure to an aggressive home environment to moderate the relationship between negative reciprocity and aggression. Based on the literature discussed so far, individuals exposed to aggressive cultures are more likely to respond aggressively to mistreatment than those who have been exposed to cultures that do not promote aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Bandura, 1973; Douglas & Martinko, 2001; Wolfgang & Ferracuti, 1967). Given the powerful effects of exposure to aggressive models when young, children's exposure to an aggressive home culture may therefore act as a moderating mechanism by which even individuals low in negative reciprocity beliefs display increased aggression. Thus, we expected that individuals both high and low in negative reciprocity beliefs would be likely to engage in aggression if they were exposed to an aggressive home culture. We argue that even individuals who endorse the importance of "turning the other cheek" (i.e., low in negative reciprocity beliefs) are influenced by the pervasive effects of an aggressive home environment. Thus, it is predicted that:

**Hypothesis 3.** *Prior exposure to aggressive home culture moderates the relationship between negative reciprocity and aggression. Specifically, participants with high and low negative reciprocity beliefs*

*would report greater levels of aggression under conditions of high aggressive home culture. Only those high in negative reciprocity beliefs would report greater levels of aggression when exposed to low levels of aggressiveness at home.*

## 2. Study 1

### 2.1. Methods

#### 2.1.1. Participants and procedure

Three hundred psychology students from a large university in the Philippines were recruited for Study 1. Participants were asked to complete a survey containing demographic information and rating scales for negative reciprocity and physical aggression during class hours with permission from the lecturer-in-charge. The parent questionnaire was given to each student at the end of survey administration. Students were asked to have one of their parents answer the questionnaire which was collected the following week. To ensure that the parents answered the questionnaire, they were requested to place the signed consent form and questionnaire in the envelope provided with their signature across the flap. Out of the 300 survey packets distributed, 230 completed questionnaires were returned yielding a response rate of 76.67%. An anonymous code created by the student participant was used to match the self-report questionnaire and the parent questionnaire. We received 200 matched student–parent questionnaires representing a response rate of 66.67%. Out of this number, 30 questionnaires were discarded either because one of the consent forms was unsigned or the parent questionnaire was not sealed inside an envelope. Thus, a final sample of 170 matched student–parent dyads were used in the analysis.

Participants were predominantly female (66.47%). Ages ranged from 15 to 21 years ( $M = 17.13$ ,  $SD = 0.90$ ) and most were predominantly first year university students (86%). For each participant, one parent (36 males, 119 females, 12 unidentified) provided ratings of the participant's prior exposure to aggressive home culture.

#### 2.1.2. Measures

Established scales were used. Questionnaires were prepared in English because this language is spoken by a vast majority of the Filipino population and is predominantly used in educational contexts (Bernardo, 2004). Reliability coefficients for each scale can be found in Table 1.

**2.1.2.1. Negative reciprocity.** Student participants rated themselves on six items from the scale developed by Eisenberger and colleagues (2004). A sample item is, "If someone dislikes you, you should dislike them." They responded to statements by expressing their agreement on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree).

**2.1.2.2. Prior exposure to aggressive home culture.** One parent of each student rated two items from the scale developed by Douglas and Martinko (2001). The items are: "In the home where this person grew up in, people were often engaged in verbal confrontations; "In the home where this person grew up in, people were often engaged in physical confrontations" (1 = not at all, 7 = extremely).

**2.1.2.3. Aggression.** Students rated themselves on six items from the physical aggression subscale of the Buss–Perry Aggression Questionnaire (Buss & Perry, 1992). A sample item is "Once in a while, I can't control the urge to strike another person." They were asked to rate the extent in which each statement is characteristic of them using a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = extremely uncharacteristic of me to 7 = extremely characteristic of me).

**Table 1**  
Descriptive statistics, zero-order correlations, and reliability coefficients for studies 1 and 2.

	M	SD	1	2	3	4
<i>Study 1 (N = 170)</i>						
1. Gender	.69	.46				
2. Negative reciprocity	2.56	.98	-.19**	(.91)		
3. Parent ratings of prior exposure to aggressive home culture	1.91	1.15	.00	.08	(.80)	
4. Physical aggression	3.13	1.32	-.25**	.46**	.40**	(.86)
<i>Study 2 (N = 144)</i>						
1. Gender	.54	.50				
2. Time 1 negative reciprocity	3.23	1.13	-.17*	(.90)		
3. Time 1 prior exposure to aggressive home culture	2.71	1.77	-.42**	.56**	(.84)	
4. Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression	3.00	1.09	-.16*	.60**	.47**	(.88)

\*  $p < .10$ .

\*  $p < .05$ .

\*\*  $p < .01$ .

### 2.1.6. Control variables

Consistent with previous research on aggression (Archer, 2002; Björkqvist, Lagerspetz, & Kaukiainen, 1992), gender (dummy coded as 0 = male, 1 = female) was controlled for in the analysis. Evidence suggests that adolescent males engage in more direct forms of aggression than females (Björkqvist et al., 1992). Moreover, males and females differ in the specific forms of physically aggressive acts they commit (Archer, 2002).

## 3. Results

Descriptive statistics, inter-correlations, and internal consistency reliabilities of the study variables are summarized in Table 1. As noted above, gender was controlled in the analyses reported below. Coefficient alpha for the study variables are all above .70 falling within the acceptable range for psychological constructs (Kline, 1999; Nunnally, 1994).

Moderated hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the incremental explanatory power of variables in each block. In order to reduce multi-collinearity, both the independent (negative reciprocity) and moderator (prior exposure to aggressive home culture) variables were mean-centered. Following Aiken and West (1991), we entered gender as a control variable in the first block of the regression equation. In the second step, negative reciprocity and exposure to aggressive home culture scores were entered to test for main effects. The multiplicative interaction terms were then computed between the independent variable and the moderator variable (negative reciprocity beliefs  $\times$  prior exposure to aggressive home culture) and entered in the regression model at Step 3.

Table 2 shows the results for the regression analysis with physical aggression as the dependent variable. Both negative reciprocity and prior exposure to aggressive home culture explained additional variance over and above the effects of gender on physical aggression  $R^2\Delta = .31$ ,  $F(2, 156) = 31.60$ ,  $p < .01$ . Negative reciprocity was found to be positively related to physical aggression ( $\beta = .40$ ,  $p < .01$ ), thus, supporting Hypothesis 1. Prior exposure to aggressive home culture also significantly predicted physical aggression ( $\beta = .37$ ,  $p < .01$ ), supporting Hypothesis 2.

Our primary hypothesis was that prior exposure to aggressive home culture would moderate the relationship between negative reciprocity beliefs and physical aggression. This was indeed the case. Entry of the multiplicative term explained incremental variance over and above the main effects,  $R^2\Delta = .03$ ,  $F(1, 155) = 26.66$ ,  $p < .01$ . The interaction accounted for an additional 3% of the

**Table 2**  
Hierarchical moderated regression analysis for studies 1 and 2.

	Study 1: physical aggression			Study 2: Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression		
	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3	Step 1	Step 2	Step 3
<i>Control variables</i>						
Gender	-.25**	-.17**	-.16**	-.16*	.01	.01
<i>Main effects</i>						
Negative reciprocity (NR)		.40**	.38**	.51**	.50**	
Prior exposure to aggressive home culture (AC)		.37**	.40**	.19*	.18*	
<i>Two-way interaction</i>						
NR $\times$ AC			-.18**			-.21**
F	10.25**	31.60**	26.66**	3.56*	32.01**	27.47**
Adjusted $R^2$	.05**	.36**	.39**	.01*	.39**	.43**
$\Delta R^2$		.31**	.03**		.39**	.04**

\*  $p < .10$ .

\*  $p < .05$ .

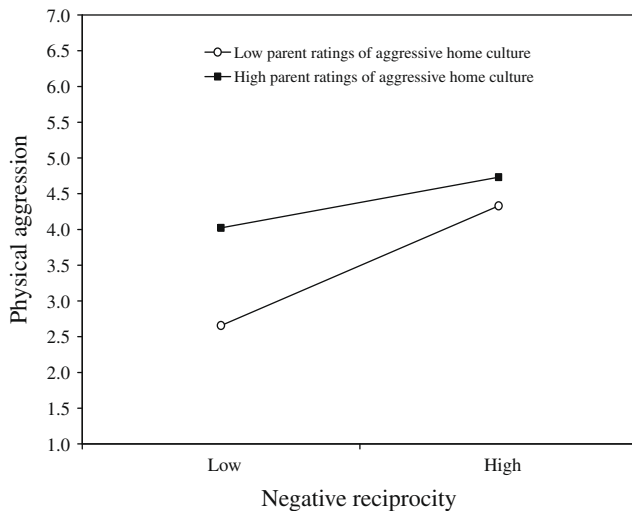
\*\*  $p < .01$ .

variance in self-reported physical aggression, thus falling within the typical range reported for moderator effects in non-experimental studies (i.e.,  $.01 \leq R^2 \leq .03$ ; Champoux & Peters, 1987). Information from the regression equation was extracted to plot the relationship between negative reciprocity and physical aggression at low ( $-1$  SD) and high ( $+1$  SD) levels of prior exposure to aggressive home culture. At low levels of prior exposure to aggressive home culture, the effect of negative reciprocity was strong and significant,  $\beta = .59$ ,  $t(165) = 7.45$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, at high levels of prior exposure to aggressive home culture, the effects of negative reciprocity were considerably weaker,  $\beta = .24$ ,  $t(165) = 2.52$ ,  $p < .05$ . Stated another way, individuals with low and high negative reciprocity beliefs engaged in greater levels of physical aggression under conditions of high prior exposure to aggressive home culture, whereas only those high in negative reciprocity beliefs reported being physically aggressive when exposed to low levels of aggressive home culture (see Fig. 1).

## 4. Discussion

Guided by the GAM and social learning theory, we examined the interactive role of negative reciprocity beliefs and prior exposure to aggressive home culture in predicting physical aggression. Our results supported our first hypothesis that negative reciprocity would be positively associated with physical aggression. This finding is consistent with previous research on negative reciprocity beliefs and their relationship with aggression-related behaviors (Eisenberger et al., 2004; McLean Parks, 1998). The results also lend support to Eisenberger and colleagues' (2004) contention that negative reciprocity beliefs serve a cathartic function. That is, individuals with strong negative reciprocity beliefs may derive satisfaction by retaliating against those who have mistreated them. We also found support for our second hypothesis that prior exposure to aggressive home culture was related to increased physical aggression. This is consistent with previous research implicating the family environment as a social context in which aggressive behaviors are learned (Cappell & Heiner, 1990; Chermack & Walton, 1999).

Our third hypothesis predicted that prior exposure to aggressive home culture would moderate the relationship between negative reciprocity and physical aggression. Indeed, we found that regardless of individual differences in negative reciprocity beliefs, exposure to high levels of aggressive home culture was associated



**Fig. 1.** The interactive effects between negative reciprocity and parent ratings of prior exposure to aggressive home culture in predicting physical aggression.

with increased self-reported physical aggression. One possible explanation for this is that the enactment of aggression does not only depend on beliefs regarding its appropriateness, but may also be contingent upon social learning processes. Thus, even if individuals weakly endorse the norm of reciprocity, they would still engage in physical aggression if it was positively modeled and reinforced in the past.

Although results from Study 1 supported the hypothesized relationships, there are a number of limitations that should be noted. First, the study used a cross-sectional design, thus, inferences of causality cannot be ascertained. Second, our measure of physical aggression was based on participants' self-report which may have been influenced by social desirability bias. Similarly, although we have attempted to minimize common method variance by using parent ratings of prior exposure to aggressive home culture, responses from this measure may have been underreported given the sensitive nature of the items (Lee, 1993). Finally, we acknowledge that we tested a single set of hypotheses against a student sample which limits the generalizability of our results.

## 5. Study 2

Study 2 builds on Study 1 in several important ways. First, we collected data from an employee sample in order to strengthen the generalizability of our results. Indeed, Lindsay and Ehrenberg (1993) proposed that replications are the key to testing the generalizability of results as it enables researchers to test whether the same result would hold again in a different population or under different conditions. Second, we assessed prior exposure to aggressive home culture using participants' self-reported ratings. We believe that the employee perspective appears to be the most appropriate source of measurement for this particular construct considering that we are assessing their subjective family experiences. Finally, we constructively replicated the outcome variable that was measured in Study 1 by using co-worker ratings of workplace aggression. Unlike other forms of human behavior, aggression may be considered less malleable – that is, it is likely to occur across various situations (McCloskey & Lichter, 2003). Thus, we collected co-worker ratings of workplace aggression because they interact with each other on a daily basis and as such, are able to observe a wide range of behaviors under different circumstances. In addition, co-worker ratings may be less susceptible to social desirability bias than participants' ratings considering the sensitive nature of the variables under consideration.

## 5.1. Methods

### 5.1.1. Participants and procedure

Data were collected from a large financial institution in the Philippines. Both employees and their co-workers completed questionnaires containing identity codes to allow matching each employee's responses with those of his or her corresponding co-worker. Two hundred full-time employees received surveys assessing their demographic characteristics, negative reciprocity, and perceptions of prior exposure to aggressive home culture. Of this number, 158 responded to the employee survey yielding a response rate of 79%. At Time 2, 2 months after Time 1 data collection, one co-worker of each of these employees received a co-worker behavioral rating form asking them to assess the extent to which the focal employees engaged in aggressive behaviors at work. These co-workers were identified by the Personnel Management Division as someone who closely interacted with the focal employees on a daily basis and in a position to observe the employees' work behaviors. We received a total of 149 co-worker behavioral rating forms. Five co-worker behavioral rating forms were excluded because of missing identity codes. Thus, the final sample consisted of 144 matched employee-co-worker dyads. All participants received a chocolate bar as an incentive for participation.

The employee sample was 69% men. Fifty-nine percent of the sample was between 21 to 30 years old. Fifty percent have been working in their organization between 1 to 5 years. For the co-worker sample, 46% were men. The mean age was 31.95 years ( $SD = 8.86$ ). Forty-nine percent have been working in their organization between 1 to 5 years. Co-workers had worked with and known the focal employee for an average of 3.13 years ( $SD = 3.48$ ).

### 5.1.2. Measures

**5.1.2.1. Negative reciprocity.** At Time 1, employees assessed their levels of negative reciprocity. As in Study 1, the measure developed by Eisenberger and colleagues (2001) was used.

**5.1.2.2. Prior exposure to aggressive home culture.** At Time 1, employees reported the extent to which they had been exposed to an aggressive home culture. This variable was assessed using the full 4-item scale developed by Douglas and Martinko (2001).

**5.1.2.3. Workplace aggression.** At Time 2, 2 months after Time 1 data collection, co-workers were requested to assess the extent to which the focal employee has engaged in a variety of aggressive behaviors in the workplace during the past months. Participants completed a 12-item scale that was adapted from Douglas and Martinko (2001). Example items include: "This employee damaged property belonging to the organization", "This employee said rude things about his/her supervisor", and "This employee said nasty things about other co-workers while at work". Higher scores reflect a higher incidence of workplace aggression.

**5.1.2.4. Control variables.** As in Study 1, gender (dummy coded as 0 = male, 1 = female) was controlled for in the analysis.

## 6. Results

Data were analyzed using the same methods described in Study 1. Means, standard deviations, and zero-order correlations for Study 2 are presented at the bottom portion of Table 1. The results of the regression analysis are provided in Table 2.

Time 1 negative reciprocity was positively and significantly related to Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression ( $\beta = .51$ ,  $p < .01$ ), thereby supporting Hypothesis 1. Time 1 prior exposure to aggressive home culture also significantly predicted Time 2

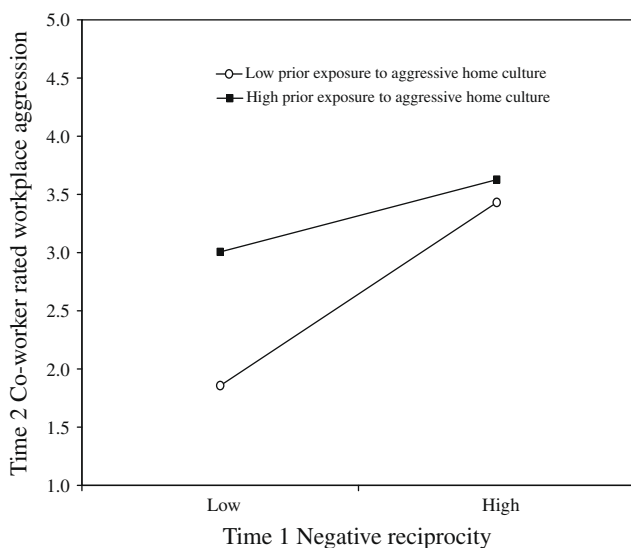
co-worker rated workplace aggression ( $\beta = .19, p < .05$ ) providing support for **Hypothesis 2**. Entry of the interactive term contributed additional variance in predicting Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression, ( $\beta = -.21, p < .01$ ),  $R^2\Delta = .04$ ,  $F(1, 137) = 27.47$ ,  $p < .01$ . Fig. 2 suggests that at low levels of prior exposure to aggressive home culture, the relationship between Time 1 negative reciprocity and Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression was strong and significant,  $\beta = .60$ ,  $t(139) = 6.34$ ,  $p < .001$ . However, at high levels of prior exposure to aggressive home culture, the relationship between Time 1 negative reciprocity and Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression was weaker,  $\beta = .39$ ,  $t(139) = 2.51$ ,  $p < .05$ . In other words, individuals with low and high negative reciprocity beliefs were reported by their co-workers to engage in greater levels of workplace aggression under conditions of high prior exposure to aggressive home culture, whereas those high in negative reciprocity beliefs were only perceived by their co-workers engaging in workplace aggression when exposed to low levels of aggressive home culture (see Fig. 2).

## 7. Discussion

The results of Study 2 replicated those of Study 1. Using a different operationalization of aggression, we found that negative reciprocity beliefs were positively related to co-worker ratings of workplace aggression (**Hypothesis 1**). Also, self-reported prior exposure to aggressive home culture was positively associated with co-worker rated workplace aggression (**Hypothesis 2**). As predicted, those individuals previously exposed to high levels aggressive home culture engaged in greater levels of workplace aggression, regardless of how strong they endorsed negative reciprocity beliefs (**Hypothesis 3**). Overall, our results lend support to both the GAM and social learning theory in viewing aggression as a product of both situational and person variables (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Bandura, 1973).

## 8. General discussion

This research contributes to the literature in several important ways. First, our results provide strong evidence about the pervasive effects of aggressive cultures in predicting aggression even among those low in negative reciprocity beliefs. Second, our findings constructively build upon Douglas and Martinko's (2001) research by



**Fig. 2.** The interactive effects between Time 1 negative reciprocity and Time 1 prior exposure to aggressive home culture in predicting Time 2 co-worker rated workplace aggression.

examining aggression in an Eastern cultural context and sample (i.e., university students and full-time employees from the Philippines) demonstrating that the relationship between aggressive home culture and aggression goes beyond the workplace environment.

While our findings supported the role of social learning in facilitating the emergence of aggressive behaviors in work and non-work contexts, recent research on aggression and violence suggests that genetic influences are also important determinants of aggression (Cadoret, Leve, & Devor, 1997; Hines & Saudino, 2002, 2004; Jaffee, Moffitt, Caspi, Taylor, & Arseneault, 2002). Rowe (1994) proposed that the transmission of aggressive behavior may be horizontal rather than vertical. That is, children may inherit genes that predispose them to engage in aggressive behaviors rather than learning these behaviors from their parents. Indeed, evidence suggests that genetic factors explain more variance in aggressive behavior than shared environmental factors (Hines & Saudino, 2002, 2004; Jaffee et al., 2002). In addition, parents who suffer from psychopathology (e.g., antisocial personality disorder, substance use) are more prone to engage in violent interpersonal behavior (Jaffee et al., 2002). Given that these disorders are moderately heritable (Gershon & Cloninger, 1994), it is possible that a predisposition for aggressive behavior is genetically transmitted. Thus, future research could explore genetic influences on psychopathology, exposure to violence, negative reciprocity and aggression. It is likely that negative reciprocity might interact with genes and home environment. Indeed, a number of studies have now shown that individuals possessing a low transcription variant of the monoamine oxidase-A gene are at risk for aggression only when exposed to an abusive home environment (Caspi et al., 2002; Kim-Cohen et al., 2006).

The current study has limitations that warrant some discussion. First, the sensitive nature of our study variables makes it possible that the data were influenced by social desirability responses. Future research may benefit from including a measure of social desirability, which can be controlled for in the analysis. Another limitation is that the variables that were measured in the study were in the same order as the hypothesized model. The use of a counterbalancing technique would be beneficial to control for order effects. Third, our measure for prior exposure to aggressive home culture is based on retrospective accounts which might have been influenced by response distortion and memory recall problems (Henry, Moffitt, Caspi, Langley, & Silva, 1994). Fourth, the mean levels of negative reciprocity, aggressive home culture, and physical aggression are quite low. However, we should note that previous research has reported similarly low levels of aggressive cultures (Restubog, Scott, & Zagencyzk, 2009), negative reciprocity (Eisenberger et al., 2004; Mitchell & Ambrose, 2007), and physical aggression (Buss & Perry, 1992; Pan, Neidig, & O'Leary, 1994) as this is a characteristic of low base rate phenomenon in general (Spector & Fox, 2005; Tepper, Henle, Lambert, Giacalone, & Duffy, 2008). While these constructs represent low incidence or low visibility and participants seem reluctant to report them, their impact has significant implications for individual well-being and occupational health and safety and thus requires continued research attention. Finally, we were unable to capture informational processes in the enactment of aggression. Indeed, most current theories on aggression recognize the role of cognitive processes such as appraisals (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Bordia, Restubog, & Tang, 2008), self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986), and effortful control (Wilkowski & Robinson, 2008) in regulating aggressive behavior. Thus, future research may investigate how these variables mediate between negative reciprocity and aggression.

In conclusion, the current study provides evidence for the interactive effects of aggressive home cultures and negative reciprocity and aggression. Our data highlight the important role of the family environment in shaping individuals' personality and behavior. That

is, under conditions of high aggressive home culture, even individuals with low negative reciprocity beliefs tend to engage in greater levels of aggression. We hope that our findings stimulate further investigation on the role of aggressive cultures in predicting aggressive behavior in both work and non-work contexts.

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