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The Role of Support for Transgender and Nonbinary Employees: Perceived Co-Worker and Organizational Support's Associations With Job Attitudes and Work Behavior

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The development of diverse and inclusive workforces is increasingly being prioritized by organizations. However, organizations often struggle to adequately address the unique issues faced by transgender and nonbinary (TNB) people, and this can result in workplace discrimination, with deleterious consequences on employees' job attitudes and behavior, and their well-being. Co-worker and organizational support may play an important role for TNB employees' job attitudes and behavior. In an online survey with 225 TNB employees, we investigated how perceived co-worker support relates to job attitudes and work behavior, specifically job satisfaction, affective commitment, turnover intentions, job anxiety, and counterproductive work behavior. We also investigated whether these relationships were mediated by perceived organizational support. We found significant associations between perceived co-worker support and all job attitudes and work behavior. We also found that all of these relationships were mediated by the extent to which the organization was considered supportive. The findings thus suggest that companies should focus on supporting TNB employees at both the organizational and interpersonal level.

Public Significance Statement
Perceived organizational and co-worker support interact and jointly promote positive job attitudes and work behavior in TNB employees, namely more job satisfaction and affective commitment, and less turnover intentions, job anxiety, and counterproductive work behavior. Companies should thus focus on supporting TNB employees at both the organizational and interpersonal level.

Keywords: transgender and nonbinary, job attitudes, perceived co-worker support, perceived organizational support

The workplace is increasingly more diverse, and companies need to embrace and support differences in terms of ethnicity, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, or culture (Shore et al., 2009). Although diversity within organizations can lead to creativity, innovation, decision-making, and organizational performance (Ogbo, Anthony, & Ukpere, 2014; Robbins & Judge, 2009), when diversity is not properly managed, it also can make people with negative attitudes toward particular groups feel uncomfortable, and their attitudes may result in workplace discrimination (Kunze, Boehm, & Bruch, 2011). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) employees often suffer from substantial discrimination at work, with transgender and nonbinary (TNB) individuals reporting the highest prevalence of workplace discrimination (Mallory, Herman, & Badgett, 2011).

It is therefore not unexpected that disclosure of a TNB identity at work often leads to unsupportive negative reactions or workplace discrimination (Brown, et al., 2012; Colvin, 2007; Dispenza, Watson, Chung, & Brack, 2012; Norton & Herek, 2013; Whittle, Turner, Al-Alami, Rundall, & Thom, 2007) manifested as harassment, lower income, not being hired, difficulties being promoted, ostracism, misgendering, or microaggressions (Budge, Tebbe, & Howard, 2010; DeSouza, Wesselmann, & Ispas, 2017; Dispenza et al., 2012). For TNB individuals, unsupportive reactions from colleagues and managers can lead to negative psychological well-being in the form of distress, depression, internalized stigma, loss of confidence, or anxiety (Chope & Strom, 2008; Mizock & Mueser, 2014), and poorer work-related outcomes such as negative job attitudes (DeSouza et al., 2017; Law, Martinez, Ruggs, Hebl, & Akers, 2011; Whittle et al., 2007). For the organization, negative co-worker reactions and workplace discrimination based on gender identity impacts the economic performance of organizations in various ways, including recruitment, retention, job performance, employer branding, and litigation (Beauregard, Arevshatian, Booth, & Whittle, 2018; Burns, 2012).

TNB employees often feel that the workplace is not a safe and supportive place for them (Beauregard et al., 2018; Brown et al.,

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2012; Budge et al., 2010; Davis, 2009). In a study conducted by Whittle et al. (2007) with transgender individuals in the U.K., 39% of participants reported having decided not to permanently align their gender expression with their gender identity. Of those 39%, 42% claimed that the possible negative consequences of disclosing their gender identity in the workplace were the sole reason why they had not permanently aligned their gender expression with their gender identity. This is unfortunate as disclosure in the workplace can improve TNB individuals' well-being (Halpin & Allen, 2004; Mohr et al., 2019; Nuttbrock et al., 2010), and identity concealment circumvents opportunities for support and has been found to be associated with lower self-esteem, less job satisfaction, greater turnover intentions, and less organizational commitment (Mallory et al., 2011; Mohr et al., 2019; Newheiser, Barreto, & Tiemersma, 2017). Interestingly, it may not be the disclosure of gender identity itself but how organizations and co-worker react to it, or rather the extent to which they are perceived as supportive, that affects employees' job attitudes, work behavior, and well-being (Martinez, Sawyer, Thoroughgood, Ruggs, & Smith, 2017). However, the workplace experiences of TNB individuals, and the role of support for TNB individuals within workplaces, have not extensively been studied in quantitative research (Brewster, Velez, Mennicke, & Tebbe, 2014; McFadden, 2015). This study therefore aimed to investigate how perceived co-worker and organizational support affects TNB employees. Specifically, we studied how perceived co-worker and organizational support relates to TNB employees' job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, affective organizational commitment, and job anxiety) and work behavior (i.e., counterproductive work behavior). These are important constructs to explore as outcomes of co-worker support, not only because they have potential economic impact for organizations, but also because previous literature has shown that negative and unsupportive reactions to TNB employees at work most frequently come from co-workers (Budge et al., 2010; TotalJobs, 2016).

The Role of Co-Worker Support for Job Attitudes and Work Behavior

Webster, Adams, Maranto, Sawyer, and Thoroughgood (2018), in a meta-analysis of studies conducted with LGBT samples, found that supportive workplace relationships (i.e., co-worker support) are the strongest predictor of positive work attitudes and well-being, as compared to other types of workplace support, such as organizational support. Co-worker support refers to peers assisting one another in their tasks, when needed, by sharing knowledge and expertise, useful feedback, encouragement, and support (Bateman, 2009; Zhou & George, 2001). In TNB populations, the extent to which co-workers and supervisors react positively to an employee disclosing their TNB identity will also be a salient aspect of them feeling supported by their peers (Law et al., 2011). Indeed, initial research on co-worker support with TNB employees has documented relationships between perceived co-worker support and greater job satisfaction, more commitment, and less job anxiety (Law et al., 2011). Additionally, in broader (i.e., non-TNB) samples, perceived co-worker support has also been linked to lower turnover intentions (Bateman, 2009) and lower counterproductive work behavior (Bruk-Lee & Spector, 2006; Chiabur & Harrison, 2008; Fox, Spector, Goh, Bruursema, & Kessler, 2012). The following hypothesis was thus formulated:

> *Hypothesis 1:* Among TNB employees, perceived co-worker support is positively related to job satisfaction (H1a) and affective commitment (H1b); and negatively related to turnover intentions (H1c), job anxiety (H1d), and counterproductive work behavior (H1e).

The Mediating Role of Perceived Organizational Support

The relationship of perceived co-worker support with job attitudes and counterproductive work behavior in TNB employees may be mediated by perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support refers to employees' perception of the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Perceived organizational support has been found to impact employees' job attitudes in LGBT samples, including job satisfaction and job anxiety (Griffith & Hebl, 2002). However, there are few quantitative studies on how specifically perceived organizational support is related to job attitudes among TNB employees. Investigating this is important because TNB employees encounter unique challenges in the workplace that are not shared with LGB employees (Ozturk & Tatle, 2016). Furthermore, most previous literature with LGBT employees has focused on organizational supportiveness (i.e., the presence of supportive policies and practices), rather than perceived organizational support, as a predictor of job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions (Law et al., 2011; Ragins & Cornwell, 2001). Evidently, perceived organizational support is related to organizational supportiveness when top management demonstrates commitment to supportive policies (Pichler, Ruggs, & Trau, 2017). Additionally, more broadly in the work psychology literature, where predominantly non-LGBT samples have been used, authors have argued that perceived organizational support mediates the associations between perceived co-worker support and important workplace outcomes such as job satisfaction (Eisenberger, Cummings, Armeli, & Lynch, 1997; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002), affective commitment (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001), job stress (i.e., analogous to job anxiety; Butts, Vandenberg, DeJoy, Schaffer, & Wilson, 2009), and turnover intentions (Shoss, Eisenberger, Restubog, & Zagenczyk, 2013). In fact, according to Organizational Support Theory (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Eisenberger et al., 1997; Shore & Shore, 1995), perceived organizational support is strengthened by favorable work experiences that employees believe reflect voluntary and purposeful decisions made by the organization (Rhoades et al., 2001). Along similar lines, Eisenberger, Stinglhamber, Vandenberghe, Sucharski, and Rhoades (2002) claimed that perceived co-worker support—specifically perceived supervisor support—is likely to act as an antecedent of perceived organizational support's associations with job attitudes, such that the perceived organizational support resulting from supervisor support results in positive job attitudes. For example, Rhoades et al. (2001), in a non-TNB sample, found that perceived organizational support mediated the relationship between perceived supervisor support and affective commitment. Another study by Eisenberger et al. (2002), again

with a non-TNB sample, found that perceived organizational support mediated the relationship between perceived supervisor support and turnover intentions. Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) suggested that perceived co-worker support was only an antecedent of the relationships between perceived organizational support and job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, affective commitment, and turnover intentions). The reason provided was that, because co-workers and supervisors act as agents of the organization in evaluating subordinates and directing their performance, receiving good treatment from supervisors may be viewed by employees as reflecting the organization's views toward them (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002). There is, to our knowledge, to date, no previous quantitative research investigating the potential mediating role of perceived organizational support in the associations of perceived co-worker support with job anxiety and counterproductive work behavior. Additionally, none of the suggested mediating roles have been examined quantitatively in samples of TNB employees before. Further examination of the mediating role of perceived organizational support on TNB employees' job attitudes and counterproductive work behavior thus advances theoretical knowledge in the perceived organizational support literature. It also enables us to obtain a deeper understanding of whether or not a mediating role of perceived organizational support is also present in TNB samples, as per Ozturk and Tatle's (2016) claim that TNB employees encounter unique challenges not shared with other employees. As a result, this study investigated, in TNB individuals, not only the relationship of perceived co-worker support with job attitudes and counterproductive work behavior (H1), but also whether perceived organizational support mediates these relationships with the following hypothesis:

> *Hypothesis 2:* The positive relationships between TNB employees' perceived co-worker support and job satisfaction (H2a) and affective commitment (H2b), and the negative relationships between perceived co-worker support and turnover intentions (H2c), job anxiety (H2d), and counterproductive work behavior (H2e), are mediated by perceived organizational support such that when organizations are supportive of TNB employees, job satisfaction and affective commitment are greater, and turnover intentions, job anxiety, and counterproductive work behavior are lower. Likewise, when organizations are not supportive, job satisfaction and affective commitment are lower and turnover intentions, job anxiety, and counterproductive work behavior are greater.

Method

Participants and Procedure

We advertised the 10-minute online cross-sectional survey on social media and contacted TNB associations to recruit TNB participants. Participants were recruited in various countries, including Australia, Belgium, Canada, Germany, Netherlands, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and the United States. To be included, participants needed to 1) identify as TNB; 2) have started the process of social transitioning/expressing their gender identity in public either full- or part-time; 3) be currently employed; 4) be 18 years of age or older; and 5) be able to complete a survey in English. Once recruited, participants clicked on the website link, and were presented with information explaining the purpose and procedure of the survey, the voluntary nature of participation, and how anonymity would be guaranteed. Thereafter, participants were asked to (digitally) sign an informed consent and complete the survey. No monetary compensation was provided. Ethics approval was provided by the Ethics Review Committee at Maastricht University's Faculty of Psychology and Neuroscience.

In total, 441 responses were recorded (completion rate = 56.5%). Of the 441 participants, 216 were excluded from data analysis as they did not complete the survey (i.e., minimum 90% completion required), did not have a job, worked as volunteers, or were retired. Of the remaining 225 participants (inclusion rate = 51%), 47.6% (n = 107) identified as women, 38.7% (n = 87) identified as men, and 13.7% (n = 31) considered themselves nonbinary including gender fluid, genderqueer, and agender. A total 80.9% (n = 182) expressed their gender identity in the workplace, and the greater majority had permanently aligned their gender expression with their gender identity (78.7%, n = 177). Additionally, 73.3% (n = 165) had full-time paid employment and 26.7% (n = 60) worked part-time. Ages ranged from 18 to 72 (M = 35.81; SD = 12.45) and most identified as bisexual (61.7%, n = 139).

Measures

Perceived co-worker support. Perceived co-worker support was assessed using a measure developed by Griffith and Hebl (2002). The original scale assessed the extent to which co-workers (superordinates, peers, subordinates) treated gay and lesbian co-workers fairly and inclusively. In this study, we used Law et al.'s (2011) adaptation, which assesses co-workers' reactions to TNB employees. The adapted scale comprises 14 items, answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). A higher score is indicative of greater social support from co-workers. An example item is "My boss/supervisor treats me unfairly because I am gender variant." This scale has been widely used in non-TNB samples, with good internal consistency in both versions. It has also previously been used in TNB samples (see, e.g., Law et al., 2011). Cronbach's alpha was .91.

Job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using one item adapted from the Job Satisfaction Index (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951), namely "I am satisfied with my job." This item was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). A single-item measure was used in line with Wanous, Reichers, and Hudy's (1997) meta-analysis, which concluded that single-item measures are robust and reliable to assess overall job satisfaction.

Affective commitment. Affective commitment was assessed using Jaros' (2007) one-item measure, namely "I am very happy being a member of this organization," which comes from the revised version of Allen and Meyer's (1990) organizational commitment scale. This item was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*).

Job anxiety. Job anxiety was measured using one item developed by Law et al. (2011) for their study, namely, "I experience considerable anxiety at work." This item was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*).

Turnover intentions. Turnover intentions were assessed using one item developed by Law et al. (2011), namely, "I have been thinking about quitting my job in the near future." This item was answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*).

Counterproductive work behavior. Counterproductive work behavior was measured with the 10-item Counterproductive Work Behavior Checklist developed by Spector, Bauer, and Fox (2010) measuring aggression, sabotage, theft, and withdrawal behaviors in the workplace. This scale is summed and includes 5 organization-focused items and 5 person-focused items. All items were answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*every day*). A higher score is indicative of greater counterproductive work behaviors. An example item is "How often have you purposely wasted your employer's materials/supplies on your present job?" This instrument has been used widely across various study populations (but not in TNB samples), and it has been found to have good psychometrical proprieties in all its versions (Spector et al., 2006; Spector et al., 2010). Cronbach's alpha was .71.

Perceived organizational support. Perceived organizational support was measured with the 16-item Survey of Perceived Organizational Support developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), which measures individuals' perceptions of the degree to which their organization supports them. All items were answered on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*totally disagree*) to 7 (*totally agree*). A higher score is indicative of greater perceived organizational support. An example item is "The organization takes pride in my accomplishments at work." This instrument has been found to be psychometrically valid (Shore & Tetrick, 1991), and it has been used broadly in various study populations (Eisenberger et al., 2014; Shanock & Eisenberger, 2006) but not in TNB samples. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .96.

Demographic variables. Demographic variables such as age, gender identity, sexual orientation, and employment status were also measured. These were adapted from Whittle et al. (2007) and Stutterheim et al. (2011).

Analyses

To test the relationship of perceived co-worker support with job attitudes and counterproductive work behavior (H1), we used Pearson correlations. Then, we conducted one-way ANOVA to check for differences controlling for gender identification and employment status. For Hypothesis 2 (i.e., the mediating role of perceived organizational support), we conducted multiple regression analyses (Field, 2009) in accordance with the Hayes procedure (i.e., "PROCESS" macro v3.4; Hayes, 2013, 2015) using bootstrapping procedures. Unstandardized indirect relationships were computed for each of 5,000 bootstrapped samples, and with the 95% confidence interval. All analyses were conducted in SPSS 26.

Results

Means, standard deviations, and correlations for perceived co-worker support, job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, turnover intentions, perceived organizational support, and counterproductive work behavior are displayed in Table 1. No differences were found on these variables by gender identification (i.e., woman, man, or nonbinary) using one-way ANOVA [$F_1 = .60$, $p = .55$; $F_2 = .16$, $p = .85$; $F_3 = .14$, $p = .87$; $F_4 = .43$, $p = .65$; $F_5 = 2.55$, $p = .08$].

Hypothesis 1 predicted direct relationships of perceived co-worker support with job attitudes, namely job satisfaction (H1a), affective commitment (H1b), job anxiety (H1c), and turnover intentions (H1d), and with counterproductive work behavior (H1e). All hypothesized relationships showed the expected trend and were significant at $p < .05$. Perceived co-worker support was positively correlated with job satisfaction and affective commitment, and negatively correlated with job anxiety, turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behavior. Hypotheses 1 was thus fully supported.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that the relationships between perceived co-worker support and job attitudes (i.e., job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, and turnover intentions), and between perceived co-worker support and counterproductive work behavior, would be mediated by perceived organizational support. The mediation diagrams including each model's total and direct relations regression weights are depicted in Figure 1, and the indirect relations and relation size measures are presented in Table 2.

Mediation analyses revealed a significant relationship between perceived co-worker support and perceived organizational support (i.e., the a-path; $\beta = .68$, $p < .01$), an important precondition for mediation. Furthermore, mediation analyses yielded significant relations of perceived organizational support with all work outcomes when controlling for perceived co-worker support (i.e., the b-path; job satisfaction: $\beta = .91$, $p < .01$; affective commitment: $\beta = .97$, $p < .01$; job anxiety: $\beta = -.28$, $p < .01$; turnover intentions: $\beta = -.86$, $p < .01$; counterproductive work behavior: $\beta = -.11$, $p < .01$). Controlling for perceived organizational

Table 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Cronbach's Alpha Values, and Correlations of Main Variables

Variable	Mean	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Perceived co-worker support	4.83	1.22	(.91)						
2. Job satisfaction	4.45	1.86	.34**	—					
3. Affective commitment	4.69	1.75	.34**	.79**	—				
4. Job anxiety	4.35	1.84	−.48**	−.40**	−.39**	—			
5. Turnover intentions	4.05	2.13	−.22**	−.56**	−.61**	.32**	—		
6. Counterproductive work behavior	1.55	.44	−.23**	−.33**	−.36**	.25**	.29**	(.71)	
7. Perceived organizational support	4.47	1.41	.59**	.65**	.71**	−.42**	−.51**	−.36**	(.96)

Note. Cronbach's alphas of multiple-item measures appear in parentheses along the diagonal.
** $p < .01$.

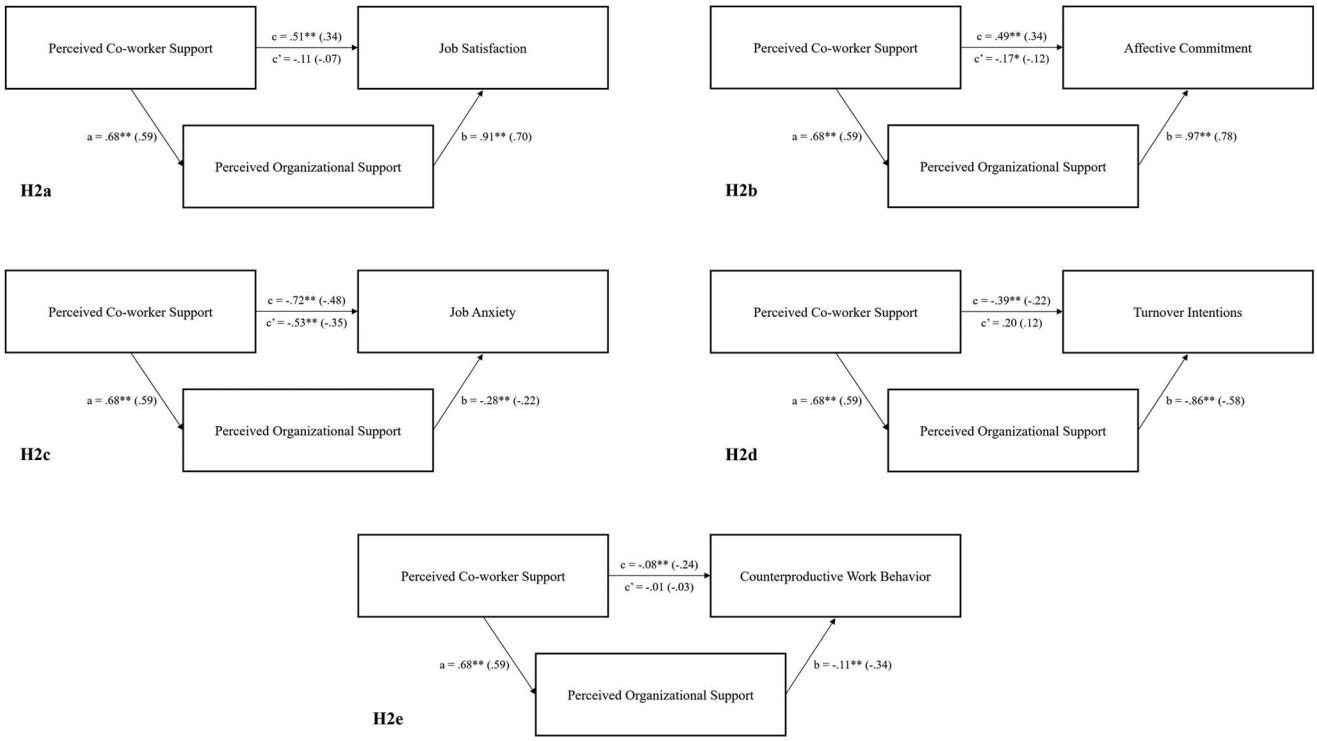

Figure 1. Mediation diagrams; a, b, c, and c' are path coefficients representing unstandardized regression weights for the relationships between perceived co-worker support and the dependent variables for H2a–e (i.e., job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behavior) as mediated by perceived organizational support. The standardized coefficients are in parentheses. The c path coefficient represents the total relation of perceived co-worker support on the dependent variables. The c-prime path coefficient refers to the direct relation of perceived co-worker support on the dependent variables when controlled by perceived organizational support. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

support, the relationship between perceived co-worker support and work outcomes (i.e., the c'-path) was no longer significant for job satisfaction ($\beta = -.11$, $p = .26$), turnover intentions ($\beta = .20$, $p = .10$), and counterproductive work behavior ($\beta = -.01$, $p = .66$) and considerably reduced in the case of affective commitment ($\beta = -.17$, $p = .04$) and job anxiety ($\beta = -.53$, $p < .01$). In the case of affective commitment, the sign of the relationship between perceived co-worker support and affective commitment even changed when controlling for perceived organizational support (changing from $\beta = .49$ to $\beta = -.17$).

Finally, the mediation analysis also provided an estimate of the indirect relation of perceived co-worker support with work outcomes via perceived organizational support (see Table 2). For all indirect relations, the 95% bootstrap confidence intervals did not include zero, indicating that all indirect relations were significantly greater than zero at $\alpha = .05$. Effect size estimates indicating the amount of variance explained in outcome variables by the full mediation model (i.e., R^2 and Cohen's f^2) ranged from medium for counterproductive work behavior ($R^2 = .13$; $f^2 = .15$) to large for affective commitment ($R^2 = .52$; $f^2 = 1.08$).

Taken together, Hypothesis 2 was thus fully supported.

Table 2
Indirect Relations and Relation Sizes

	Indirect relation (*ab*)			Effect size[a]	
Hypothesis	Effect	*SE*	95% CI	R^2	Cohen's f^2
H2a	.62	.08	[.47, .78]	.43	.75
H2b	.66	.07	[.53, .80]	.52	1.08
H2c	−.19	.07	[−.33, −.06]	.26	.35
H2d	−.59	.08	[−.75, −.44]	.27	.37
H2e	−.07	.02	[−.11, −.04]	.13	.15

[a] Effect size estimates refer to the full mediation model.

Discussion

This study investigated, with TNB employees, how perceived co-worker support relates to job attitudes and counterproductive work behavior. It also quantitatively investigated, for the first time ever in TNB individuals, whether perceived organizational support mediates these relationships. We found, first, a direct relationship between perceived co-worker support and job attitudes, such that when co-workers were perceived to be supportive, TNB employees reported greater job satisfaction and affective commitment, and less job anxiety and turnover intentions. Furthermore, perceived co-worker support was negatively related to counterproductive work behavior. This is in accordance with previous literature conducted with TNB individuals, which found that perceived co-worker support was related to greater job satisfaction, more

organizational commitment, and less job anxiety (Law et al., 2011). No previous quantitative research investigated the relationships between co-worker support and counterproductive work behavior or turnover intentions in TNB individuals, but, in broader (i.e., non-TNB) samples, positive co-worker reactions have been found to be related to lower turnover intentions (Bateman, 2009) and lower counterproductive work behavior (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008). We also found that perceived organizational support mediated the associations of perceived co-worker support with job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behavior. This has not previously been investigated quantitatively with TNB employees but is in line with previous research conducted with non-TNB samples where perceived organizational support was found to play a mediating role in the relationship between perceived co-worker support and some of the correlates included in our study, namely job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, and turnover intentions (Butts et al., 2009; Eisenberger et al., 1997, 2002; Rhoades et al., 2001; Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002; Shoss et al., 2013). In our study, we also found that job attitudes were more highly correlated with perceived organizational support than with perceived co-worker support. It is thus not surprising that perceived organizational support mediated the associations between perceived co-worker support and job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behavior.

Our findings also showed no differences in study variables depending on gender identity (i.e., woman, man, or nonbinary). Previous literature has also suggested that trans men and trans women differ in their workplace experiences and outcomes (Davidson, 2016; Schilt, 2006; Schilt & Connell, 2007; Schilt & Wiswall, 2008). For example, Schilt and Wiswall (2008) found that, after transition, trans women experienced a substantial decrease in earnings and a loss of authority, as well as harassment and termination. In contrast, trans men experienced either no change or a slight increase in salary. The fact that no differences based on gender identification were found in this study could possibly suggest that the workplace may be becoming more conscientious about gender equality, but this would certainly need to be explored further in depth in future research.

The results of this study add substantially to the literature as this is the first study, to date, that has quantitatively explored, among TNB employees, the associations between perceived co-worker support and turnover intentions, as well as counterproductive work behavior. It is also, to our knowledge, the first quantitative study to investigate the mediating role of perceived organizational support in the relationships between co-worker support and job attitudes with TNB individuals.

In terms of practice, the findings that perceived organizational and co-worker support had a direct association with TNB employees' job attitudes and work behavior are important. It points to the need to promote acceptance of, and support for, TNB employees in the workplace. However, acceptance of TNB individuals in the workplace is not yet as it should be. For many cisgender individuals, accepting TNB identities is difficult because TNB identities challenge the widespread assumption that sex and gender are dichotomous, which can lead to co-workers having doubts, concerns, and negative attitudes toward TNB people. This may have its roots in strong support for social conventions, power hierarchies, and traditional values (Norton & Herek, 2013). At the same time, the current literature shows that people are becoming more aware of the struggles that TNB individuals face, as, increasingly, TNB individuals are "coming out" in the public sphere. This emphasizes the need for organizations, and the people working within them, to be prepared to address the needs of a TNB workforce (Sawyer & Thoroughgood, 2017). However, although there is some legislation on employment discrimination against minorities, it is certainly, at this point in time, insufficient for TNB people (Cavico, Muffler, & Mujtaba, 2012; Currah & Minter, 2000; Espinoza-Madrigal, 2012; Trotter, 2010). Organizational nondiscrimination procedures to support TNB people often require organizational changes in terms of personnel, policy, legal, and medical issues that cannot easily be deduced from race- or sexual-orientation-inclusive organizational changes but are unique to TNB people (Colvin, 2007). Fortunately, Sawyer and Thoroughgood (2017) have recommended a series of policies and best practices that companies can undertake to make their workplace inclusive for TNB people at both the organizational and individual level. At the organizational level, these are 1) create organizational nondiscrimination policies that include gender identity and expression, 2) institute diversity training that includes gender identity and expression, as well as material that outlines the difference between sexual orientation and gender expression, 3) create inclusive bathroom policies to incorporate the full spectrum of gender expression, 4) institute gender neutral dress codes, 5) ensure that benefits are offered for individuals undergoing gender transition, 6) increase employee contact with members of the transgender community, and 7) incorporate gender expression inclusivity across organizational functions. At the individual level, these are 1) offer mindfulness training or provide suggestions about how to locate stress management programs for those encountering discrimination or hostility stemming from gender expression, 2) ensure compassion from HR surrounding unique work–life needs stemming from gender transition, 3) measure individual attitudes about gender identity and behaviors toward those with nontraditional forms of gender expression within the general employee population, and 4) measure and encourage ally behaviors within the general employee population. Additionally, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation has developed a workplace index on LGBTQ equality (i.e., Corporate Equality Index), and, increasingly, companies are undertaking changes to be more inclusive to these communities. In fact, there has been a wide-scale adoption of TNB-inclusive initiatives across businesses that reflect organizational support. For example, currently 91% of the Fortune 500 have gender identity protections enumerated in their policies, which was 3% in 2002 (Human Rights Campaign Foundation, 2019). The adoption of LGBTQ policies can also be at a governmental level, as reflected, for example, in the extension of employment nondiscrimination laws to LGBTQ workers in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by the United States Supreme Court in June of 2020 (Liptak, 2020). However, even when nondiscrimination policies are available, microaggressions often occur in gray areas that are not clearly outlined in policy (Galupo & Resnick, 2016). This clearly indicates the importance of working on improving both organizational support and co-worker support to TNB employees, paying attention to more nuanced forms of discrimination and their impacts, also within smaller businesses.

The present study is not without limitations. The first limitation is the cross-sectional nature of our data. Because of this, we are not in a position to make claims about causality. It is possible that some of the relations examined are reciprocal in nature (e.g., counterproductive work behavior could be an outcome of low perceived organizational support, which, in turn, can lead to co-workers being less supportive and, ultimately, to changes in job attitudes). Future research would thus benefit from a longitudinal assessment of within-person changes and would enable us to investigate further the directionality of the correlates of perceived organizational and perceived co-worker support. Future studies should also seek to uncover the causal mechanisms underlying the mediating relations found in this study. In this study, perceived organizational support was considered a mediator of the associations between perceived co-worker support and job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behavior. However, it is possible that perceived co-worker support is an antecedent to perceived organizational support rather than organizational support being a mediator, and this would imply that organizational change comes from the employees. Evidently, it would be highly beneficial to take a look at these relationships again in a longitudinal study. It would also be interesting to test for psychological correlates of support on TNB employees, such as identity concealment in cases where the employee believes the organization is not supportive.

A second possible limitation is our use of single-item measures for the constructs job satisfaction, affective commitment, job anxiety, and turnover intentions. Single-item measures are often viewed as having inadequate psychometric properties in terms of validity and reliability (Ginns & Barrie, 2004). Although single-item measures have been used in previous studies with TNB samples (e.g., Law et al., 2011), we recommend that multiple-item measures of these constructs be used in future research.

A third limitation is that we did not measure phase of transition (i.e., pretransition, in-transition, posttransition). It is possible that transition phase plays a role in support needed and provided. For example, it is possible that the workplace is less likely to respond positively to TNB employees if they disclose their gender identity before transition rather than afterward because of potential accompanying costs (e.g., absence from work due to operations). We therefore recommend that future studies take transition phase into account.

Another potential limitation was the broad geographic scope of our sample. Our sample included participants from various countries, which is in contrast to past research that focused primarily on the United States and the United Kingdom. Although our diverse data may increase the generalizability of the findings, it impedes the acquisition of specific information about each country, which could be important because governmental TNB policies, cultural norms, and the consequences of disclosure are likely to differ across countries. We were not able to ascertain differences based on location as we did not ask participants to report their location. Future research should therefore consider this by including a demographic question about a participant's country of origin.

Beyond the recommendations for future research that flow from the limitations of this study, we also recommend that future research follow up this quantitative study with qualitative studies that contextualize and further unpack the complex relationships between support at work and job attitudes and work behavior in TNB individuals, such that both quantitative and qualitative studies inform interventions and policies aiming to promote diversity and make the workplace safe for TNB employees.

In sum, the findings of this study suggest that when organizations are supportive of TNB employees, perceived organizational and co-worker support may benefit job attitudes and work behavior in TNB employees. Companies should thus focus on supporting TNB employees at both the organizational and interpersonal level.

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