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EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCES OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE IN GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA

Floyd Dimatso Maluleke

A research report submitted to the Faculty of Management, University of the Witwatersrand, in 50% requirement of the requirements for the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Public and Development Management).

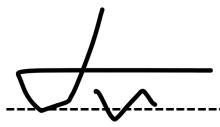
August, 2024.

ABSTRACT

The study explored organisational justice experiences in the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (**the dtic**) by determining how employees access organisational justice, what motivates employees to take justice-related actions, and employees' overall perception of organisational justice. Semi-structured interviews comprising 15 participants were conducted, while thematic analysis was used to analyse and present the interview data. The study found that organisational justice is accessed through the employee's immediate line manager, the employment relations unit, and organised labour. The study revealed that employees preferred their immediate managers and organised labour due to their support, trust, and interaction quality. Motivation to pursue organisational justice revealed knowledge as a primary motivator for taking justice-related actions, including personality traits requiring access to information. The perception of employees' experiences revealed the presence of bias in procedures, interactions, information, and outcomes and inefficiencies in how the department communicates processes and outcomes, influencing how employees feel about fairness in the department. The perception of employees' overall justice judgment in the department revealed perceived inequality, influenced by a lack of explanations and the inability of the department to consider employee's needs. The findings revealed that fairness is required in all components of organisational justice, with custodians playing a pivotal role in shaping how employees experience and perceive the management of organisational justice in the public sector. Fundamentally, the study revealed that employees can distinguish between what component and justice rules within each component are violated, supporting the need for fairness in each component. The study concluded by providing recommendations and avenues for future research, with the hope that the study's findings can be helpful in internal governance policies and the management of organisational justice.

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Management (in the field of Governance) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university.



Floyd Dimatso Maluleke

August, 2024

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I want to thank my family for putting up with me throughout this journey and my brain for not giving up on me and constantly reminding me that learning is all about trial and error. To my late sister Queen Hilda Maluleke, who ignited my passion for academia and taught me the value in meaningful conversations, I thank you. In closing, I am grateful for the support my supervisor, Dr Christine Hobden, for her patience and guidance throughout the research process and my language editor Dr Sarah Taylo for the check and balances this report needed. Although, in the grand scheme of things, this study is a drop in the ocean, it has left a boundless world of skills and knowledge.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CMSD	Corporate Management Services Division
DPSA	Department of Public Service and Administration
HRM	Human Resource Management
PAIA	Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000
POPIA	Protection of Personal Information Act
PSC	Public Service Commission
the dtic	Department of Trade, Industry and Competition

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CHAPTER ONE

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This study explored experiences of organisational justice in the Gauteng Department of Trade, Industry and Competition (**the dtic**) by asking four questions: How do employees access organisational justice structure? What are their motivations to seek justice? What is their perception of organisational justice noting their experiences? What is their overall judgment of organisational justice? The study utilised a qualitative research approach with semi-structured interviews for data collection and thematic analysis to analyse the study's findings. This chapter's structure comprises the study's background, research problem statement, research questions and objectives, as well as the purpose statement.

1.2 BACKGROUND

Organisational justice comprises four components: procedure, distribution, interaction (interpersonal), and information. These three components work together to produce justice in a system. By definition, organisational justice ultimately is how a person(s) participating (interaction) in a process (procedures) perceives the fairness of the interactions, processes, and outcomes (distribution) of a decision (Beugr, 2002, p. 38; Yean, 2016, p. 798). Organisational justice incorporates the fundamentals of justice through its emphasis on fairness, captured in an organisation by how employees feel about its resource's distribution, its fairness of interactions one-on-one or in a collective, and its procedures. Organisational justice can occur informally and formally; however, it is most typically experienced and documented formally through lodging a grievance within an organisation.

1.2.1 Organisational justice structures in government

the dtic, like all government departments in South Africa, engages in organisational justice processes in the day-to-day administration of its employees, both internally and externally, through internal governance procedures and broad legislative concerns relating to public servants' overall working conditions. As part of the government's economic cluster, **the dtic** is responsible for commercial and industrial policy.

Its strategic programmes are organised around the themes of Industrial Development, Trade Export and Investment, Regulation, Broadening Participation, Professional Standards, Licensing, and Accreditation. Ten branches carry out their primary duties, and its internal governance is carried out by two support service branches: the Corporate Management Services Division (CMSD) and the Office of the Director-General (National Government of South Africa, n.d.). The CMSD branch comprises five subunits: Human Resource Management (HRM), Human Resource Planning Strategy and Information Management, Human Resource Development, Organisational Development and Transformation, and Employment Relations Unit, all of which maintain its internal governance. Specific to **the dtic**, these subunits incorporate organisational justice mechanisms into their operation, which employees can access independently. For example, the Human Resources Planning Strategy and Information Management sub-unit initially manages performance-related organisational justice. The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) provides internal governance norms, standards, and support for the branch and subunits. The DPSA "is required to facilitate and support efforts that seek to, among others, improve service delivery quality and access; human resource management and development; business processes; systems and accountability management; anti-corruption and integrity; and effective public participation" (National Government of South Africa, n.d., para. 2). Grievance management in **the dtic** places line managers at the centre of grievance resolution.

1.2.2 Grievance management in government

According to **the dtic** grievance policy (The Department of Trade Industry and Competition, 2020, p. 10), "informal discussions and resolutions are a preferred approach of dealing with grievances" both as the initial step to resolving a grievance and as part of the formal grievances procedures. Employees and union representatives may lodge formal grievances 90 days after the claimed occurrence, with a resolution required within 30 working days for junior employees and 45 working days for senior management. Employees can refer grievances to the Public Service Commission (PSC) (The Department of Trade Industry and Competition, 2020, p. 10). Internal governance, which includes the management of grievances within **the dtic**, is managed by two support branches, the CMSD and the Office of the Director-General, which support and maintain its internal governance mandate. The DPSA and the

Department of National Treasury, through departments, established human resource support divisions to administer, support, promote, and further institutionalise organisational justice and its structures through internal governance aided by legislation that underpins internal governance. All departments are mandated to report grievances periodically to employees and the Public Service Commission (PSC), whose functions are to "promote the constitutionally prescribed values and principles governing public administration in the public service; investigate, monitor and evaluate the organisation and administration, and the personnel practices, of the public service" (National Government, n.d., para. 3). Important to this function, the PSC ensures "effective and efficient performance within the public service; give directions aimed at ensuring that personnel procedures relating to recruitment, transfers, promotions and dismissals comply with the constitutionally prescribed values and principles" (National Government, n.d., para. 3).

1.2.3 Legislation of organisational justice

The organisational justice framework in South African public services is underpinned by (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, p 9) chapter 2, which sets the foundation for fair labour practices, equality, and the right to just administrative action (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 996; South African Government, 2024). Legislatively, the framework is supported by South African Public Service Act (1994), which establishes the legal framework for employee management in the public service, outlining aspects like recruitment, performance management, discipline, and grievance procedures. In addition,

- The Labour Relations Act of 1995 grants public servants basic labour rights, including freedom of association, collective bargaining, and protection from unfair labour practices. The promotion of the Administrative Justice Act of 2000 ensures fairness in administrative decisions affecting individuals, including public servants. The Employment Equity Act, 1998 protects and prohibits unfair discrimination and promotes affirmative action to achieve equity in the workplace, including within government departments. The Protected Disclosures Act of 2000 encourages and protects whistle-blowers who report unlawful or unethical conduct within organisations, including government departments (South African Government, 2024).

The Constitution's framework, legislation, and regulations are integrated into human resource mechanisms, internal policies, and processes that rely on access, participation, engagements, and employee consensus to encourage workplace justice, fairness, and democratisation, which is primarily the duty of the employment relations divisions (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 996). Employment relations divisions in government departments and external parties such as organised labour, chapter 9 institutions, and the PSC solidify the importance of fairness and the management of internal governance. According to the PSC fact sheet on grievance resolution (Public Service Commission, 2020, p. 10), national departments reported 4690 grievances for the 2019/20 fiscal year, a 3.5 per cent decline from the grievances recorded for the 2018/19 fiscal year, but a 19.8 per cent increase from the total reported for the 2017/18 fiscal year. However, figures show that 48% of these complaints were unresolved (Public Service Commission, 2020, p. 11). Although the fact sheet does not elaborate on the factors contributing to the unresolved grievances, the literature points to various internal and external developments that impact employment conditions, such as changes in the political power of government departments and stakeholders within the organisational justice framework, prompting employees' just action.

1.2.4 Stakeholders of organisational justice

Employment conditions and socioeconomic developments frequently draw in stakeholders involved in organisational justice, including organised labour, courts, and independent organisations like the PSC. One example is the recent wage agreement between the South African Government and civil servants for the fiscal year 2021/22 and the agreed and proposed strategies to reduce the wage bill by reducing public servant recruitment and discontinuing performance-related bonuses. These events or changes often highlight issues of organisational justice and the undefined approaches public servant employees use to access organisational justice structures. These undefined approaches occur within group discussions among organised labour and informal discussions as stated by **the dtic**'s grievances policy, which research in organisational justice does not capture.

During implementation and several engagements, and contained in a document from General Public Service Sector Bargaining Council dated 6 June 2021 and signed by GPSSBC panellist, the Congress of South African Trade Unions and Public Servants

Association of South Africa raised concerns about transparency and lack of information, as well as **the dtic**'s disregard for procedure, access to information, and the lack of engagements with employees. Politically, structures within **the dtic**, like other government departments, are affected by changes made to the executive authority and the department's splitting and merging. Such changes, as in the case of **the dtic** and Department of Economic Development merger, result in bloated human resources structures and unintended consequences such as internal market visibility of departments and divisions, external and internal divisional legitimacy, and a lack of organisational trust, all of which have an impact on internal support and organisational justice (Kurscheidt, 2021, p. 33).

However, policies within **the dtic**, supported by legislation, provide justice through a framework that includes collective action, political and sectoral consideration, and participation by independent institutions. **The dtic**, through its employment relation, notes its constitutional obligation and recognises that employers and employees are essential in ensuring the proper application of the labour laws and application of justice by providing adequate access to justice structures. It is clear that access to justice structures remains critical for just pursuers, as any sense of injustice experienced by employees through interactions, procedures, and distribution, as noted by various researchers, harms the organisational social system, influencing employees' attitudes, performance, and relationships with management and the overall organisation (Roch & Shanock, 2006, pp. 299-300; Yean, 2016, p. 798; Arifin, 2020, p. 190). Thus, this study will explore public employees' experiences of organisational justice in **the dtic** in Gauteng. Provide context on the modes employee typically use to access these structures and their motivations. Determine whether these experiences within these different modes impact how they perceive organisational justice structures within **the dtic**. In turn, the study aims to reveal potential gaps in internal governance about each organisational justice component and provide ways to refine, align and manage organisation justice in **the dtic**.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM STATEMENT

Employees in an organisation are vital assets as they are the means of production and are what an Organisation requires to achieve strategic goals. Public organisations prioritise developing HRM strategies to support employees through access and engagements to foster fairness. Public employees' perception of treatment in their daily activities is essential as it informs employees' organisational attitudes (Yean, 2016, p. 798). According to Roch and Shanock (2006, pp. 299-300) and Arifin (2020, p. 190), organisational attitudes and behaviour link to the perception of justice. This attitude primarily affects organisational performance and employees' economic well-being, resulting in differing job satisfaction, employee participation, and employee involvement (Yean, 2016, p. 798). A quantitative study by Ledimo (2015, p. 1559) notes that public employees use organisational justice components as motivation for positive work behaviour.

Ledimo's study reveals that any discrepancy in distributive justice affects employee emotions, affecting their inputs (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1559). According to Beugr (2002, p. 1094), this is because components of organisational justice, procedure, distribution, and interaction need to work harmoniously when dealing with perceived organisational justice, making each component an essential and complementary part of overall justice. Research on organisational justice mainly covers its impact on employee attitudes, performance, and job satisfaction; however, research on experiences of organisational justice in the public sector is limited, mainly through methods that exist to access organisational justice structures, reasons for employees' choices, and motivations to seek justice in the public sector. Exploring these experiences will aid in understanding perceptions of organisational justice by how organisational justice structures are typically accessed and expose underpinning factors that motivate public sector employees to pursue justice—moreover, shed light on the perception of organisational justice in **the dtic** through each component, which may aid in the administration and management of internal governance.

1.3.1 Research purpose

Organisational justice experiences have an impact on organisational behaviour. This behaviour is characterised by activities that halt service delivery initiatives and internal governance in the public sector. Organisational justice is crucial for a thriving

workplace because it fosters fairness, trust, and a positive work environment, leading to numerous benefits for employees and the organisation. Imperial evidence asserts that by prioritising organisational justice, organisations can cultivate a thriving workplace where employees feel valued, engaged, and productive, ultimately leading to success for both individuals and the organisation. However, little is known about experiences and perceptions of organisational justice in South African public services, including experiences of how it is accessed, motivation to pursue justice in such an organisation, perception of those experiences, and overall justice judgment. Thus, the study aimed to explore public employees' experiences when accessing organisational justice structures and how these experiences influence their perceptions of organisational justice in **the dtic** in the Pretoria Head Office, Gauteng.

1.3.2 Research questions

The study was guided by the following main research question: What are public sector employee's overall perceptions of organisational justice in light of their experience?

The sub-questions were:

1) How do public sector employees access organisational justice (methods/modes), and what are the reasons for their choice?
2) What are public sector employee's motivation(s) to pursue organisational justice?
3) What is public sector employee's perception of their experience (four-factor model)?

The main objective of the study informed by research questions, was to ascertain public sector employees' overall perceptions of organisational justice. The sub-objectives were to ascertain;

1.) Public sector employees' access to organisational justice, and the reasons for their choice.
2.) Public sector employees' motivation(s) to pursue organisational justice.
3.) Public sector employees' perceptions of their experience

1.4 CONCLUSION

The chapter met its goal by providing the study's context, problem statement, purpose, and research questions and objectives. The management and administration of organisational justice are critical for employees and organisations in any institution.

Empirical evidence suggests that perceived workplace justice continues to influence employees' productivity, dedication, motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction in organisations while fostering trust in leadership and cooperation. Thus, exploring employees' experiences and perceptions remains essential in identifying the current impediments and enhancing the management of organisational justice in systems and structures in **the dtic**. The structure of this research report is:

- **Chapter Two** provides a literature review on the four components of organisational justice and an overview of organisational justice theories, specifically Steven Greenberg's organisational justice theory, which served as the foundation for this study. In addition, the chapter discusses literature on employee motives for seeking justice and internal and external avenues for employees to access organisational justice. The chapter concludes by explaining the study's analytical framework.
- **Chapter Three** presents and discusses the study's methodology, with particular attention on identifying and describing the research approach, research tools and their application, sampling, the data analysis process, research limitations, feasibility, and positionality. The chapter concludes by detailing the ethical principles followed and upheld throughout the study.
- **Chapter Four** presents findings from the participants' responses, addressing the research questions as they relate to the research objectives. The chapter provides participants' quotes and organises the main and sub-themes, as well as a brief analysis of the research question/objective findings.
- **Chapter Five** discusses the study's findings, starting with the three sub-questions and ending with a discussion of the leading research question.
- **Chapter Six** provides recommendations and future research related to the study's findings and concludes by providing an overall conclusion and closing remarks.

CHAPTER TWO

2 LITERATURE REVIEW: ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE, COMPONENTS, MOTIVATIONS, ITS ACCESS, AND THEORIES

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to present literature on organisational justice, as well as overall justice perceptions and its components, namely distributive, procedural, interaction, and informational justice. An overview is provided of equity as the first theory to dominate organisational justice research, followed by social exchange, fairness heuristic theory, and Steven Greenberg's organisational justice theory, which this study leans on. The penultimate part discusses employee motives for seeking justice. The chapter concludes by examining the different routes to organisational justice, emphasising internal and external intuitions available to employees.

2.2 ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

In its most basic form, organisational justice is the study of how employees perceive fairness in the workplace. It embodies criminological and social psychology research elements with which it shares its core ideas (Eib, 2015, p. 7). Distributive justice sparked early studies of organisational justice and applied Adams' equity theory as its dominant theory approach. Its dominance stems from its emphasis on reward and a view that when individuals contemplate fairness, they are more likely to compare the ratio of their contribution and reward to that of another individual (Indriani, 2015, p. 908; Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 60). Greenberg (1987, p. 13) expanded on this and included procedural and interpersonal justice, which looked at perceptions of processes leading to an outcome and treatment of employees within an organisation (Indriani, 2015, p. 908; Patnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 60). Organisational justice today incorporates these three components and is defined as the study of perceived fairness or ethical treatment of employees in an organisation through structures relating to procedures, interactions that include information, and distribution of employee encounters in an organisation (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 998; Johnson et al., 2014, p. 2; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1549; Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 58; Novitasari et al., 2020, p. 97). Organisational justice arises from the interactions of employees, managers, and the organisation. In essence, events involving human resources practices,

processes, and organisational changes or lack thereof trigger it (Eib, 2015, p. 7). These events provide a platform where an organisation's perception of justice is measured separately or jointly through distribution, procedures, and interactions. Greenberg's (1987, p. 9) work enhanced contemporary thinking on organisational justice and the idea that its components serve a coherent set of fairness-related principles and concepts. His work solidifies the term 'organisational justice' by including streams from social, industrial, organisational, and organisational psychology (Colquitt, 2008, p. 73). Greenberg's (1987, p. 9) theory of organisational justice led to studies in organisational justice shifting from the perspective of distributive justice and its dominance in equity theory to the use of other theories, such as social exchange, by dividing interactional justice into two parts: interpersonal, which deals directly with relationships or human interactions and information, which deals with the truthfulness of the information provided during and after an outcome (Roch & Shanock, 2006, p. 300; Colquitt, 2008, p. 73). Research conducted by Colquitt and Rodell (2015, p. 192) confirmed that informational justice is the adequacy of information provided within interactions. In essence, organisational justice has evolved from being a single-dimensional construct that focused on distributive justice to become a four-dimensional construct found in distributive, procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice (Colquitt, 2008, p. 73; Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 58; Novitasari et al., 2020, p. 96). These components, individually and combined, provide grounds for how employees experience organisational justice and shape singular or overall perceptions of organisational justice. Thus, theories such as equity theory, social exchange theory, collective action theory, and Greenberg's four-factor model explain an organisation's overall justice experience (Beugr, 2002, p. 1093; Kovačević et al., 2013, p. 40).

2.3 OVERALL JUSTICE PERCEPTION

According to Colquitt (2012, p. 8), outcome, procedural, interpersonal treatment, and information constitutes overall justice judgments. Integrating these components to form justice is described as a multidimensional concept in which each component interacts to generate a sense of justice (McCardle, 2007, p. 9; Cropanzano et al., 2018, p. 9). Overall, justice is the subjective perception of fairness emanating from a specific event and how an organisation allocates and treats its employees (Eib, 2015, p. 9).

According to Ambrose and Schminke (2009, p. 492), these events or sources of justice provide the central causal mechanism in which specific justice questions form overall justice. Ambrose and Schminke (2009, p. 492) add that when determining overall justice, outcomes and processes play a more critical role in overall justice judgments than interactional justice. However, Holtz and Harold (2009, p. 1188) argue that three components contribute to overall justice while determining who (person) or what (cause) is being evaluated assists in clarifying the relationships between these components. For example, an event with a reward would have distributive and procedural justice as the main drivers of overall justice. Context or source of injustice is equally vital to organisational justice components as isolating the person or persons involved and the course or source of an injustice highlights components dominant to the injustice (Holtz & Harold, 2009, p. 1188). Focusing on a specific component of justice in isolation may not provide a complete or accurate picture of how people make and apply justice judgments (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009, p. 492; Eib, 2015, p. 9; Holtz & Harold, 2009, p. 1188). In essence, a combined analysis of the perception of fairness in the outcome, processes, and interactions through a single occurrence is a better indicator of overall justice. Positive perception of organisational justice influences organisational behaviour, which can be demonstrated through increased job satisfaction, organisational citizenship behaviours, positive employee attitudes, employee involvement, performance, and trust in the organisation (Roch & Shanock, 2006. p. 299-300; Ambrose & Schminke, 2009, p. 492; Eib, 2015, p. 9; Yean, 2016, p. 798; Arifin, 2020, p. 190). Thus, this study intends to determine the employees' perception of overall justice judgment, taking into account the organisational justice framework, which consists of perceived fairness in procedural, interpersonal, and destructive justice in an organisation.

2.3.1 Perceived distributive justice

Early research on distributive justice focused on the equity of reward, which correlates with Adams' equity theory (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 997; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). Distributive justice is the first wave of organisational studies where employees compare their inputs and outcomes to their counterparts to determine fairness. The current view of distributive justice is now viewed through the lens of equity, equality, and need in which the perceived feeling of fairness in reward or allocation of an outcome is judged (Beugr, 2002, p. 1093; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551).

However, distributive justice has expanded to include non-financial rewards such as promotions, training, resources, and treatment in an organisation (McCardle, 2007, p. 79). Contemporary distributive fairness considers three rules: equality – employees receiving the same inputs or resources, equity – receiving the same outcome based on the same inputs and needs, and time consideration in distribution (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). In essence, this is equity, equality, and need in an organisation's procedures, interactions, information, and outcomes. Because organisational procedures and policies control resource distribution, distributive justice is a structural construct, with managers and the organisation as its sources (McCardle, 2007, p. 80). The structural construct will put in question the fairness of policies regarding the distribution of resources (monitory and non-monitory) and information. From a management perspective, managers implement policies equitably and treat subordinates fairly (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1 556). These include equal access to resources divisionally and individually, equal work for equal pay, equal access to information, and equitable application of policies in an organisation. Because of its structural component, distributive justice calls into question procedural justice. According to Lucas (2009, p. 253), this is because distributive justice is a multidimensional justice component where acceptance of outcome relies on fairness in procedures, information, and interaction. Thus, the assessment of distributive justice involves assessing all components of organisational justice. According to Eib (2015, p. 8), distributive justice relies primarily on "six rules for a fair process: that decisions are based on accurate information, are correctable, representative of all parties involved, free of bias, and ethical, and that the allocation process is consistent for different individuals and over time".

Lucas (2009, p. 253) adds that decision outcomes provide information needed for the initial evaluation of relevance used in primary appraisals, procedural considerations provide information necessary for generating an ultimate interpretation in the secondary appraisal, while treatment affects the emotional aspect of outcomes. When these are all explained, they increase an individual's acceptance of the decision. In essence, interactions, information, and procedural fairness counteract the adverse effects of inadequate distributive fairness and minimise its deviance (McCardle, 2007, p. 25).

2.3.2 Perceived procedural justice

Procedural justice depends on structures and fairness applied to policies and processes and the laws governing organisational interactions. Procedural justice is considered the second wave in organisational justice research. By definition, procedural justice is the feeling of fairness in procedures and processes leading to an outcome of a decision (Beugr, 2002, p. 1095; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). Procedural justice considers the fairness in processes and relations that lead to the outcome (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). Procedural justice considers two main principles: participation and accuracy in processes. In essence, participation is the right to partake in processes leading to an outcome, an opportunity to be heard, and accuracy in applying processes and rules governing procedures (Solum, 2004, p. 9). Employees evaluate procedural justice on whether policies are applied ethically, consistently, accurately, and without bias, whether procedures can be corrected, and whether decisions and procedures are representative of their course (Beugr, 2002, p. 1095; Eib, 2015, p. 8; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). Consistency refers to the consistent application of procedures and processes, the accuracy of information and procedures that can be corrected, suppressed self-interest from those who make the rules, following moral and ethical standards, and integrating the interests of all parties, all of which involve interactional justice (Beugr, 2002, p. 1095; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551; Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 62). The formal aspect of procedural justice constructs institutionalised policies and procedures developed within the framework of legislation and whether individuals or groups have a voice (Collie et al., 2002, p. 545).

Legislatively, government institutions must prescribe to procedural values and principles governing public administration in the public service to ensure effectiveness and adherence to these principles. Independent institutions such as PSC "give directions aimed at ensuring that personnel procedures relating to recruitment, transfers, promotions and dismissals comply with the constitutionally prescribed values and principles" (National Government, n.d., para. 3). Thus, actions taken in response to procedural injustice are intended toward the organisation, its outcomes, organisational support, organisation of its divisions, and implementation of its processes and interactions demonstrated by employers and custodians of the processes (McCardle, 2007, p. 13).

Formal procedures enable individuals to engage in justice structures by structurally applying rules accurately and consistently facilitated by leaders and an organisation. In addition, by demonstrating standards of "appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationship, and promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision-making" (Jha & Singh, 2019, p. 386). Processes, procedural information, and interaction explanations are essential in this component. Thus, procedural justice is studied within social exchange theory as just seekers emphasise the reciprocal relationship between themselves, their managers, and the organisation in their exchange of resources (Eib, 2015, p. 12).

2.3.3 Perceived interpersonal justice

Interactional justice is unique in the field of organisational justice. Beugr (2002, p. 1095) attributes this uniqueness to the social aspects it incorporates into organisational justice and its components. Interactional justice in the workplace is strongly associated with organisational justice, as groups and personal views of justice are likely to be calibrated through social comparisons (Fischer et al., 2014, p. 108). Its early conceptualisation centres on interaction as its core, which now incorporates informational and interpersonal relations, which take place on an individual and organisational level (McCardle, 2007, p. 7; Fischer et al., 2014, p. 108). Broadly, interactional justice concerns the feeling of being treated appropriately, leading up to and after an outcome (Beugr, 2002, p. 1095; Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 998; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551).

Interactional justice draws from four principles: respect, propriety, justification, and truthfulness (Dai & Xie, 2016, p. 57). From an interpersonal perspective, justice seekers consider diplomatic relations, respect, politeness, and ethical behaviour within interactions. This relation centres on treatment demonstrated by managers and an organisation (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). According to Johnson, Lanaj and Barnes (2014, p. 2), interpersonal justice entails demonstrating respect and similar behaviours by justice actors irrespective of the context and whom they are engaging in an organisation. Johnson et al. (2014, p. 3) add that adherence to the interpersonal justice rule of respect reduces the perception of bias in interpersonal treatment and improves self-efficacy.

However, this treatment can differ depending on one's interpersonal traits, ethnical background, and power distance (Beugr, 2002, p. 1096; Eli, 2015, p. 29). Treatment of employees within government intuitions is protected by several key acts and legislations namely;

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), the Public Service Act of 1994 (which provide a legal foundation for employee management), The Labour Relations Act of 1995 (which grants them basic labour rights), The Employment Equity Act of 1998 (which prohibits unfair discrimination and promotes and achieves equity),
- The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act of 2000 (which promotes lawful, administrative, reasonable, procedurally fair, and unbiased outcomes), and, The Protected Disclosures Act of 2000, which establishes the legal framework for employee management and ensures fair treatment of employees.

These includes border polices and regulations that talks directly to treatment of employee such as Batho Pile framework, Public Service Code of Conduct, Collective Bargaining Agreements (CBAs) ensuring standards, fairness in interaction, treatment, ethical behaviour and conduct in government institutions.

2.3.4 Perceived informational justice

Information is another part of interactions where information about procedures and decisions is studied. Informational justice concerns itself with information on procedures and explanations required in every component of organisational justice (Colquitt, 2012, p. 2). It represents the structural part of interactional justice and reflects the "extent to which decision-makers explain and provides adequate justification for their decisions" (McCardle, 2007, p. 7). Because information about other people's outcomes is not easy to acquire, information that is available, such as information regarding processes and decisions, constitutes interactional justice (Collie et al., 2002, p. 546). For example, van den Bos (2003, p. 483) argues that when people are trying to assess whether the outcome they received is just or unjust, they prefer to rely on solid outcome information followed by procedural information that gives them a clear answer to this question. This information must be accurate and valuable in relationships (Colquitt, 2012, p. 2).

Thus, perceptions of interactional justice are perceived through the process of internal communication (information) and relations (behaviour) that confirm principles of respect, propriety, justification, and truthfulness by subordinates (Dai & Xie, 2016, p. 57). For employees to be provided access to information, the provision of information within government institutions is legislated through the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 (PAIA), which gives effect to the constitutional right of access to any information held by the State and any information that is held by another person and is required for the exercise or protection of any rights (National Government, n.d., para. 1). In contrast to the PAIA is the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 (POPIA), which sets out the minimum standards regarding the processing, collecting, receiving, recording, organising, using, and distributing information. Government institutions are mandated to provide mechanisms that ensure employees have access to relevant and adequate information without contravening the protection of information.

2.4 MOTIVATIONS OF JUSTICE

The motives to pursue justice in an organisation vary. According to Latham and Locke (2008, p. 318), a "motive is a physiological or psychological based desire that incites a person to action". Thus, sources of motivation to pursue justice in an organisation can be influenced by individual traits, needs, and organisational environment. Latham and Locke (2008, p. 318) add that when differing needs are unmet, employees experience discomfort, which triggers them to act. In South Africa, these motivations are made even more complicated by vast inequality, politics, and the involvement of justice-related stakeholders such as organised labour and independent institutions in government. Broadly, motives closer to individuals are split into four categories in an organisation: uncertainty, belonging or affiliation, trust, and esteem/status (Fischer, 2013, p. 6).

2.4.1 Uncertainty motive

Employees in an organisation need predictability and certainty (Fischer, 2013, p. 6). The need to feel sure and in control stems from perceived unjust outcomes, status, trustworthiness, and self-interest experienced in an organisation, triggering employees to act (Colquitt, 2008, p. 77).

Fair judgments serve a psychological purpose and can eliminate or minimise the adverse effects of uncertainty in an organisation's procedures, interactions, and outcomes (Colquitt, 2008, p. 77; Fischer, 2013, p. 6). Uncertainty motive aligns with the fairness heuristic theory, as individuals need justice-relevant information to make sense of perceived injustice. Employees use this information as a substitute for trustworthiness (van den Bos, 2001, p. 73; Colquitt, 2008, p. 78). Cooperation is likely to happen when relevant justice information is provided, thus reducing uncertainty and creating predictable situations (Colquitt, 2008, p. 78). Finding the truth is the essence of this theory. Organisations reduce uncertainty by creating a just environment through "voice", process, and decision control (Colquitt, 2008, p. 77; Fischer, 2013, p. 6). Trade unions facilitate the process of creating voice, process, and decision control within South Africa's public sector. Reducing uncertainty relating to employee relations is evoked and facilitated through rallies that motivate employees to pursue justice – with the promise of providing support. In essence, the inability of an organisation to clarify and adjust processes and decisions creates the need for employees to reduce uncertainty through organisational justice. The inability to do so, the relational model contends, employees will be hesitant to seek justice on their own and will do so in groups to collectively seek justice-relative information and justice by involving other parties such as trade unions (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018, p. 469).

2.4.2 Belonging/affiliation motive that includes trust

Employees need to feel like they belong and are part of an organisation. Affiliation or belonging is a process that involves employees in organisational processes and decisions (Fischer, 2013, p. 22). The inability of an organisation to create an inclusive environment creates collectivism, which creates inclusion through other mechanisms such as collective action and voice (Poole, 2007, p. 738; Fischer, 2013, p. 22). Collectivism provides members the feeling of belonging and reach by including employees in instrumental (dealing with process change and control) and non-instrumental (dealing with treatment, respect, and politeness) activities in an organisation (Fischer, 2013, p. 22). Because of its reach, collectivism in complex organisations, riddled with perceptions of political instability, lack of organisational support, trust, and leader-member interaction, fosters a desire to act (Colquitt, 2008, p. 74; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018, p. 469).

An organisation's inability to involve employees in its formal and social settings causes a sense of alienation, which individuals seek directly in the organisation or indirectly from collectivism.

2.4.3 Esteem/status motive

Esteem motivation stems from employees' need to confirm their status and self-worth in an organisation. This motivation stems from their subjective sense of personal worth or value. When dealing with justice, employees with high self-worth are likelier to pursue justice than employees with low self-esteem. However, self-esteem relies on a person's personality traits, level of need, and knowledge that regulates their choice and persistence to act (Latham & Locke, 2008, p. 318). From a personality traits perspective, conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, and openness to experience as traits regulate employees' motive to act (Barrick et al., 2003, p. 63; Latham & Locke, 2008, p. 319; Sackett & Walmsley, 2014, p. 539). For instance, agreeable employees will struggle to assert their wants, needs, and preferences compared to less agreeable employees.

2.4.4 Knowledge – Cognition motive

Defined by Kruglanski et al. (2010, p. 322), cognition is the mental action or process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through experience and the senses. As a motive, cognition draws on social cognitive theory, which claims that employees will gather information based on a core set of determinants, their work process, and the best ways to translate this knowledge into effective practices (Latham & Locke, 2008, p. 323). The processes include knowledge of the risks and benefits of various practices, the expectation of the costs and benefits of various practices, perception of one's efficacy in terms of being able to influence performance outcomes, and perceived facilitators and social structural impediments to needs (Latham & Locke, 2008, p. 323). From an organisational point of view, employees will gather knowledge by acquiring justice-related information and information through their social accounts to make decisions to act. According to Eib (2015, p. 27), cognition, knowledge or the lack thereof influences the appraisals of justice and the need for control, including identity-related mediators such as self-esteem, the need for meaningfulness, emotional mediators, and psychological and physical behaviour.

According to Latham and Locke (2008, p. 322), in the absence of knowledge, an employee cannot determine ways to satisfy a need or to behave in ways consistent with or leading to, the attainment of a value. A different aspect of cognitive motive brings forth employees' need for closure, which Kruglanski et al. (2010, p. 940) refer to as cognitive closure. Kruglanski et al. (2010, p. 940) suggest that the motivation to act is influenced by closure that is not specific, such as a need for a firm answer to ambiguity and confusion relating to outcomes and their process. Another is the need for specific closure when an employee's desire is to reach a specific, personally desirable answer or outcome. Both Eib (2015, p. 27) and Kruglanski et al. (2010, pp. 940-941) assert that the extent of an individual's need for closure is moderated by the perceived benefits of closure and the costs of lacking closure, as well as other moderators, such as the type of injustice, organisational support, and leader-member exchange relations.

2.4.5 Perceived organisational support and leader-member exchange

With its roots in social exchange theory from its norm of reciprocity, perceived organisational support epitomises the extent to which employees believe their organisation has their best interest at heart and cares enough about their welfare (Cropanzano, Rupp, Thornton & Shao, 20018, p. 19)

According to Cropanzano et al. (2018, p. 24), perceived organisational support is linked to supervisor support as both concepts measure the extent to which the organisation and its leaders value employee contributions and meet their socioemotional needs, increasing work effort, trust, and employee job satisfaction. As with perceived supervisor support, perceived organisational support asserts that an organisation is perceived to be supportive when it prioritises fairness in distribution and procedure, creating organisational trust, employee commitment, innovation, job satisfaction, and motivates employees to pursue injustice (Cropanzano et al. 2018, p 11). The reciprocal relationship between supervisors and their subordinates can be interpreted through leader-member exchange, which looks at the quality of the relationship between leaders and subordinates.

A positive leader-member exchange is reciprocal, where loyalty and work proximity between employees and their supervisors create the expectation of support from managers when employees are in need.

Following this analogy, the extent to which managers prioritise employee welfare through organisational justice impacts organisational trust and, in turn, motivates employees to act in situations of injustice. According to Cropanzano, Bowen and Gilliland (2007, p. 34-35), the expectation of a manager's support stems from the supervisor's role in an organisation and their perceived positional power within the organisation's structures. **the dtic** encapsulates this relationship in its grievance policy by positioning managers as an extension of organisational support where managers are responsible for creating an enabling environment for organisational justice. Part of the manager's responsibilities, as per the policy, is to manage formal and informal internal grievances, providing the necessary support, such as authorisation, in instances where they cannot be resolved. In essence, the role of managers is critical in the management of justice in departments, enabling processes and decision control and amplifying employees' voices, which can influence employees' motives to act.

2.4.6 Stakeholder motives

In South Africa, organised labour as a stakeholder is essential in motivating and facilitating organisational justice by creating or influencing justice claimants. According to Kelloway et al. (2008, p. 649), unionisation affects organisational behaviour. In South Africa, trade unions rally their members to action by providing support, resources, and time for employees' interests, dissatisfactions, and union interests. Trade unions encourage members to be justice agents by creating access and voice through their power and support to pursue justice individually and collectively (Fischer, 2013, p. 6). This is due to the power, support, and resources they collectively provide to influence and bring about change for members. Research on how employees perceive workplace justice through organised labour in South Africa is limited. However, organised labour's involvement in South African public services is extensively established, particularly its influence on labour relations reforms, policies, employee conditions of employment, decent work promotion, and social justice advocacy. In South African public service, social, economic, and political circumstances are potent motivators for seeking justice. Because organised labour interests are much broader, societal changes frequently converge through trade unions in public service. This is seen in the mobilisation of numerous public sector employees and campaigns confronting socioeconomic and political issues affecting South African governance and broader society (Msila, 2018, pp. 5-6).

Despite being an important mode to access justice presently and in the past, little is known about its potential influence on employee motivations to pursue justice, nor its influence on how employees perceive the organisation through their involvement.

2.5 ACCESS TO ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE (INTUITIONS AND THEIR STRUCTURES)

An organisation and its formation structures are critical to the administration and achievement of justice (Schminke, Cropanzano, & Rupp, 2002, p. 881; McCardle, 2007, p. 51). Organisational structure, in essence, is a pattern of institutionalised internal activities, mechanisms, rules, roles, and responsibilities and the flow of information administrated between an organisation's levels (McCardle, 2007, p. 51).

These structures have administrative mechanisms that influence the flow of information, procedures, and distribution and the nature of human interaction, thus affecting perceptions of fairness (Ambrose & Schminke, 2002, p. 39). The organisation's size, complexity, and centralisation and formalisation of processes influence perceptions (Schminke et al., 2002, p. 883). In the public sector, the DPSA looks at broader public administration legislation, while departments will develop and adopt policies aligned to broader legislation within their departments depending on the institution's nature and size. This organisational structure enables and governs how people access, acquire, and process social information, stimulate cognitive activity and build social interactions and interpersonal relationships by providing social context in an organisation (McCardle, 2007, p. 51). Related to processes, rules, and distribution, formalisation centres on explicit written operational rules, procedures, instructions, and communications (Schminke et al., 2002, p. 884).

2.5.1 Internal structures

In the public sector, internal structures take shape formally through broader governing legislation and internal policies and structures that set out the rules regarding how employees access justice, processes, and procedures, ensuring fairness. In the public and private sectors, access to organisational justice is managed and institutionalised by an organisation, and its HRM structures are guided by policies and practices (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 997).

Access within HRM practices includes mechanisms that deal directly with HRM practices, such as employee training and development, recruitment and selection, remuneration and benefits, change management, employee wellness, and performance management (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1549). The administration of these HRM practices is the responsibility of the organisation, its human resource division, and management. Thus, how an organisation organises itself, its formalisation, and HRM practices influence overall justice perception. Dzansi and Dzansi (2010, p. 996) agree and found that just HRM practices are what employees evaluate in determining their perceptions of organisational justice. Fundamental rules the organisation and its HRM division must consider are consistency, which encompasses the consistent application of rules in procedures, distribution, and interactions, and bias suppression, accuracy, correct-ability, and representativeness, which employees use to determine perceived fairness (Schminke et al., 2002, p. 884; McCardle, 2007, p. 52). In an organisation riddled with protocol, these norms (rules) become significant, making procedural justice the cornerstone of organisational fairness compared to an organic setting where interpersonal influences increase the weight of interactional justice in individual outcomes (McCardle, 2007, p. 52). Centralisation limits employee choice of access due to centralised power. According to Schminke et al. (2002, p. 884), centralisation looks at the extent of an organisation's balance or imbalance of power or decision-making, which is closely related to sheer complexity. However, HRM remains critical in regulating, maintaining, and managing fairness in an organisation. An organisational justice system is as good as its institution and the structures developed to manage it (Beugr, 2002, p. 1093). Failure, in this regard, leads to the involvement of other relevant justice stakeholders as other means to access justice.

2.5.2 Other access points of justice

Stakeholder involvement in organisational justice in South Africa's public sector is broad in scope and based on various interconnected legislations. As the Constitution prescribes, organisational justice in South Africa's public sector involves all government employees, trade unions, and independent institutions. Because the system of law also includes other justice stakeholders, both public and private, these stakeholders have independent rights and responsibilities within organisational justice (Schminke et al., 2002, p. 881). These institutions provide other means for employees to access organisational justice.

By default, this is an alternative if the organisation fails to mend employees' pleas. Independent institutions that provide access, particularly within the public sector, include chapter 9 institutions as legislated by the Constitution. Referrals within the public sector allow these institutions to be part of justice processes. The referrals blend formal legislation and internal policies into internal processes for employees to use at their discretion (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 996; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1549). Although there is little research on the involvement of independent intuitions and access to justice, their involvement as a result of independence serves as an alternative that might provide a different type of justice experience.

2.5.2.1 Collectivism

Another access point that dominates the public sector is access gained through collectivism. Using collectivism to gain access to organisational justice in the public sector emphasises the achievement of group outcomes and the subordination of personal interests to achieve group outcomes (Beugr, 2002, p. 1096; Msila, 2018, p. 2). Collectivism can be beneficial as individuals within a group can contribute their knowledge, resources, and time, thus increasing the chance of attaining organisational justice (Rao et al., p. 243; Beugr, 2002, p. 1096). Poole (2007, p. 738) adds that employees facing distribution and procedural disputes lean on organised labour relations to access organisational justice. Members use unionisation for traditional union issues and various social justice issues. In an organisation, employees join unions due to dissatisfaction and frustration as a logical step to resolve their dissatisfaction. By joining trade unions, employees hope their association will be instrumental in resolving their dissatisfaction (Kelloway & Francis, Catano, & Dupre 2008, p 643). Kelloway et al. (2008, p. 643) add that procedural and distributive injustice typically ignites employees to join unions since its virtue resides in norms, processes, and decision-making that a collective may discover and negotiate. According to Wahda et al. (2020, pp. 2-3), employees often seek refuge within groups due to the lack of organisational trust, which is an essential aspect needed in employee relations and the organisation's internal structure and social system. Organisational trust is employees' confidence and belief in their organisation, its leaders, and its processes.

Authors such as Beugr (2002, p. 1094) and Wahda et al. (2020, p. 3) found that organisational trust is a by-product of organisational justice, just as organisational justice is a by-product of organisational trust, where employees are likely to seek refuge in groups when they have little trust in the organisation and its leaders. Activities that foster this trust are how organisations manage justice and how dependable, transparent, respectful, and consistent the organisation's structures are. In essence, the perception of how organisational justice is managed influences employee behaviour. Thus, this study aims to explore the experiences of employees' organisational justice, how it is accessed, its motivations, and whether those experiences impact their overall perception of organisational justice in the public sector.

2.5.2.2 Managers/leaders

Organisations and managers are critical in creating an enabling environment for organisational justice. **the dtic** supports this view through its grievance policy, which emphasises managers as an access point and a mechanism for resolving workplace justice. According to **the dtic** grievance policy, managers in the respective division are responsible for managing formal and informal grievances in the department. This responsibility includes providing support (procedural, authorisation), formalising alternatives for formal and informal grievances, and promoting workplace justice. According to Pattnaik and Tripathy (2019, p. 61), this is because allocation norms such as equality are expected to be allocated and resolved by managers, including managerial intentions that promote solidarity and ensure employee welfare and development. Pattnaik and Tripathy (2019, p. 61) add that allocating norms also requires managers to mitigate the effects of perceived inequity due to their proximity to employees and the employer. Thus, social exchange assumes that the quality of relations between managers and subordinates will result in managers creating spaces for workplace justice to be resolved and imply employee’s voices. In essence, managers are part of the ecosystem of organisational justice. They are responsible for ensuring that justice is adhered to within their respective divisions and providing their subordinates with support and access to justice structures.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Various justice theories can be found throughout organisational justice research. Among these is Adams' equity theory, which focuses on outcome fairness, social exchange theory, which focuses on information and interaction within an exchange, and the fairness heuristic theory, which looks at truth and acceptance of the outcome. These advances paved the way for Greenberg's organisational justice theory, or the four-factor model, which established organisational justice as perceived fairness in procedural, interpersonal, information, and distribution areas, underpinning the current study. Adams' equity theory dominated early studies on organisational justice. This theory pins distribution as the centre of organisational justice perception, where individuals compare their inputs and rewards with others in the organisation. Coined by Adams (1965), "equity theory suggests that when perceiving the fairness of the results, individuals would work out the ratio of their input and output and compare their distributive results with themselves (internal and external) and others" (Dai & Xie, 2016, p. 56). Justice rules in equity theory centre on equity in which imbalances create distress and a feeling of unfairness. Critics argue that because it is strongly related to outcome, it overlooks the functions of justice rules (procedures and interaction) that affect perceptions of distribution fairness (Indriani, 2015, p. 909). Proposed by George Homans (1961), social exchange theory posits that employees and organisations engage in a reciprocal exchange of resources and rewards, where fairness perceptions are based on the quality and balance of these exchanges (Eib, 2015, p. 12). Employees evaluate the fairness of the exchange itself, as well as how fairly they compare to others in similar exchanges, which is observed in the relationship between employees and their managers (leader-member exchange) and the organisation (Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 62) and the expectation that parties in exchange will follow a specific code of conduct and stick to certain expected standards (Roch & Shanock, 2006, p. 303; Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018, p. 458). Fairness theory and the fairness heuristic theory also feature and contribute to understanding organisational justice but with important distinctions and nuances.

Fairness theory encompasses various theories exploring different aspects of fairness in organisations, including distributive, procedural, interactional, equity, relative deprivation, social exchange, procedural fairness, interactional fairness, and informational fairness, and aims to explain why individuals perceive fairness or

unfairness and the consequences of these perceptions on various outcomes (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003, p. 89; Eib, 2015, p. 13; Indriani, 2015, p. 913). On the other hand, fairness heuristic theory concentrates on how people employ mental shortcuts to make snap justice decisions and suggests that employees evaluate fairness based on easily accessible information, often prioritising procedural justice rules, voice, respect, consistency, and alternatives in their initial assessment of fairness (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003, p. 88; Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 69).

2.6.1 Greenberg's theory of organisational justice

Greenberg's theory of organisational justice serves as the foundation for the current study as it interprets justice from an organisation's perspective and its environment (Kovačević et al., 2013, p. 37). According to Greenberg's (1993, p.1) view, justice in an organisation includes constructs of procedures, interactions, information and outcomes from which a sense of justice is derived. Colquitt and Rodell (2015, p. 189) further demonstrated that each of the four components (procedural, interactional, information & outcomes) has predictive validity for key organisational outcomes (e.g., employee commitment, trust and rule compliance. Greenberg's theory also adopts equity theory by suggesting that employees examine equity and fairness by contrasting one's self and others based on inputs and outcomes. Greenberg's theory of organisational justice also ties in with the social exchange theory, arguing that an organisation is a social system in which employees have a reciprocal relationship with an organisation. From the context of this study, public employees in an exchange relationship are entitled to receive rewards proportional to their contribution in exchange with the organisation and others. The exchange must be in congress with fair procedures, information, and interactions to ensure fair outcomes. The social system in an organisation is archived by adherence to norms, which involve all four factors.

2.6.1.1 Applying Greenberg's organisational justice theory

Organisational justice theory defines justice in an organisation and its different sources as the perceptions of fairness in rules and social norms governing by its four factors or dimensions; distribution/outcome (how outcomes should be distributed); procedures (processes, policies used for making such distribution decisions), interpersonal (how people are treated in interactions) and information, its usefulness

and accessibility (Ghosh et al., 2014, p. 631; Greenberg, 1993, p. 1). Measuring perceptions of organisational justice brings together connecting patterns of structural, systematic, social relationships and justice rule in each component such as; (Greenberg, 1993, p. 1; Cropanzano, Bowen & Gilliland, 2007, p. 36; Poole, 2007, p. 728; Randeree & Malik, 2008, p. 65; Dong & Phuong, 2018, p. 144).

1. Accuracy, correctable, consistency, bis suppression, ethical standard and representative in procedures, and processes leading toward an outcome found in procedural justice;
2. The systematic and structural context of reward, seen through justice rule, equity, equality and need found in distributive justice;
3. The social determinant of procedural justice seen as providing explanations and information that is accurate, relevant, sufficient, timely and truthful, about procedures and outcomes found in informational justice and;
4. The social components of organisational justice obtained by demonstrating respect and politeness in interaction found in interpersonal justice.

TABLE 2.1: ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE AS A FRAMEWORK

Organisational justice **Political environment, legitimacy, organisational trust, and organisational justice structures**			
Interpersonal justice **Relationships** **Treatment**	**Informational justice** **Information** **Explanations**	**Procedural justice** **Policies** **Processes** **Procedures**	**Distributive justice** **Equity** **Equality** **Need**
Justice rule	**Justice rule**	**Justice rule**	**Justice rule**
Truthfulness	Accuracy	Accuracy	Need
Respect	Timeliness	Correctable	Voice
Politeness	Explanation	Consistency	Equity
Justification	Truthfulness	Bis suppression	Equality
	Sufficiency	Ethical standard	
	Relevancy	Representative	
Relationship satisfaction	System satisfaction	System satisfaction	Outcome satisfaction

Source: Adjusted from Greenberg (1993, p. 1), Poole (2007, p. 728), Cropanzano et al., 2007, p. 36; Randeree and Malik (2008, p. 65), and Dong and Phuong (2018, p. 144)

The foundation of fairness in South Africa's public services is built by considering fairness, equity, and ethical behaviour in all four components of organisational justice. The adherence to fairness in all four components is solidified in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, (1996), which lays the foundation for fair administrative action and labour practices in governance. The Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic employs a broad range of Legislative Framework Regulating Employment Relations in South Africa, such as the Labour Relations Act (LRA) (Act 66 of 1995) the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (BCEA) (Act 75 of 1997), the Promotion of Administrative Action Act 3 of 200 ("PAJA"), that provide context for fair organisational labour and administrative practices (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, p 9). These pieces of legislation constitute a guide to the application of labour laws in South Africa. For instance, the Disciplinary Code and Procedure in the Labour Relations Act (LRA) (Act 66 of 1995) is set to promote respect and uphold the common law and statutory rights of both the employer and the employee in the workplace or the institution. Equally is important the Promotion of Administrative Action Act 3 of 200 ("PAJA") which promotes and protects the right to lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair administrative action, as well as the right to written reasons for administrative action.

Alongside their successive amendments of these pieces of legislation, government institutions are required to include details of any workplace grievances and disciplinary procedures, with emphases on how procedures, interactions, information and outcomes that lead to grievances. How the South Africa's public services operationalise justice with its institutions supports (Holtz and Harold, 2009, p. 1186) notion that examining one distinct component results in fragmented literature, as the impact of justice on an outcome varies depending on the particular justice dimension. In the same breath, it also supports (Ambrose and Schminke, 2009, p. 496) notion that focusing on a single event and variables such as individual context and traits organises the four components into their adverse effect, highlighting the scale of each component's dominance.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This literature review outlined the concept of organisational justice with solid arguments that organisational justice perceptions are found in the four components of organisational justice: procedures, information, interactions, and outcomes. Literature on modes or methods employees use to access organisational justice centred on internal organisational structures, such as the employment relations unit and line managers, and external structures, such as organised labour and chapter 9 institutions. Key arguments regarding these access structures where the roles, responsibilities, and limitations in managing workplace justice and the impact their involvement might have on the perception of fairness. Literature on motivations to pursue workplace justice outlined varying factors such as knowledge, individual traits and needs, and organisational environment. The literature, however, leans more towards employees' needs, personality traits and knowledge or cognition as consistent triggers driving employees to take justice-related actions. Lastly, the theoretical framework presented strong arguments for the relevance and application of Greenberg's organisational justice theory. Firstly, it demonstrates that organisational justice is a multidimensional concept, with each component of justice contributing to the perception of workplace justice. Secondly, it demonstrates that all components combine to form an overall justice judgment when considering various factors such as context, individual traits, and the source of injustice. The following chapter provides the methodology and methods used to gather, process, and analyse the data used to explore the experiences of public servants in **the dtic**.

CHAPTER THREE

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents and discusses the study methodology, processes, and methods used to gather, process, and analyse the data to explore experiences of organisational justice perceptions in the national office of **the dtic** in Pretoria. It has six objectives: identifying and describing the research approach, research tools and their application, sampling, the data analysis process, and the researcher's limitations, feasibility, and positionality. The chapter concludes by explaining how the research upheld research ethics principles.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The study adopted a qualitative, interpretivism approach to explore the experiences of organisational justice in **the dtic**. A cross-sectional design was used to collect primary data using a semi-structured interview schedule. A semi-structured interview is appropriate in exploratory research as it allows a dialogue between the researcher and the researched. In addition, using a semi-structured interview allowed for open-ended or additional questions to be asked, ensuring that appropriate data was collected (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019, p. 1). Although time-consuming, a good semi-structured interview can reveal much richer data if the conditions under which the interview is held are presumed comfortable for participants. Thematic analysis was used to organise, interpret, and present the participants' responses. Thematic analysis is a qualitative research analysis method used in qualitative research design to identify, analyse, organise, describe, and report themes found within a data set (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 2). Using thematic analysis complemented the data collection tool as it allowed phrases and text to be grouped, providing meaning through themes. Although limited, secondary data such as **the dtic** grievance and staff compliment stats were used to contextualise the department's target population and grievance trends. Secondary data is collected through a primary source, not by the researcher, but is available for use and analysis (Long-Sutehall et al., 2011, p. 336).

3.3 RESEARCH TOOLS AND THEIR APPLICATION

The qualitative study used a semi-structured interview schedule to guide the data collection process. A semi-structured interview is a guided interview in which predetermined open-ended questions can elicit information from participants (DeJonckheere & Vaughn, 2019, p. 1). Literature was used to formulate questions about the four organisational justice components: procedural, interpersonal, information, and distributive justice (Beugr, 2002, p. 38; Yean, 2016, p. 798), ensuring the interview schedule collected appropriate data. Open-ended questions were used, with an additional question about improvements for each study objective. Open-ended questions are appropriate in qualitative research as they allow long responses and options to probe and add additional questions, enabling more data to be gathered comprehensively in exploratory studies (Allen, 2017, p. 1). Interviews must also consider scheduling, time allocation, environment, and technology to administer and transmit the data collection tool (Bryman, 2016, p. 468). A list of all permanent employees was provided by **the dtic**'s human resource information unit. An invitation to the study was transmitted using emails noting the criteria of participants, and providing the participant's sheet, consent form, and ethics approvals. The email invitation was sent using the 'blind copy' option to protect the identity of the potential participants. The researcher administered the interview using two modes: a physical interview and a virtual interview using MS Teams. The virtual interview option increased the response rate. Self-administering the interview ensured that appropriate data was collected. Interview conversations were recorded using MS Teams after a verbal and signed consent form was received from each participant. Recording ensured conversations were comprehensively captured and allowed efficient transcribing. The physical interviews took place at **the dtic**'s Pretoria Head Office, Gauteng, between the 18th of July 2022 and 14 December 2022, following existing COVID-19 procedures. Participants were allowed more time to elaborate on their responses if necessary.

All raw data and recordings were saved on a password-encrypted computer and transcribed. The interview recordings will be deleted two years after the study is completed, as they may be needed for future research by the researcher. A pilot study conducted with a non-targeted population allowed for alignment and changes to the interview questions.

3.4 SAMPLING

The sample was drawn from 1500 permanent employees directly employed within the 12 divisions in **the dtic** located in Pretoria's Head Office, Gauteng. A purposeful sampling technique was used to select the 15 participants to be interviewed. Table 3.1 outlines the participant's basic descriptive information.

TABLE 3.1: PARTICIPANTS' BASIC INFORMATION

PARTICIPANTS' BASIC INFORMATION								
Gender		**Race**		**Salary Level**		**Union affiliation**	**Grievance**	
Female	Male	African	White	Entry-Level	Middle-Man	Union	Formal	Informal
13	**2**	**14**	**1**	**9**	**6**	**14**	**12**	**3**

The following criteria were used to select the sample: permanent employees with at least three years' service; had engaged in organisational justice structures formally or informally in the past three years; none and trade union affiliates; race and gender. Twelve (12) out of 14 participants had formally lodged a grievance, while the remaining two had no grievances filed. Two of the 15 participants were male, the majority were black, and only one participant was white (Table 3.1).

An email invitation, including a google interview schedule link, was sent to the targeted population stating the criteria. Included in the email were the participant's information sheet, consent form, and ethics clearance approval from **the dtic** and the University of the Witwatersrand. Ten participants responded to the invitation, and five were physically recruited.

All participants were contacted and screened before the interview, ensuring they met the criteria. The five physically recruited participants comprised **the dtic**'s HRM branch. Participants in the HRM brunch were intentionally recruited due to the sensitivity of the research topic and to limit non-response bias, which occurs when participants are unwilling to take part in the study based on characteristics or experiences that distinguish them from others who respond (Compton et al., 2019, p. 95). Exclusions to the sample were the researcher's branch, part-time or contract employees, and employees employed in agencies of the department. These

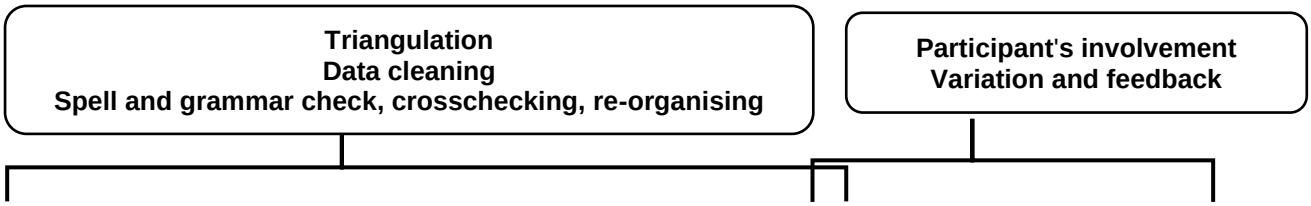
exclusions were intentional to limit relations bias emanating from direct relationships the researcher has in his branch and insight part-time and agencies employed might not necessarily have.

3.5 PROCESS OF ANALYSIS

The researcher conducted 15 interviews using a semi-structured interview schedule. Thematic analysis was conducted on the primary data to find patterns of meaning by themes emerging from the raw data (Long-Sutehall et al., 2011, p. 338; Nowell et al., 2017, p. 2). A six-phase thematic analysis strategy was adopted to establish the trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, and dependability of the study's findings (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 4; Prescott et al., 2018, p. 5).

- **Phase 1**: Data familiarity started by automatically transcribing the 15 recorded interviews using MS Teams software. The computer-generated text and duplicate words and phrases were removed. Grammatical and spelling errors were corrected, and all transcripts were organised according to questions and responses and transferred into a consolidated Excel spreadsheet for code/theme generation.
- **Phase 2:** Codes were generated using the consolidated Excel spreadsheet, created and filed notes. Common words and phrases were colour-coded, and the main themes, sub-themes, and concepts were remarked. A pre-thematic framework for each research question was composed.
- **Phase 3:** Searching for themes: using the consolidated Excel spreadsheet, thematic frameworks, which included main, sub-themes, and concepts, were created to understand theme connections and detailed notes on the emergence and hierarchies of concepts and themes were generated.
- **Phase 4:** Reviewing themes: each thematic framework was reviewed by revisiting the interview recordings, merging sub-themes, re-colouring coding, and adjusting each thematic framework referring to the literature.
- **Phase 5 and 6:** Consensus on the definition and name of the themes was achieved by revisiting the raw data and literature. Additional literature not covered in the proposal was incorporated. The final phase included a presentation of the thematic framework for each question and a detailed analysis of participants and context covering data presentation, analysis, and discussion of the themes and findings.

TABLE 3.2: THEMATIC ANALYSIS PROCESS STRATEGY



Phase 1: Data familiarity	Phase 2: Code generation	Phase 3: Searching for themes	Phase 4: Reviewing themes	Phase 5: Defining and naming themes	Phase 6: Producing the report
Data cleaning, triangulating audio recording with generated transcripts, pre-analysis of themes, codes and thoughts, taking filed notes, storing and organising data on an Excel spreadsheet to address dependability	Reflexive journaling, selecting code framework, and audit trail of code generation, which also forms part of dependability and confirmability	Making diagrams to understand theme connections and detailed notes on the emergence and hierarchies of concepts and themes	Main themes and sub-themes screening and testing for referential adequacy by returning to raw data, addressing credibility	Consensus on themes by referring to raw data, field notes and literature	Detailing the analysis and context, addressing transferability

Source: Author's depiction adapted from the theoretical work of Nowell et al. (2017, p. 4) and Prescott et al. (2018, p. 5)

3.6 LIMITATIONS, FEASIBILITY, AND POSITIONALITY

The physical aspect of the interview and the prevalence of COVID-19 could have discouraged participants from participating in the study. A virtual interview option for participants using MS Teams was used to overcome these limitations. The second limitation was capturing the interview data and transcribing, which had the potential to be costly and time-consuming. To limit this, physical and virtual interviews were recorded and transcribed using MS Teams after receiving written consent from participants. Using MS Teams limited the costs usually associated with hiring research assistants and travelling, as well as the time to capture and transcribe the data.

In addition, the researcher revisited the interview recordings to accurately capture critical themes and elaborations made during the interview before and during the data analysis. Although not mentioned in the research proposal, the third limitation was the research topic's sensitivity, which could have deterred participants from participating, particularly those within the human resource branch. This was mitigated by physically recruiting participants and providing background of the study, the consent form and ethics approval from the University of the Witwatersrand and **the dtic**. The fourth limitation was the interview schedule's ability to elicit data relevant to the research purposes. To limit this, a pilot study was conducted on the non-targeted population. The result from the pilot study was used to refine the questions proposed in the research proposal. Finally, the researcher's positionality could have created relation bias and bias in interpreting the research findings. To limit this, the researcher's branch at **the dtic** was not part of the study, and literature and direct quotes from the participants to support the findings were used in the data presentation and discussion of the research findings.

3.7 ETHICS

The promotion of confidentiality, protection against harm, consent, and guarding against researchers' misconduct was adopted throughout the research. A research protocol was developed guided by the University of the Witwatersrand and **the dtic** ethics standards and sent to participants. As part of the study's communication and recruitment strategy, the information pack was sent to all participants, which included a participant information sheet, consent form, and ethics approval from the University of Witwatersrand and **the dtic**. In addition, the following ethical measures were advanced and communicated to all participants beforehand: Participation in the study was voluntary; the researcher obtained informed consent; participants were informed about the consequences of their participation in the study. In addition, participants' names, names of the trade unions, divisions they report to and anything that could potentially identify them in the research report was omitted, including stories that could identify them.

3.8 VALIDITY, RELIABILITY, AND DEPENDABILITY

Validity, reliability, and dependability can never be eliminated; however, their effects can be mitigated by paying attention to validity and reliability during the research process (Cohen et al., 2002, p. 133). In qualitative enquiry, the trustworthiness of the methodology can enhance the study's credibility and findings (Noble and Smith, 2015, p. 34; Cohen et al., 2002, p. 133). To ensure the study's trustworthiness, transferability, credibility, dependability, and confirmability will be achieved in the study's methodology and findings (Long-Sutehall et al., 2011, p. 3). Literature, not the researcher's perspective, informed the interview questions, improving validity. A pilot study was carried out to ensure that the interview questions directly yielded data needed to improve validity and reliability. The questions were adjusted and aligned based on the pilot study's results. Interviews were recorded and transcribed using MS Teams recording software, addressing dependability. The recordings ensured that the interviews were accurately captured, allowed easy data transcribing, and eased triangulation by allowing data to be revisited during and after analysis (Noble and Smith, 2015, p. 34). To improve the trustworthiness of the findings of the study, a thematic analysis process strategy **(Table 3.2)** was adopted that included data familiarity, code generation, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report. Direct quotes were used to represent the participant's responses and the study's findings were informed by literature.

3.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter achieved its aim by presenting and discussing the study methodology, processes, and methods used to gather, process, and analyse the data used to explore participant's organisational justice experiences and perceptions in the national office of **the dtic** in Pretoria. This chapter specifically detailed the research approach, research tools and their application, sampling, the data analysis process, and the researcher's limitations, feasibility, and positionality. The following chapter presents the data gathered from 15 interviews.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the findings that emerged from the participants' responses, addressing the research questions. The chapter provides participants' quotes, organised into main and sub-themes, as well as a brief analysis of the research question findings derived from 15 interviews. Thematically, the analysis was guided by the six-phase qualitative data analysis strategy presented in section 3.5, suggested by Prescott et al. (2018, p. 5) and Nowell et al. (2017, p. 4). To ensure the collection of rich data, participants were asked what may be improved in objectives 1), 3), and 4). The principal goal of asking participates what they felt need improvement was to reach trustworthy sub-conclusions about organisational justice experiences. To facilitate the chapter, findings related to the three sub-theme questions are presented first as objectives one, two, and three. This is followed by the findings of the main research question, presented as objective four.

Main research question: What are public servants' overall perceptions of organisational justice in light of their experience?

Sub-theme question 1: How do public sector employees access organisational justice (methods/modes), and what are their reasons for their choice?

Sub-theme question 2: What are public sector employee's motivation(s) to pursue organisational justice?

Sub-theme question 3: What is public sector employee's perception of their experience (four-factor model)?

4.2 OBJECTIVE ONE: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE, AND THE REASONS FOR THEIR CHOICE

This objective aimed to determine the modes participants use to access organisational justice and understand the reasons for their choice. Participants were asked what they felt could be improved in modes they have identified. The rationale for the question was to arrive at the most accurate conclusion about the participant's mode of choice and reasons for their choice.

4.2.1 Main theme: Line manager as an access point

TABLE 4.1: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES IN TERMS OF LINE MANAGER AS AN ACCESS POINT

OBJECTIVE ONE: HOW PARTICIPANTS ACCESS ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE AND REASONS FOR CHOOSING THOSE METHODS/MODES LINE MANAGER	
TOPICS	**QUOTES**
Reasons - **Protocol** - **Authorisation** - **Perceived support**	"I mean, let's agree on that, that there will be something that's happening to me that, that says, OK, I'm, this is injustice and then if then I want that injustice corrected, then I think **it's about protocol**, it first it's negotiation with your **manager**." **—Participant 10** "**I go to the manager first**. I think the first point of departure is you go to the **manager**. So yeah, that's what I will do or that's what I've done before, I went to my manager first. Yeah, with a certain experience that I had in the department. But you know, sometimes, if there's no agreement, that's when I want to [go to the] union." **—Participant 11** "I simply my manager would be the first one to have to sign this and he'd be the one to have to push it through. It's formal, basically the process that has to be followed, so you relied on formal process" **—Participant 15** "**Including my manager, was to get facts straight, that we both report to him** not the other way around. We both report to him so it is only fair if [he is] the one giving instructions…**I think procedurally, it was correct to include my manager**, I think it was, especially because I report to him. I think he should know whatever is happening, especially if it is related to work." **—Participant 9** "Account manager, remember either done the union and the ER [employment relation], every employee **should start with the account managers to raise their concerns** because that's their responsibility to assist so we raised it with

	the account managers and she took it upon herself, she even went to the DG [Director-General]." **—Participant 4** "The support that she give[s], like studies; **she give[s] like 100% support**, she even encourages [you to] take [advantage] of this bursary scheme that they offer in the department and then also even personal support. She does that a lot for employees. She always says that we are individuals, so she gives like support in that regard." **—Participant 4** "I think it's about **protocol;** [first] it's **negotiation with your manager**…All organisations have processes and procedures in place that [need] to be followed as a first step, and also those processes and procedures have a sequence to say if you don't get a joy here, move to the next step." **—Participant 10** "I mean, if maybe [there] is a **strong [director]** with whom you have a **good relationship**, but he's also not in an empowered position, but I mean, such a person could maybe first also talk to the senior manager and say, you know what, this is the rest of the story." **—Participant 2** "Managers manage the unit, you know. If there was anything that would need **signing or even buy in, it would have to be authorised** within the unit first before it went outside of the unit, and at my level, I'm not an authoriser, I can only recommend, I know sorry. Yeah, so that was very easy." **—Participant 5** "Our supervisor, [who] is in the unit, who felt it was good initiative. He was in total agreement. And then we went to the operations unit within our division and they said that was beyond their jurisdiction. And they're the ones who said we should go directly to HR [human resources]." **—Participant 5**
IMPROVMENTS	
Support (buy-in) **Less interference** **Firm decision-making** **Engagement**	"**Showing their buy-in more** because I mean, at the end of the day, there isn't apart from cc-ing [carbon copy] a person to show that you're involving them in something. Verbal conversations cannot hold water. I think if everybody's part of the **dialogue**, it can really assist and maybe fast track processes." **—Participant 5** "I feel that there should be a **lot of engagement with employees** and awareness in terms of making them aware of all the organisational policies, what they entail, where can they access them, and what is the process of accessing them without making them feel uncomfortable about [it]." **—Participant 12** "I think the issue is really **having firm people** to then resolve and give this access as well. I find people are not quite confident when somebody is [in] the

wrong, to say actually, you know, according to company rules[…]." **—Participant 10**

"[In] the beginning, my manager was supportive, yeah, this is a good idea, you know I think you should try something new." **—Participant 14**

Participants' responses were explicit regarding line managers as an access point; as a result, deliberation focused on the reasons for their selected modes or methods. Most participants highlighted the internal reporting structure and procedures ("protocol") as the basis for their choice. Other participants based their choice on the inherent administrative responsibilities, such as formalisation and authorisation, the line managers have in various stages of grievance management in the department.

"Account manager, remember either done the union and the ER [employment relation], every employee should start with the account managers to raise their concerns because that's their responsibility to assist." **—Participant 4**

"Managers manage the unit, you know, if there was anything that would need signing or even buy-in, it would have to be authorised within the unit first before it went outside of the unit." **—Participant 5**

"I think it's about protocol; [first] it's negotiation with your manager…All organisations have processes and procedures in place that [need] to be followed as a first step, and also those processes and procedures have a sequence to say if you don't get a joy here, move to the next step." **—Participant 10**

Participants' responses show that employees select the line manager as a mode due to the organisational structure, procedures, and policies that dictate the grievance management process sequence. Participants' responses also show that employees select line managers as a mode due to the administrative role they play in the grievance management process. The third reason for choosing the line manager to access justice is perceived manager support and or "buy-in", which participants believed is facilitated by a close working relationship with their line manager.

"I mean, if maybe [there] is a strong [director] with whom you have a good relationship…I mean, such a person could maybe first also talk to the senior manager and say, you know what, this is the rest of the story." **—Participant 2**

"At the beginning, my manager was supportive, yeah this is a good idea, you know I think you should try something new" **—Participant 14**

Participants' responses generally show that employees choose their line manager due to the potential of receiving organisational support they might provide, which they believe influences processes and outcomes in the department. Participants' responses show that employees choose their line manager as a preferred access point because they are able to elicit their "buy-in"/ support, which might influence outcomes. Participants' responses additionally highlighted the quality and close working relationship (proximity) as an important attribute in the facilitation of buy-in or support between employees and line managers. Participants' responses regarding improvements were specific, as participants emphasised managers showing "buy-in", and enhancing the quality of engagement they have with employees.

"Showing their buy-in more. Verbal conversations cannot hold water. I think if everybody's part of the dialogue, it can really assist and maybe fast track processes" **—Participant 5**

Participants' responses reemphasised managers' support and its influence on processes and outcomes in the department.

4.2.2 Main theme: The employment relations unit as an access point

TABLE 4.2: PARTICIPANTS' DIRECT QUOTES RELATED TO THE EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS UNIT AS AN ACCESS POINT

OBJECTIVE ONE: HOW PARTICIPATS ACCESS ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE AND REASONS OR FOR CHOOSING THOSE METHODS/MODES EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS UNIT	
TOPICS	**QUOTES**
Reasons - **Protocol** - **Authorisation** - **Perceived support**	"**Initially, I employed the services of the ER** as an individual employee. That didn't go any further. It wasn't quick, the response wasn't so quick" **—Participant 13** "**With ER, I feel they hide behind documentation**. It's very in **impersonal.** It feels like you are dealing with a robot, a robotic system. You just state your case, and then it's documented. This [is] for them to just capture; you **don't feel like you have a voice**. So [there are] things you might miss, [things] that are important for your case to state because you're not a good writer, you know. So, I feel that the system is flawed that way." **—Participant 6**

	"ER [employment relation] isn't the best way. It is not what is the use, you can use ER [employment relation] and then they will **fail you with no reasons**. Yes, I know that we say they must be a mediator, but that mediator, if his **takes sides**, of which they take the wrong side, then what happens?" **—Participant 1**
IMPROVEMENTS	
Suppression of bias **Fair procedures** **Engagement** **Independent**	"I think the issue is really having **firm people** to then resolve and give this access as well. I find people are not quite confident, when somebody is [in] the wrong, to say actually, you know according to company rules." **—Participant 10** "I think that the **department must stop being biased**, and they shouldn't take any side. If they need to be mediators, let them be mediators." **—Participant 1** "And I think those are the impediments we have so far but through continuous **engagement**. There is always improvement, there's always a need for improvement and hence they are continuous[ly] ongoing, continuous collective bargaining where [as] human[s], we make mistakes, but they need to be fixed." **—Participant 8** "So the limitation in **how policies are interpreted** by individuals in employee relations. The soundness or harmonisation with internal policies with the highest book legal document in this country, which is the Constitution." **—Participant 8** "For me personally, I think [these] types of units, which have to deal with justice in the workplace, **have to be independent,** meaning that they can be outsourced from the outside; they can be cantered at the DPSA or outsourced." **—Participant 12** "I feel that there should be a lot of engagement with employees and awareness in terms of making them aware of all the organisational policies, what they entail, where [they can] access them, and what is the process of accessing them without making them feel uncomfortable about [it]." **—Participant 12**

The employment relations unit resonated with a few participants as an access point to organisational justice in the department. Most participants highlighted the employment relation units' inclusion as part of policy and its role in facilitating, recording, formalising/legitimising and escalating grievances in the department. Generally, participants criticised its ability to manage grievances, highlighting delays and a lack

of responses, while others characterised engagements with the employment relations unit as impersonal.

"Initially, I employed the services of the ER [employment relations] as an individual employee. That didn't go any further. It wasn't quick, the response wasn't so quick, but when I went to the union, the response was quicker and the response was much more positive than when I engage[d] them as an individual." **—Participant 13**

"You just state your case, and then it's documented. This [is] for them to just capture; you don't feel like you have a voice. So [there are] things you might miss, [things] that are important for your case to state because you're not a good writer, you know. So, I feel that the system is flawed that way." **—Participant 6**

The participant's responses show that employees use the employment relations unit as access to organisational justice due to policies and the administrative roles it plays in managing grievances. The participant's responses also show that employees use the employment relations unit to formalise grievances, enabling them to formally escalate grievances.

Responses related to improving the employment relations unit as an access point emphasised accuracy in the interpretation and application of policies, in addition to suppression of bias, by separating the employment relations unit and the department, and [robust] interpersonal engagement and treatment.

"For me personally, I think [these] types of units, which have to deal with justice in the workplace, have to be independent, meaning that they can be outsourced from the outside; they can be cantered at the DPSA or outsourced." **—Participant 12**

"I think that the department must stop being biased, and they shouldn't take any side. If they need to be mediators, let them be mediators." **—Participant 1**

Participants' responses show that employees have a lack of trust in the employee relations unit's ability to manage grievances, which influences its use in the department. Participants' responses also show that the employment relations unit's inability to engage employees on an interpersonal level discourages its usage in the

department. Table 4.3 provides direct quotes and topics as they relate to organised labour as a mode of accessing organisational justice.

4.2.3 Main theme: Organised labour as an access point

TABLE 4.3: PARTICIPANTS' DIRECT QUOTES RELATED TO ORGANISED LABOUR AS AN ACCESS POINT

OBJECTIVE ONE: HOW PARTICIPATS ACCESS ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE AND REASONS OR FOR CHOOSING THOSE METHODS/MODES ORGANISED LABOUR	
REASONS	**QUOTES**
Reasons - **Protocol** - **Support** - **Escalation**	"Initially I employed the services of the ER [employment relation] as an individual employee. That didn't go any further. It wasn't quick, the response wasn't so quick, but when I went to the union, **the response was quicker** and the **response was much more positive** than when I engage[d] them as an individual." **—Participant 13** "Basically, we just raise it with the union and the union then further encouraged us [to] make it formal with **the dtic** by raising it with the employment relations [unit] so that it's on record that we had a complaint for this and then I think employment relations raised it with think the DDG [deputy Director-General] who was hiring." **—Participant 6** "[A]although it was a minor case, I did have a case personally, and I found it **much quicker and easier** [to go] through the union." **—Participant 6** "I went to my manager first. But you know, sometimes **if there's no agreement**, that's when I want to [go to the] union." **—Participant 11** "I must say that our two organised labourers, they are **very vocal**, they are very supportive, and they represent the employee's interests, and that **gives employees confidence** that at least there [are] structures internally that **support** [us] to raise our issues if we find ourselves in situations where we need their support." **—Participant 12** "[I]t [is] **much quicker and easier** to have to go through the union because the union tends to be aggressive in the approach and as a result, the employer tends to listen, for lack of a better word,

[because] the unions [are] more than [an] individual employee." **—Participant 6**

"Yeah, there is a huge difference because with the union you have this fire and zeal, you know, you know that fight, you have a fighting spirit and [you are] **encourage**[d]. You have some **form of backup** and you have a **right to raise your voice**. I think the union is there to say to you, 'Don't keep quiet, step up and you're going to be okay. No one is going to victimise you, and it is your right to actually voice your opinion.' So that's the beauty of a union." **—Participant 6**

A few participants identified organised labour as a mode or access point to organisational justice; however, it was said to be used at the beginning of a grievance and when participants were unhappy with the services and outcomes of the employment relations unit. The resolution of deadlocks between the department and the employer was highlighted as a wide rationale for involving organised labour.

"Basically, we just raise it with the and the union then further encouraged us [to] make it formal with **the dtic** by raising it with the employment relations unit…**" —Participant 6**

"…But you know, sometimes if there's no agreement, that's when I want to [go to the] union" **—Participant 11**

In addition, reasons to access organisational justice through organised labour included perceived support and its ability to escalate employees' concerns. Participants emphasised how organised labour can intensify or provide attention to their concerns, resulting in speedy responses and outcomes.

"[I]t is much quicker and easier to have to go through the union because the union tends to be aggressive in the approach and as a result, the employer tends to listen, for lack of a better word, [because] the unions [are] more than [an] individual employee." **—Participant 6**

"…our two organised labourers, they are very vocal, they are very supportive, and they represent the employee's interests…**" —Participant 12**

Participants' responses show that employees access workplace justice through organised labour because of its ability to escalate, provide support, and fast-track grievances in the department.

Participant's responses, in addition, show that employees choose to involve organised labour because it affords them better treatment and fairness. The last reason for using organised labour as an access point highlighted its ability to provide quality interpersonal treatment. For instance, participants highlighted that, compared to the employment relations unit, interaction with organised labour is personal, cordial, and respectful, allowing employees to express themselves fully. Participants emphasised how encouraging interactions are, leaving employees with the confidence to report their grievances.

> "…organised labourers, they are very vocal, they are very supportive, and they represent the employee's interests and that gives employees confidence that at least there [are] structures internally that support [us] to raise our issues if we find ourselves in situations where we need their support." **—Participant 12**

The participants' responses show that employees use organised labour because of the quality of interpersonal treatment they receive from organised labour institutions. Their responses also show that employees involve organised labour because it affords better treatment and fairness in the department. Figure 4.1 provides a thematic framework of modes employees use to access organisational justice.

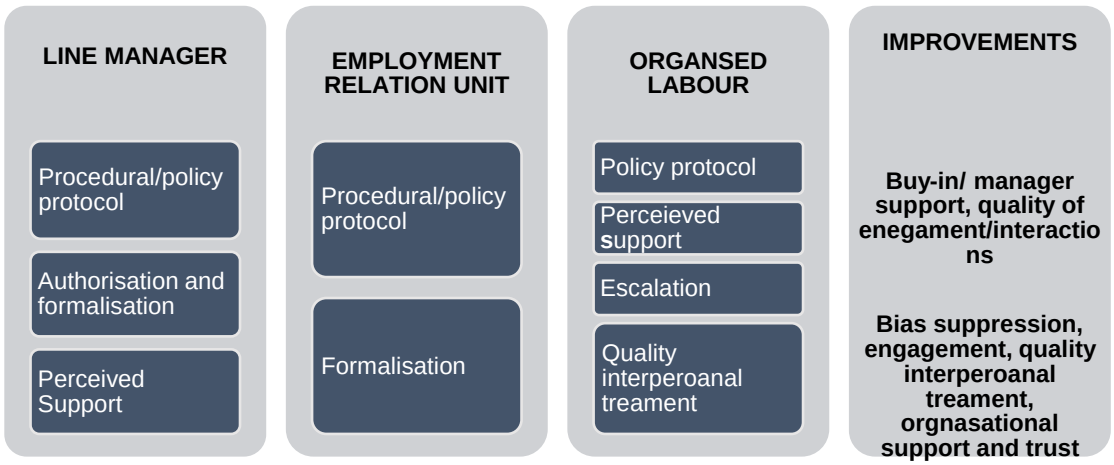


FIGURE 4.1: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK OF METHODS AND MODES EMPLOYEES USE TO ACCESS ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

As highlighted in figure 4.1 participants' responses drew on the department's organisational structure, policies, and procedures, which indicated three access points: the line manager as the primary and preferred form of access, the employment relation unit, and organised labour. The reason for choosing the line manager as an access point, in addition to policy, procedural protocol, formalisation, and authorisation, was perceived line manager support. The employment relations unit, on the other hand, was only considered due to policies and its administrative role of formalising/legitimising and facilitating grievances in the department. In addition to policy, reasons for choosing organised labour included organised labour support, its ability to escalate grievances, and the quality of interpersonal treatment. Improvements were only provided relating to the line manager and employment relation unit, with emphasis on the quality of interpersonal engagement, treatment support, and suppression of bias superficially in the employment relations unit.

4.3 OBJECTIVE TWO: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION(S) TO PURSUE ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

This objective aimed to determine and understand what motivates participants to pursue organisational justice in **the dtic**. The data presented reflects participant's responses from 15 semi-structured interviews based on their experience. Table 4.4 provides direct quotes and topics as they relate to knowledge as a motivator for pursuing organisational justice.

4.3.1 Main theme: Knowledge as a motivator

TABLE 4.4: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATED TO KNOWLEDGE AS A MOTIVATOR

KNOWLEDGE (THEME)		
TOPICS	**QUOTES**	
Processes and procedures **Policies** **Experience** **Social environment**	"[Y]ou know, also look, the [undetermined speech] had very **concrete evidence** but also so you must calculate very carefully, will I gain or will I lose because sometimes you lose a battle or you win a battle but then you lose the war." **—Participant 2**	"Maybe if it happens once you [are], like, okay. But when it happens, like, [a] second time around and you [are], like, no, I think something needs to be done. And also **when you interact with other people** and you can see that, ohh, this thing has been happening and no one is doing anything about it." **—Participant 3**

"Ohh, it came from uh, you know when you, when you, when you are an employee within the department, you must read; so, because **I understood the policies** of the, like, the DPSA policies, so when I stood up for this, it's because **I knew that I was within the correct lane**, you understand. I wasn't taking chances it was within my right, so I knew I was going to win the case." **— Participant 7**

"Organisational culture play a huge role. You are much more **likely to talk to colleagues** before you even take steps to seek out justice for yourself. Your colleagues will tell you of their own experiences, and based on those experiences, you'll either be motivated to seek out justice or you will be demotivated or be discouraged from doing so." **—Participant 13**

"So, in, in most cases, what people do in my experience, even myself personally, [is] you start to [weigh] the pros and cons for standing up for yourself, you know, or for seeking justice for yourself. So what you end up doing is you check or assess which one will give you more peace and if not seeking out for justice, [which one] will give you more peace, [then] you go for that." **— Participant 13**

"It's an alchemy of so many shades, yeah, like we say, upbringing also from my exposure of how the economy is constructed when it comes to skills. And also **my experience**, you know." **— Participant 5**

"**I don't allow people to dominate me when they don't have informed** or appropriate researched facts about what needs to be done. So, I make sure that when I put my argument across, it's supported by fact[s]." **—Participant 12**

Knowledge was the first theme identified as a motivator and an essential component for participants who credited their personality traits and needs as reasons to take justice-related action. As an independent motivator, participants emphasised access to information and knowledge to apply it within the department. Knowledge included information acquired from social accounts and participants' educational and work experiences, which they believed influenced their confidence to take justice-related action.

"…when you are an employee within the department, you must read; so, because I understood the policies of the, like, the DPSA policies, so when I stood up for this…**" —Participant 7**

"It's an alchemy of so many shades, yeah, like we say, upbringing also from my exposure of how the economy is constructed when it comes to skills. And also my experience, you know." **—Participant 5**

The participants' responses show that employees are more motivated to act when they have access to relevant and adequate justice-related information and an understanding of how to apply it in the department. The responses also show that information about policies, procedures, outcomes, and social counts of others facilitates understanding that builds confidence to take action.

4.3.1.1 Use of information and knowledge

The discussions that followed highlighted the value and use of knowledge and information. For instance, information was said to be used as evidence to support cases and largely to strategise and weigh options and grievance successes.

"…even myself personally, [is] you start to [weigh] the pros and cons for standing up for yourself, you know, or for seeking justice for yourself. So what you end up doing is you check or assess which one will give you more peace and if not seeking out for justice, [which one] will give you more peace, [then] you go for that." **—Participant 13**

"[Y]ou know, also look, the [undetermined speech] had very concrete evidence but also so you must calculate very carefully, will I gain or will I lose …" **—Participant 2**

The participants' responses show that information and knowledge put options, possible outcomes, and effort required into perspective, which informs employees if justice is worth pursuing. Overall, participants' responses show that access to relevant justice-related information and explanations relating to processes and their outcomes is critical in taking justice-related action. Table 4.5 provides direct quotes and topics as they relate to personality traits as a motivator for pursuing organisational justice.

4.3.2 Main theme: Personality traits as a motivator

TABLE 4.5: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATED TO PERSONALITY TRAITS AS A MOTIVATOR

PERSONALITY TRAITS (THEME)		
TOPICS	**QUOTES**	
- **Self-expression** - **Social environment** - **Knowledge** - **Quality of interaction**	"**I think it is within me** because, like even outside, I don't think I would. If I say something is wrong, I need to deal with it, understand. I can't say that because of outside **the dtic** or I'm not within, there are no policies." **—Participant 7** And I must say, when this senior manager started, also with a **very forceful personality**, I must say she intimidated me, that's true, so I think I was more tongue tied where she was there, done what I would normally be. So I had no problem if she felt I am not ready for the position, to then block me, but I would have expected that to become a personal discussion." **—Participant 2** "You know, there's also the problem, in **the dtic**, there is no **real space for private discussions**, because, I mean, if you discuss, if there's a discussion in the chef directors office, even if the door is closed, the people sitting close to it can hear." **—Participant 2** **"**But they said I must also lodge a formal complaint and grievance, but after that, I didn't want to go through all those things **after the treatment." —Participant 11** "I think in the organisation, no one really motivate[s] me, I believe in standing up for myself." **—Participant 9** "…let's **treat people** equal and fair. If [you] say the system is supposed to be	"I'm the **kind of a person who's not afraid to express what I'm feeling** regardless of who am I dealing with. It doesn't really matter for me as long as you are a person. You are [a] human being, and [as] a human being, your level or my level doesn't necessarily have an impact on that." **—Participant 9** "But I had some reasons basically for a grievance procedure, but I am satisfied that for my **type of personality** also, [I] [don't] like confrontation. I think I chose the right venue. And okay, what meant a lot to me is that my director knew what I was capable of. We work together very nicely." **—Participant 2** "I think **I don't want to be seen as a bad person** sometimes, sometimes I'm not even happy about myself because I tend to brush things off because I just don't like confronting people even if I'm not happy, so I just decide to let things go. But I think if now it keeps on happening then. That's when I'll start talking, because now I will then refer back that, you know, this thing is not the first time happening, but in an instant, I don't. I just let it go." **—Participant 3**

	equal and fair and justice is about equality and fairness, let's do that. Let all animals be equal in the zoo." **— Participant 6** "**I'm a very empathetic person**. I'm a clergyman as well. So I love helping people. I'm an activist, so I [am] where there's a need for change I'm always excited about being part of bringing that positive change. And therefore, yes, it is a great part of my personality. I love to help people. And hence I got into that space. Yeah. So those are my [motives]." **—Participant 8**	"There's one thing that I told myself, I will, I'll never be allow[ed] to be suppressed in any form. **I'm an adult, I'm a professional,** and everything should be communicated with respect and be solved with respect." **— Participant 12** "Every **person is unique,** obviously you deal with everything in a unique way." **—Participant 1**

Participant's personality trait is the second theme. As a motive, participants drew on their upbringing, and educational and work experiences, which they believed shaped their personalities and how they behave and react to work incidents. For instance, participants highlighted their ability to express themselves in various settings, while others credited their empathetic and confrontational personality traits as a motive believed to influence their decision to take justice-related action.

I'm the kind of a person who's not afraid to express what I'm feeling regardless of who am I dealing with. It doesn't really matter for me as long as you are a person. You are [a] human being and [as] a human being your level or my level doesn't necessarily have an impact on that." **—Participant 9**

The participants also contrasted their personalities with others, noting that dominant, suppressive, and confrontational personalities often deter them from taking justice-related action. However, the participants believed that having information and knowledge assists in counteracting such personalities.

"…I told myself, I will, I'll never be allow[ed] to be **suppressed** in any form. I'm an adult, I'm a professional, and everything should be communicated with respect and be solved with respect…. I don't allow people to dominate me when they don't have informed or appropriate researched facts about what needs to be done. So

I make sure that when I put my argument across, it's supported by fact[s]." **—Participant 12**

"…I tend to brush things off because I just don't like confronting people even if I'm not happy, so I just decide to let things go…" **—Participant 3**

The participant's response shows that employees' personality traits influence whether they will take justice-related action. The participants' responses also show that domineering, suppressive, and confrontational behaviour deters those less social from taking justice-related actions.

The participants' responses further show that information and knowledge provide employees the additional confidence to take justice-related action.

4.3.2.1 Sub-theme: Quality of treatment and environment

Alongside personality traits, participants emphasised how they are treated and the environment in which disputes are handled as an additional factor that influences their personality and motivates them to act or deter them from taking justice-related action.

For instance, participants believed that a hostile, insensitive environment and one that lacks privacy is a deterrent to reporting workplace incidents.

"You know, there's also the problem, in **the dtic**, there is no real space for private discussions…even if the door is closed, the people sitting close to it can hear." **—Participant 2**

"But they said I must also lodge a formal complaint and grievance, but after that, I didn't want to go through all those things after the treatment." **—Participant 11**

The participants' responses show that employees are motivated to pursue justice in an environment perceived to be protected and treats aggrieved employees cordially. Table 4.6 provides direct quotes and topics as they relate to type of injustice/needs as a motivator to pursue organisational justice.

4.3.3 Main theme: Type of injustice/needs as a motivator

TABLE 4.6: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATING TO THE TYPE OF INJUSTICE/NEEDS AS A MOTIVATOR

TYPE OF INJUSTICE AND NEED (THEME)		
TOPICS	**QUOTES**	
- **Frequency** - **Personal preference** - **Needs**	"**Maybe, it will depend on what I am [pursuing],** and you will not know what problems I may come across in the future…remember you never know the issues that you will come across in future." **—Participant 1** "**It depends on what injustice** are you pursuing…For me, I wouldn't really say culture, but it's [a] personal preference. So I think it's more [a] personal preference and an ability to produce and do what I need to do for the employer in a manner that is very comfortable and satisfying to me." **—Participant 10** "[A]lot of people tend to seek out justice **based on the kind of injustice that is happening**, for instance myself, based on the culture that I have experienced, I am not likely to seek out just this for myself. I would probably seek out just if someone has been physical with me, but if it is soft issues where there is no emotional, psychological abuse." **—Participant 13**	"Maybe if it **happens once you like,** okay. But when it happens like [a] second time around and you like, no, I think something needs to be done. And also when you **interact with other people** and you can see that, ohh, this thing has been happening and no one is doing anything about it. So you feel you know what, I think it's time someone say[s] something." **—Participant 3** "**If the bullying continued**, I almost want to say over years and escalate, then I would have considered it." **—Participant 2** "**[I]t has a higher precedence** than the person who was, even if I felt it wasn't approachable, I would have filled, made that attempt." **—Participant 5**

The type of injustice was the last theme identified as a motive to take justice-related action. As a motive, participants deliberated on different work incidents that influenced their decisions to act. For instance, workplace incidents such as work bullying, harassment, and unfair remuneration were primarily incidents most participants felt they would not stand for, while others felt that anything that affected their ability to work took precedence.

"It depends on what injustice are you pursuing…" **—Participant 10**

"I would probably seek out just if someone has been physical with me…" **—Participant 13**

4.3.3.1 Sub-themes: frequency, level of discomfort, and need

The frequency of a similar incident and the level of their discomfort if their needs are not met were highlighted as moderators. Employee needs were conceptualised as different preferences, which the participants believed should be met by the department in order to do their job.

"Maybe if it happens once you like, okay. But when it happens like [a] second time around and you like, no, I think something needs to be done." **—Participant 3**

"If the bullying continued, I almost want to say over years and escalate, then I would have considered it." **—Participant 2**

"…For me, I wouldn't really say culture, but it's [a] personal preference, So I think it's more [a] personal preference and an ability to produce and do what I need to do for the employer in a manner that is very comfortable and satisfying to me." **—Participant 10**

The participants' responses show that employees' motive to take justice-related action depends on the injustice they experience and their particular needs at a specific time. Their responses also show that the frequency and the level of discomfort caused by work-related incidents regulate their decisions to take justice-related action. Generally, participants felt that situations that affected their emotional and psychological state would motivate them to take justice-related action. Figure 4.2 provides a thematic framework for employee motivation to pursue justice in **the dtic**.

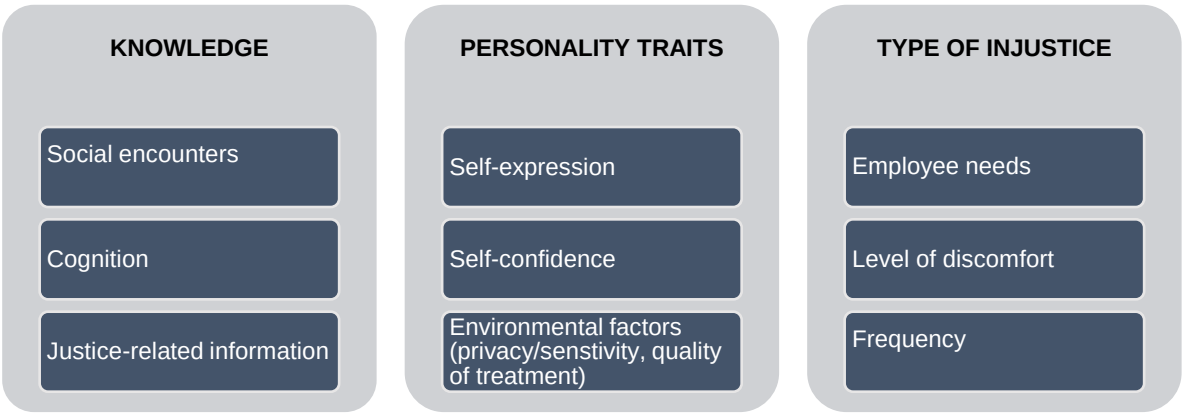


FIGURE 4.2: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK FOR EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION(S) TO PURSUE ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

As in figure 4.2 indicates, discussion about motives drew on connecting elements such as participants' family background and their education and work environment that influence their motives to take justice-related action in **the dtic**. Three distinct themes emerged: knowledge as the central theme, personality traits, and type of injustice. The evaluation of participants' motives included a single or a combination of all motives, with knowledge serving as its own theme and an attribute of other themes. Knowledge as a theme revealed the acquisition of information about policies and social encounters and the understating of its application as a motivator. Personality traits as a theme highlighted different personalities as motives and a deterrent to act, such as the confidence for one to express oneself, dominance, and confrontation traits. In addition to personality traits, environmental factors, such as the level of privacy, hostility, and sensitivity in which grievances are held, were highlighted as factors influencing employees' motives to pursue organisational justice.

Finally, the participants' responses revealed that the decision to take justice-related measures is influenced by the type of injustice experienced, including variables such as employees' needs and the level of discomfort and frequency of the injustice.

4.4 OBJECTIVE THREE: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EXPERIENCE

This objective aimed to determine and understand participants' perceptions of organisational justice in **the dtic**. Follow-up questions included what participants felt could be improved regarding the department's management of organisational justice. The rationale for the questions was to arrive at the most accurate conclusion about the participant's perception of organisational justice in the department. All 15 participants responded to the questions by referring to their experiences. Table 4.7 provides direct quotes and topics as they relate to the perception of bias in the department.

4.4.1 Main theme: Perceived bias

TABLE 4.7: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATING TO THE PERCEPTION OF BIAS

BIAS THEME (PROCEDURES, INTERPONAL TREATMENT, INFROMATION, AND OUTCOMES)				
TOPICS	**PROCEDURAL JUSTICE**	**DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE**	**INFORMATIONAL JUSTICE**	**INTERPERSONAL JUSTICE**
Consistency **Transparency** **Prejudice**	"I think **they look at the person** […] in terms of procedures. We don't follow procedure because they look at the person." **— Participant 4** "You will find people complaining, 'Why is the department **biased**. Why [the] **favouritism**?' Sometime [it] feels like [they] check the skin colour." **— Participant 1** "We were told that the rotation policy at some point doesn't exist but you can tell people are moving and you ask yourself, 'Does this policy exist or not?' **Why is it easy for other people to run with this thing, and it's difficult for others**?'" **— Participant 10**	"In certain instances, **outcomes** in **the dtic** are fair and not fair, because in some instances, it actually **depends on who their decision favours**." **— Participant 13** "And also the **personal relationship** that the culprit has with the employer is likely to influence fairness of the decision. In most cases, [the] probabilities of bullies being senior managers are very high." **—Participant 13** "I've had my instances in **the dtic** where I've presided over disciplinary actions, but you find that just because **I am in the room, the outcome is**	"Somewhere **you are told about the PAJA** [Promotion of Administrative Justice Act], and for some, it's just given. To others, the very same information you requested, that you were told about, the PAJA, and the **other person's accesses is free, like is easy access** to that other person, and for the other person, they must go follow the procedure to access the very same information." **— Participant 4** "I feel **at some point** at various levels of intervention, the **information becomes the truthful and adequate when and even stamped when the management** comes physically to explain themselves	"For me, it felt like that's **inconsistency, how we treat cases**, how we handle inquiries, [there] is [a] certain, **certain race we need to prioritise them**. [It] is like we are pushed to assistance." **— Participant 4** "You will find people complaining, […] 'Why is the department biased…? Why [is there] favouritism?' Sometimes [it] feels like [they] check the skin colour." **— Participant 1** "To me, individually, it felt like a power issue. What I suffered was a power issue. I'm in charge and everybody must listen who are you." **—Participant 14**

"I don't think they are executed fairly so that all of us feel like we are equally treated or if the circumstances are similar, you know." **— Participant 14**

"So perceptions are [a] big problem even when cases are being handled. I talked about the interpretation of policy visa vie the interpretation of facts that are provided, charge someone, and individual biasness in that." **— Participant 8**

"I think again, it's the **miscarriage of those procedures that makes them unfair** because how they are carried [out] isn't uniform to everyone. You'll find that, that what is available to you, what you can do, is not available to somebody else." **— Participant 10**

"There's a challenge with how human beings interpret data. **different**." **— Participant 10**

"I think for **other divisions they propose alternatives**, such as creating a new post. We were just told, you know, there's no, it's definite." **— Participant 5**

"I think there were few people that they consulted with. You know, when this merging thing happens. They had their own meetings and then they didn't involve everybody else." **—Participant 11**

Outcomes and decision are challenging [when] looking at the power dynamics. Obviously, it depends on the level that you are [at] in terms of the decisions that are made, but thus far, my view is that for any decisions that are made, [there] should be engagement, [they] and say no, this is the problem, these are the solutions help us find a solution you know and then we work together that way." **—Participant 6**

"And he gives his own reason, not [when] we are all sitting together, he gives them [behind] close[d] doors to the other person. That other person comes back and give[s] you the report back of the person that you're sitting with here and the president tells you, 'Listen, I need you to sit here, you can go to jump and go to Timbuktu, but you are going to come back and sit here'." **—Participant 14**

"Information in **the dtic** is sometimes **inappropriately dispersed**. There is no consistency and level-headedness in how information is spread around. If I write a submission to say I want to move to

"When you talk then about those procedures again its people-oriented and depends on the case, who's handling. It's at the execution that's the problem, which for me is really unfair if we really want to talk about fairness, I don't think they are executed fairly so that all of us feel like we are equally treated or if the circumstances are similar, you know." **— Participant 10**

"I found [what] was unfair was that feedback wasn't given. We were side-lined, that's the honest truth. We are not called to say, 'OK, the report is out and here's the report'. I felt it was unfair that **only those who were part of the conflict were given feedback**." **— Participant 12**

"There is a serious gap, and what I've seen is that our leaders are **leading**

	Data can be manipulated and biases formed and because of that bias, in how we interpret policy and how we even write policy, and there's misalignment with the Labour Relations Act and even the Constitution." **— Participant 8**	should engage in that decision." **— Participant 12**	a division, I'll be told, 'No, that policy does not work'. But then you go to a meeting, you meet somebody who says I'm actually being seconded to this unit, like how?" **—Participant 10** No, I don't think it was a fair because there was an example of the same thing happening in another division for another intern, but when we were inquiring, we're told it's no longer applicable. We were even told that the department is struggling." **— Participant 5**	**with egos**, and if you lead by ego, you are not uniting, you are not building. Leaders should lead with humility. We are not fighting them, we respect them, and I think the important thing is to respect [us] back." **—Participant 12** "No, **people don't respect each other here**, **especially when you are [on] a very low salary scale.** [It] is like [you are] nothing, like you have no feelings, and at the end of the day, we are all adults. We all came to work. Manager or not a manager, but we all came to work, we are both employees." **— Participant 9**

IMPROVEMENTS	
Transparency **Procedural alignment** **Participation in policies** **Suppression of bias**	"For me, I feel, um, **transparency** and training and people must not feel like if you are lodging a complaint now, you are now shooting yourself in the foot or maybe you are getting yourself into trouble." **—Participant 3** "I think **transparency** would be one of them. That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5** "**They mustn't [be] biased. They must take both side[s] and weigh them and check who is wrong here**. They must take the right decisions, even if it gets the department into trouble." **—Participant 1**

I think it [is that] one **procedure and benchmarking** is well, people need to benchmark with other departments and see how things are done. I know the environment and I can never be the same, but at least just benchmark and see what other people are doing before you. Yeah. So it still falls under a consultation. That's what I think is the most important part, consultation and communication." **—Participant 11**

We need to **give our ER [employment relations] space to do their job** without any fear of harassment, without any fear of them becoming victims themselves, as well as we need to have maybe internal structure, maybe operationally it can be done that these structures are independent, and they are regulated by the DPSA or Department of Labour. What we can do is we can put internal structures in place where these people [ER] do not report to anybody else but the person who regulates Labour Relations processes." **—Participant 13**

"Looking at **the dtic** as big as it is, I think they do follow a procedure, otherwise I believe they will be in trouble. I think **being treated equally and given enough time to explain** my story." **—Participant 9**

"But we continually need to improve our **own internal policies and ensure that they align with the Constitution** and the Labour Relations Act and to safeguard. And those that we don't agree with must be taken up for, agree up, review those [we] agree with, must be protected." **—Participant 8**

"I think that procedures and processes, when they formulate them, **during the formulation involving the people, involving the [staff], listening to the views of the [staff] to say,** 'OK, we are going to implement this and this is how it's going to look. What do you think?'" **—Participant 14**

"I think they must **stick to the one the governs us**, the DPSA, because in that way there is no way you're going to say, 'but' if it's, like the regulation, we cannot deviate from that. Because if we do [deviate from] the departmental rules. If it is departmental policies, someone will say, 'The DPSA is saying this, why are you saying this to me?' then we end up not using the very same procedure that we are saying [is] our procedure." **—Participant 4**

"What I feel is that they would **share these policies with us**, on newsflash, and you can see it is signed, but there's never an opportunity where one we are giving an opportunity to input one on that policy or to debate that procedure. It's almost like it's one way, and you only find out it is not suitable for you the day you're supposed to use it." **—Participant 10**

4.4.1.1 Sub-themes: Perceived bias in procedures, information, interactions and outcomes

Most participants' comments deliberated on experiences of bias based on prejudice and esteem placed on authority in the department. Participants believed that due to

bias, procedures, information, outcomes, and interpersonal treatment are often inconsistent and inaccurate, resulting in inequalities in the department.

"You'll find that, that what is available to you, what you can do, is not available to somebody else." **—Participant 10**

"You will find people complaining, 'Why is the department biased…? Why [is there] favouritism?' Sometimes it feels like [they] check the skin colour." **—Participant 1**

"I think they look at the person […] in terms of procedures. We don't follow procedure because they look at the person." **—Participant 4**

"For me, it felt like that's inconsistency, how we treat cases, how we handle inquiries, [there] is [a] certain, certain race we need to prioritise them." **—Participant 4**

"…I think again, it's the miscarriage of those procedures that makes them unfair because how they are carried [out] isn't uniform to everyone." **—Participant 10**

"In certain instances, outcomes in **the dtic** are fair and not fair, because, in some instances, it actually depends on who their decision favours." **—Participant 13**

"I've had my instances in **the dtic** where I've presided over disciplinary actions, but you find that just because I am in the room, the outcome is different." **—Participant 10**

Participants' comments regarding improvement reemphasise bias suppression, calling for the suppression of bias through enhanced transparency, employee participation, consultation, and consistency across all components of organisational justice, which participants believed will assist in aligning procedures and fairness in the department.

"I think transparency would be one of them…a notice that indicates that certain policies or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5**

"But we continually need to improve our own internal policies and ensure that they align with the Constitution and the Labour Relations Act and to safeguard. And those that we don't agree with must be taken up for…review those [we] agree with, must be protected." **—Participant 8**

"I think that procedures and processes, when they formulate them, during the formulation involving the people, involving the [staff], listening to the views of the [staff]…" **—Participant 14**

The participants' responses show that employees who are in positions of authority are highly regarded, which generates the perception of bias in the department. The participants' responses also show that consistency, accuracy, and transparency in interpersonal treatment, information, procedures, and outcomes reduce the perception of bias. Lastly, participants' comments on improvements reemphasised suppression of bias and showed transparency, consultation, and employee participation as mechanisms to reduce bias and increase fairness in the department.

4.4.2 Main theme: Ineffective communication

TABLE 4.8: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATED TO INEFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

INEFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION (THEME)		
TOPICS	**QUOTES**	
Lack of feedback **Adequate explanation** **Truthfulness** **Transparency** **Voice**	"[What] I found was unfair was that **feedback wasn't given**. We were side-lined, that's the honest truth. We are not called to say, 'OK, the report is out and here's the report'. I felt it was unfair that only those who were part of the conflict were given feedback." **—Participant 12** "And there's no consultancy, there's no communication, [there is a] **lack of communication. It's just implementation**. We are only told there is this process going to happen and this is how it's going to happen and this is when you're going to go for training, full stop." **—Participant 14** "**They didn't explain**. They just did what we requested just to shut us up.	"Honestly, I think communication. If there can be a **clear communication** in terms of how one can follow a process that could be easier because I don't think most people know how to trigger a process, how to do follow-ups, how to check and how to request information if you feel that you have not been given adequate information." **—Participant 12** "**Information sharing is not as open and as engaging**, especially when you're talking about policies and procedures. I mean, I've really never in **the dtic** [sat] in a meeting where we were debating a policy or a procedure before it was signed into power, and I feel that it is injustice." **—Participant 10** "Going through the processes, you know, you go through the processes,

	Yes, why was it not done that time when it was presented." **—Participant 4** "And how ER [employment relations] has captured the information on their side and came back and given the responses you feel like you are given a **textbook answer**. And it's relevant to them because it's a ticking box for them." **—Participant 6** "I think being treated equally and given enough time to explain my story, whether through representative or not, but given enough time to, yeah, to share my story and judgment should be done on, based on evidence." **—Participant 9** "And for them, deciding to advertise, choose the post, they will advertise for us. I don't think it's fair. So there was no information that was shared in terms of why they made that decision." **—Participant 3** "I think that the senior manager in that instance actually didn't have enough information and the people that did have it, you know, we're not in a position to share it with her before the decision was taken. The lack of information was actually a problem that contributed to that decision, the unfair decision." **—Participant 2**	sometimes you just hit a hard wall and then you sit down and you kind of recoup and say, 'OK, I'm just hitting a hardware, what do we do now?' There's nobody to talk to in **the dtic**, actually because if you go to what is this directory where the supposed to be helping employees. You find that they support managers." **—Participant 14** "It's also levels of information. There is information, which is well distributed because maybe it's absolute. They will send us disciplinary cases 18 (numbers), that one they wouldn't fake, but also wouldn't you want to know if they are 18 disciplinary cases, what are they about, why are they not telling the depth of them to see if generally are dealing with disputes between managers is performance." **—Participant 10**
IMPROVEMENTS		
Transparent communication Explanations	"I think **feedback** is always important whether good or bad. Feedback, its actually very important, especially if it's a manager, and you went to present something. When you come back,	"Before you can implement things, **allow a space of communication**, let this thing be like you know [there are] things call a hierarchy. Let [us] all be equal before you can implement something as a senior manager. Anything come to junior staffs,

present and give feedback to your business unit." **—Participant 4**

"**Continuous review of policies**, how they do things, and in a **continuous feedback**, which is something we get maybe quarterly. It would be nice to see a paper, you know, on what have they achieved with their SOPs [standard operating procedures], what have they achieved with [their] policies, are the policies updated, the times have changed, and then looking at the levels of complaints they're getting. Things obviously have changed." **—Participant 6**

"I submitted [and] the case was assigned to whoever but I feel they could have done more in terms of creating a tool of you know, you know, you're keeping it. A timeline thing that says: case received, case registered case, assigned case, opened file number, case number. You know those things, they are more hidden, they're the back office more than for you as a personal complaining to see them." **—Participant 6**

"Yeah, it needs to be communicated, but not only communicated, but there has to be **engagement** in some because you find that something, a policy, is changing and the changes are just not making sense and you realise the decision was just made by a few people somewhere who were ask them what are their challenges that they [are] coming across." **—Participant 1**

"I was not consulted before that. And they only discussed it at that level and then they made a decision. There was no consultation. They only told me that you are going to do this, but if you don't want to go. You understand when sometimes people are giving you an ultimatum." **—Participant 11**

"It should be shared. I think they need to **give valid reasons** and also come up with the solution of that reason that you are giving me." **—Participant 3**

"So that's why I'm saying. It would be nice to be warranted if given an **opportunity to express myself**, to sit with people, not to feel like I'm sitting [in] a back office." **—Participant 6**

"I **think transparency** would be one of them. That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5**

"I need to be heard, **I need to be heard** because it is my issue. It's not something that I've just made-up out of my mind. So they need to understand where I'm coming from and yeah, they must. Yeah, keep my issue as important, agent." **—Participant 3**

"They can make it very, very personal man. Don't make it a pepper-based system like a ticking box system. Make it an open system. Have that open door policy of saying you can still come and sit and reason. Give us that, make me feel like my

	focusing on one area of, um, you know, one aspect of this policy and there wasn't enough engagement."**—Participant 5**	case is important you know, don't just make me feel like it's just another complaint that's going to form part of the statistics." **—Participant 6**
	"I think they need to do away with you having to request the information of all the reports. For justice to be effective, processes have to be transparent and honest. So to promote that transparency, what they need to do, by default, [is to] submit to you and your representative that information." **—Participant 13**	"I think being treated equally, and, given enough time to explain my story, whether through representative or not, but given enough time to, yeah, to share my story and judgment should be done on based on evidence." **—Participant 9**

The second main theme saw participants deliberate inefficiencies in the dissemination of information. The delay in providing relevant and adequate information relating to the department's policies, procedures, and decisions was highlighted. For instance, the participants emphasised that the department communicates internal policies, processes, and outcomes unclearly.

"That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5**

"I think communication. If there can be clear communication in terms of how one can follow a process that could be easier because I don't think most people know how to trigger a process, how to do follow-ups, how to check and how to request information if you feel that you have not been given adequate information." — **Participant 12**

4.4.2.1 Sub-themes: Adequate explanations and truthfulness

Alongside the lack of adequate and relevant information, the participants deliberated on the lack of explanations and truthfulness of information. In this instance, the participants highlighted the lack of adequate explanations regarding changes and using procedures and adequate and relevant explanations of outcomes, outcomes that are positive, and executive decisions in the department.

"They didn't explain. They just did what we requested just to shut us up…why was it not done that time when it was presented." **—Participant 4**

"And how ER [employment relations] has captured the information on their side and came back and given the responses you feel like you are given a textbook answer. And it's relevant to them because it's a ticking box for them." **—Participant 6**

The participants' responses show that relevant and adequate information and explanations influence the perception of fairness. Their responses also show that accurate and adequate information and explanations influence the acceptability of outcomes. The participants' responses further show that explanations, even when the outcome is positive, are required. The participants also emphasised the difficulty of obtaining information due to policies, such as the POPIA, while other participants believed that information received about outcomes and processes leading to outcomes is often not complete, irrelevant, and untrue. The participants believed that information about processes and outcomes is not absolute, resulting in employees questioning its truth.

"It's also levels of information. There is information, which is well distributed because maybe it's absolute. They will send us disciplinary cases 18, that one they wouldn't fake, but also wouldn't you want to know if they are 18 disciplinary cases, what are they about, why are they not telling the depth of them…" **—Participant 10**

The participants' responses show that a lack of explanations regarding processes and outcomes influences the perception of fairness and truthworthiness/validity of information and outcomes. Their response also shows the conflicting role in providing information and explanations with the current legislation on access to information and protection of information in the department. The last discussions were on what participants feel can be improved in managing organisational justice. The participants, in this instance, deliberated on the lack of feedback, engagement, sharing justice-related processes and information, voice, transparency, and honesty.

"…they need to do away with you having to request the information of all the reports. For justice to be effective, processes have to be transparent and honest.

So to promote that transparency, what they need to do, by default, [is to] submit to you and your representative that information." **—Participant 13**

The participants' responses also show that transparency and employee participation through employee engagement are mechanisms to improve department interactions. Their responses also show that personal and engaging interaction decreases the likelihood of grievances. Figure 4.3 provides a thematic framework of the perception of organisational justice in **the dtic**.

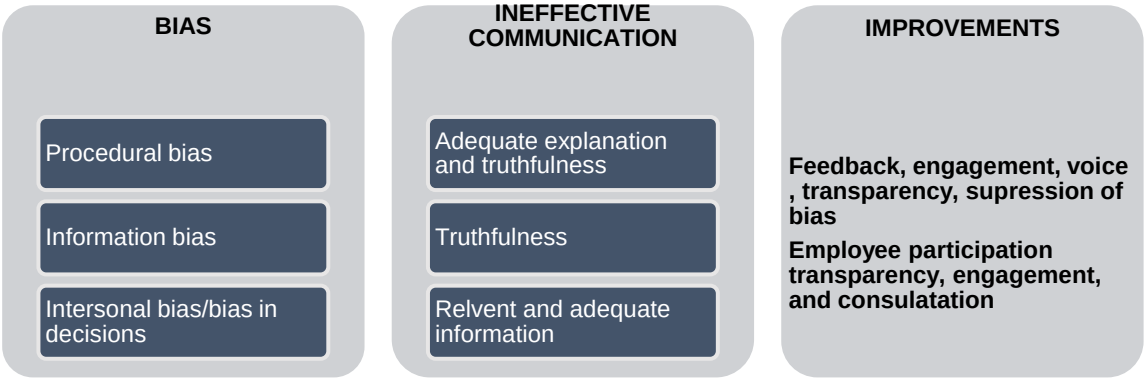


FIGURE 4.3: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK OF EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE IN THE DEPARTMENT

As highlighted in figure 4.3 most participants expressed having experienced bias, which they believed is caused by prejudice and esteem placed on authority, resulting in a lack of consistency, accuracy, and transparency in the department. Ineffective communication was the second theme, with emphasis on the lack of relevant and adequate information, explanations, and cordial and respectful interactions. Inequality was the last theme, with emphasis on the lack of consideration of employee needs and explanations. Improvement in the management of organisational justice drew primarily on the suppression of bias and emphasis on employee participation, engagement, consultation, transparency, and voice in **the dtic**.

4.5 OBJECTIVE FOUR: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

This objective aimed to determine and understand the perception of participants' overall justice judgment as it relates to their experiences of organisational justice. To collaborate on the perception of their overall judgment, participants were asked how organisational justice could be improved based on their overall judgment. The

rationale for the question was to arrive at the most accurate conclusion about participants' overall experience. The data presented reflect participants' responses from 15 semi-structured interviews as it relate to each participant's experience. Table 4.9 provides direct quotes and topics as they relate to the perceived lack of equity/inequality.

4.5.1 Main theme: Perceived inequality

TABLE 4.9: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATED TO THEIR PERCEPTION OF INEQUALITY

MAIN THEME: EQUITY	
SUB-THEMES	**QUOTES**
	"We should all be **equal. Equality** is needed, regardless of skin colour, regardless of position, regardless of who's child [you are]. We all have to be equal." **—Participant 1**
	"…let's treat people equal and fair. If [you] say the **system is supposed to be equal** and fair and justice is about equality and fairness, let's do that. Let all animals be equal in the zoo." —**Participant 6**
	"Justice is fairness, justice is giving everyone an **equal chance and an equal opportunity** to voice their cases, to be made to feel like they matter and their complaints or their opinions are valued by the organisation. So that is, that is justice to me." **—Participant 6**
	"Like I said, if **all aspects are being looked at**, whether I was wrong or I was right and whether the outcome maybe doesn't favour me. But if all aspects have been looked at and I can see that the outcome was not biased. It was fair and square, presentations were done and if it [is] myself. No bias, fair and square. All aspects been looked at." **—Participant 9**
	"I think if we can all be equal and the **service can be given equally to all of us**. And I think if we can be listened [to]. It's not about me being happy. If you say you know what, ma'am, we can't give you this reason being this and there is a valid reason for that." **—Participant 14**
	"I think **being treated equally,** and, given enough time to explain my story, whether through representative or not, but given enough time to, yeah, to share my story and judgment should be done on based on evidence." **Participant 9**
	"I don't think they are executed fairly so that all of us feel like we are **equally treated** or if the circumstances are similar, you know." **Participant 14**

	"It is not fair because **I was the only one who didn't get** [a performance bonus] and every work it start from me, and it goes to the next person, to another person. So now if I am not getting it, why am I not getting it because [we are a team]. I just couldn't understand." **—Participant 3** "But it, you know, justice is like all democratic values. It's good that we strive for it. We are humans, we are not perfect. But as long as the general culture at least strives toward it. That's good and I think in **the dtic**'s case, [there] is that striving towards the basic foundation, it is at least the, it might not work out perfectly each case yeah." **—Participant 6**
Employee Needs	"**All components are important**. A house will not properly function if there are no rules and regulations in place**. So processes and procedures are very important** for me and they should be respected and they should be known by employees and by the employer. And it starts there." **—Participant 12** "The department must **focus on their employees and what they need**. In doing so, employees will be happy, enjoy being here, enjoy coming up with innovative ideas, [and stop] thinking about themselves." **—Participant 1** "It's either **you get what you deserve**, **or else the reason they are giving you is satisfactory**. You see where they are coming from and [there] is a better solution even if the solution is not what I wanted but is something I can see that ok, I can work with this thing." **—Participant 3** "I think people have different challenges at different points in time and, therefore**, we sort of, um, put things in an array according to how we order them and what takes priority** for us at that point in time because and say at that point in time because you know at a different point in time people, two people can have shared Injustices. And then, at another point in time people's sense of injustice can **differ according to their needs**." **—Participant 5** "If they are making those decisions, **they need to see who is the most people in the office during COVID**. That means we are like frontlines, which means, yeah, we need manpower." **—Participant 3**

Policies and procedural equity	"Justice, I think it will be when an employer doesn't give run-around to employees, you understand, on obvious things that are also written on a paper. If something is written on paper, it is clear that we should adhere to that, both employer and an employee. So it makes it easier for us to work hand in hand, like with the employee and the employee. But then if the employer now wants to deviate from what was agreed upon, then that is injustice." **—Participant 7** "Like remember when I started here, you gave me [a] certain code of conduct, treat me accordingly to those things you gave me, if I did this, **address my case according to what that policy** is saying, not according to what my manager is saying. Let's just say they must follow the procedures, is it aligned to the policy." **—Participant 4** “Its bit hard to find someone who will take you through [processes], specifically since maybe at HR it will be kind of difficult for you to find someone and get them to explain to you if you don't understand what's written in a certain document or what would be the [right] procedures”. **—Participant 15** "Yeah, the simple answer is yes, because most of the time decisions are employee oriented. I don't think they are lying or not truthful when they say we are looking out for the employees, but I think again it’s the **miscarriage of those procedures** that makes them unfair because how they are carried [out] isn’t uniform to everyone. You'll find that, that what is available to you, what you can do, is not available to somebody else." **—Participant 10** "So [there] is no **fairness**, even if it's HR [human resources]. They're the ones that make a decision, but once they meet up with your manager, why is the decision reversed? It is that thing I said, different people, different procedures. Isn't HR supposed to be the one in charge, and then what, do you go back to your manager if they made the decision." **—Participant 4**
IMPROVEMENTS	
Transparency **Fairness** **Equal** **Employee participation** **Engagement** **Consultation**	"If you have to define that synergy, **it would be a transparency** and **externalising decisions** and other parts of processes within the department so that there's less biasness and there is timely action and responses. If I have a scar that I cannot remove, if I had to lose my eye for me to get the cell phone, was the cell phone worth it?" **—Participant 13** "We have what we call the Batho Pile principles that are guiding the department, and those are supposed to be the Bible of all the employees of the government. Every time you're told about the Batho Pile principles, what does that say, it says people first, you know we **put people first,** put their opinions first, and their interactions with you, information that they need from you, put it there, don't hide it,

don't hide behind rank and say this is for certain individuals, this is for certain ranks. No, people matter, that's why [there] is Batho Pile." **—Participant 6**

"It needs to be communicated, but not only communicated, but **there has to be engagement** in some because you find that something, a policy, is changing and the changes are just not making sense and you realise the decision was just made by a few people somewhere who were focusing on one area of um, you know, one aspect of this policy and there wasn't enough engagement." **—Participant 5**

"We just need to deal with, uh, the challenges of bias**. Individual bias,** I can't stress this enough because one person's perception, like I gave a scenario where someone working in a department, I mean in a unit can apply, meet the requirements according to them but according to the person shortlisting…**" —Participant 8**

"I think fairness and transparency." **—Participant 6**

"So it's just about **strengthening our processes and bringing that alignment**, the Constitution and Labour Relations Act. I mean there would be more confidence in the processes itself, in the hearing itself. You know that would change perceptions of people " **—Participant 8**

"So I think for me, justice, whether it's fair or not is where there is a **consultation and room for transition**. I'm just looking at it from the simple example of **the dtic** name change, **collaborative efforts or engagement** and also allowing for transition." **—Participant 5**

"Justice is fairness, justice is giving everyone **an equal chance and an equal opportunity to voice their cases, to be made to feel like they matter** and their complaints or their opinions are valued by the organisation. So that is that is justice to me." **—Participant 6**

Participants shared experiences of inequality by contrasting disparities in the department's implementation of policies, results, treatment, and information availability. Most participants felt that due to prejudice, employees are treated differently, resulting in a "system" that is unequal. For instance, some participants believed that internal services are not provided equally, while other participants believed that employees are not given the same opportunities for voice.

"We should all be equal. Equality is needed, regardless of skin colour, …position…We all have to be equal." **—Participant 1**

"I think if we can all be equal and the service can be given equally to all of us." **—Participant 14**

"Justice is fairness, justice is giving everyone an equal chance and an equal opportunity to voice their cases, to be made to feel like they matter and their complaints or their opinions are valued by the organisation. So that is, that is justice to me" **—Participant 6**

Participants' responses show that the perception of fairness observed and experienced in each component of organisational justice generates a sense of equity.

4.5.1.1 Sub-theme: Policies and procedural equity

An important aspect of equity highlighted by the participants was fairness applied across all components of organisational justice, with emphasis on the importance of the fair application of policies and procedures. For instance, participants perceived the application of procedure to be inconsistence, biased, and, in some instances, not followed.

"…if all aspects are being looked at, whether I was wrong or right and whether the outcome maybe doesn't favour me." **—Participant 9**

"…you gave me [a] certain code of conduct…address my case according to what that policy is saying…follow the procedures." **—Participant 4**

"I don't think they are executed fairly so that all of us feel like we are equally treated or if the circumstances are similar, you know." **—Participant 14**

"It is that thing I said, different people, different procedures." **—Participant 4**

The participants' responses show that perceived fairness, particularly in procedures, generates a sense of equity. Their responses also show that equity is evaluated based on set agreements and policies directives in the department.

4.5.1.2 Sub-theme: Employee needs

The second sub-theme pertaining to participants' overall judgment pointed to the department's disregard for the needs and circumstances of employees when making decisions.

For instance, participants highlighted that the department does little to engage employees, particularly about what they need. They also mentioned the lack of

consultation and collaboration and room for transition, particularly in decisions about process changes and executive decisions regarding the department's operations.

"I was not consulted before…they only discussed it at that level and then they made a decision…they only told me that you are going to do this…You understand when sometimes people are giving you an ultimatum." **—Participant 11**

"So I think for me, justice…is where there is a consultation and room for transition. I'm just looking at it from the simple example of **the dtic** name change… collaborative efforts or engagement and also allowing for transition." **—Participant 5**

Suggested improvements highlighted the need for equal treatment with emphasis on transparency, engagement, and employee participation, even in instances where executive decisions are made in the department. While other participants highlighted the need for suppression of bias and to be included in the formulating processes and decisions, in addition to transparency and the formulation of alternatives.

"It needs to be communicated, but not only communicated, but there has to be engagement in some because you find that something, a policy, is changing and the changes are just not making sense and you realise the decision was just made by a few people somewhere who were focusing on one area, one aspect…" **—Participant 5**

"We just need to deal with…the challenges of bias. Individual bias…" **—Participant 8**

"Justice I think it will be when an employer doesn't give run-around…on obvious things that are also written on a paper." **—Participant 7**

Participants' responses show that considering employees' needs and circumstances generate a sense of equity and is an essential aspect of fairness. The participants' responses also show that considering employees' needs and circumstances generate alternatives, which assist in the acceptance of outcomes.

4.5.2 Main theme: Inadequate explanations

TABLE 4.10: PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES RELATED TO INADEQUATE EXPLANATIONS

EXPLANATIONS		
THEME AND TOPICS	**QUOTES**	
Valid reasons Satisfactory responses	"Outcomes and decisions are challenging [when considering] the power dynamics. Obviously it depends on the level that you are [on], in terms of the decisions that are made, but thus far, my view is that for any decisions that are made, [there] **should be engagement,** [they] should engage in that decision." **—Participant 12** "Explain, make me to understand, show me, look, you mess[ed] up here and because you've messed up here, I can't give you this but next time, if you improve here and get what you want. I'm a human being. It's not all about me. It's all about, you know, let us all work together to achieve the objective of the department." **—Participant 14** "It should be shared. I think they need to give valid reasons and also come up with the solution of that reason that you are giving me." **—Participant 3** "And for them, deciding to advertise, choose the post, they will advertise for us. I don't think it's fair. So **there was no information that was shared** in terms of why they made that decision." **—Participant 3** "**I was not consulted before that**. And they only discussed it at that level and then they made a decision". There was no consultation. **They only told me that**	"Okay, I look at justice in two ways; it's either you are getting what you were complaining about or you are getting a **satisfactory response**. Where you are sitting you can see that okay, no. What they are saying is it a valid reason, I was not understanding at first, but now I think I understand where they're coming from. So that is justice for me." **—Participant 3** "So **explanations sounded like an extended desperation**. They really, they were desperate to justify. That's how it sounded and the fact that it was coming after a lengthy wait, it just sounded almost ridiculous." **—Participant 5** "**They didn't explain**. They just did what we requested just to shut [us] up. That's how I felt, like we going to give you your upgrades, and then we're gonna back pay whatever [you] haven't got for the past two years. Yes, why was it not done that time when it was presented? Why was it not done, maybe [you're] underqualified, maybe you, yes, of experience, like something or the value of the work that you do doesn't qualify you for that level, something." **—Participant 4** "Every time you're told about the Batho Pile principles, what does that say? It says people first, you know we put people first, put their opinions first, and their interactions with you, information that they need from you, put it

	you are going to do this, but if you don't want to go. You understand when sometimes people are giving you an ultimatum." **—Participant 11**	there, don't hide it, don't hide behind rank and say this is for certain individuals, this is for certain ranks, no, people matter that's why the is Batho Pile." **—Participant 6** "What could be provided, like I said before, **communication is very important** and don't treat people in hostility. [Let's] sit down with people and then explain. **Sometimes it's best if they could have explained better to me**." **—Participant 11**
IMPROVEMENTS		
Engagement Consultation Transparency Voice (participation)	"Communication. That's point number one, and when we communicate, let us not throw rules down. And say, 'this is what's going to happen as from tomorrow and please follow them'. Let us [interact], let us sit down, let us talk, let us communicate, let us fight, but let us meet, let us come to a common ground." **— Participant 14** "What is missing for me, I think, yes, I was consulted, but I was told, there was no explanation. I cannot say because we never sit down and have a common agreement. I was told that when I will be doing this, and then we are also going to move you from this unit to another unit." **—Participant 11**	"**Engage employees, engage employees** like you cannot merge a two departments and not engage employees, engage employees, share the benefits and the consequences. For me when you start engaging it shows respect, it shows that you respect them as employees, even if the decisions that are taken are not going to obviously benefit employees, but the mere fact that we have engaged them, **it shows that [courtesy],** it shows that you respect them. Engage your employees." **— Participant 12** "**It's about being engaged to a point where it's satisfactory to me**. It's about being engaged to a point where I understand the circumstances, because now that I think about it, maybe the outcome might not be so valuable to me. **But at least sit me down and make me understand,** which is why we would not give you this position**." —Participant 10**

The last main theme pertaining to participants' overall judgment was inadequate explanations in the department. The participants deliberated on how the department communicates decisions and the processes used to arrive at these decisions. For instance, the participants highlighted that the department does not necessary provide

explanations regarding processes and decisions made, including explanations, even when the outcome is positive. Other participants highlighted issues of validity of explanation when eventually the department responses or provides them with responses.

"It's either you get what you deserve…or [a] better solution even if the solution is not what I wanted but is something I can see…I can work with this thing." **—Participant 3**

"It should be shared. I think they need to give valid reasons and also come up with the solution of that reason that you are giving me." **—Participant 3**

"So explanations sounded like an extended desperation. They really, they were desperate to justify. That's how it sounded and the fact that it was coming after a lengthy wait, it just sounded almost ridiculous." **—Participant 5**

The participants believe that providing adequate and relevant explanations of outcomes and processes leading to the outcome generates a sense of fairness. Their responses also show that explanations are required even if outcomes are positive. Improvement in terms of providing explanations improved employee engagement, consultation, transparency, and the creation of voice (participation) as mechanisms and tools to eliminate bias in the department's processes and decision-making.

"We just need to deal with, uh, the challenges of bias. Individual bias. I can't stress this enough." **—Participant 8**

"Communication. That's point number one, and when we communicate, let us not throw rules down…Let us [interact], let us sit down, let us talk, let us communicate, let us fight, but let us meet, let us come to a common ground." **—Participant 14**

Overall, the participants' responses show that explanations regarding processes and outcomes are critical to equity and can be enhanced by involving employees and improving transparency in processes and decisions.



FIGURE 4.4: THEMATIC FRAMEWORK OF EMPLOYEES' OVERALL JUSTICE PERCEPTIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT

As highlighted in figure 4.4 participants' responses revealed three themes: inequality, lack of explanations and disregard for employees' needs as their overall justice perceptions in the department. Inequity was the central theme, which participants felt needed to be considered in all components of organisational justice. Inequality was said to be caused by prejudice based on race and rank, which resulted in deviation from department policies and agreements. The disregard for employees' needs as a theme highlighted employee participation, voice, and transparency, which participants believe is a mechanism for generating alternatives. Explanations as a theme focused on how the department communicates processes and outcomes, emphasising satisfactory and valid responses. Improvements across all themes highlighted the need for employee participation, transparency, and bias suppression.

4.6 CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to explore experiences of organisational justice in **the dtic** by determining different modes of accessing organisational justice and reasons for participant's choices, factors that motivate justice seekers to pursue justice, perceptions of their experience, and perceived overall justice judgment in **the dtic**. The chapter presented data collected from 15 interviews guided by a semi-structured interview schedule. The data analysis was guided by the six-phase qualitative data analysis strategy, presented in section 3.5, suggested by Nowell et al. (2017, p. 4) and Prescott et al. (2018, p. 5). Greenberg's four-factor model (procedural, interpersonal, information, distributive justice) was used to evaluate and analyse the data presented. The themes that emerged from the data analysis process as they relate to literature and the analytical framework are presented in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

5 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to discuss the findings of the study as they relate to the data presentation and analysis presented in chapter four. The data was collected from 15 participants using a semi-structured interview schedule. To facilitate the process, the chapter discusses four objectives and their primary and sub-themes related to the study's purpose. The discussion of the study findings includes participants' direct quotes and literature presented in chapter two, with specific reference to the conceptual framework (Greenberg's organisational justice theory – four-factor model: procedural, interpersonal, information and distribution justice) as it pertains to the findings presented in the previous chapter. The chapter that follows will detail recommendations, as well as possible future research, as it relates to the study's findings.

5.2 OBJECTIVE ONE: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' ACCESS TO ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE AND THE REASONS FOR THEIR CHOICE

5.2.1 Main theme: Access through manager

The first identified main theme of how organisational justice is accessed points to access through line managers. The participants revealed that policies governing workplace interaction and organisational structure influence employees' choices of modes and the sequence of whom they need to involve in the grievance process. For instance, participants 9 and 10 believed protocol dictates that work-related incidents must be reported to one's manager, including other aspects such as negotiating and authorisation during the course of the grievances.

"I think it's about protocol; [first] it's negotiation with your manager…All organisations have processes and procedures in place that [need] to be followed as a first step, and also those processes and procedures have a sequence…" — **Participant 10**

"I think procedurally, it was correct to include my manager…" **— Participant 9**

The findings are consistent with Schminke et al.'s (2002, p. 881) view that organisational structure and policies outline an organisation's activities, influencing the management of organisational justice and its structures. Responses from participants 7 and 9 supported this assertion as they felt that by design, the department's organisational structure and policies outline institutionalised internal activities, which legitimise grievances through rules, roles, responsibilities, and the flow of information administrated between levels in an organisation (McCardle, 2007, p. 51).

"The reason was when you deal with your problem, you must understand the structures because when you just go up straight, the first question that will be asked [is], 'Did you ask your line manager?' So I had to ensure I do the basic steps to resolve the problem." **—Participant 7**

"I report to him, I think he should know whatever is happening, especially if it is related to work." **—Participant 9**

Similar to organisational structure, grievance policies formalise the process and enable employees to raise and resolve workplace concerns. According to Nurse and Devonish (2007, p. 91), a grievance policy is an essential tool for ensuring an orderly, fair, and equitable grievance process in the workplace for all employees and, importantly, describes the roles and responsibilities of employees, supervisors, the employment relations unit, and external parties, such as organised labour. Adherence to policy provides an orderly, formal, and acceptable process employees can refer back to and escalate grievances (Schminke et al., 2002, p. 884). In conjunction with the influence of organisational structure and policy, the participant's second reason for choosing line managers as a mode emphasised managers' administrative responsibilities in mediating and formalising grievances. Participants 4 and 5 emphasised that line managers must be notified and intervene in formal and informal grievances. In addition, they are responsible for authorising and providing recommendations at different stages of a grievance. In contrast, the employment relation unit and organised labour are required if no resolution is reached.

"…remember either done the union and the ER [employment relations], every employee should start with the account managers…because that's their responsibility to assist…" **—Participant 4**

"Managers manage the unit…if there was anything that would need signing or even buy-in, it would have to be authorised within the unit first before it went outside of the unit, and at my level, I'm not an authoriser…" **—Participant 5**

The findings revealed that the administrative role and managerial actions required at various stages of a grievance process are an integral part of choosing line managers as the first point of contact. The findings further revealed that involving line managers legitimises the grievance process and the inclusion of the employment relations unit and organised labour. Participants' responses support Cropanzano et al.'s (2007, p. 36) and McCardle's (2007, p. 51) claims that in addition to organisational structure considerations, the administrative responsibility and managerial actions required at various stages of grievances influence the access point. Some of these administrative and managerial actions go beyond the formalisation of grievances and include mediation of internal conflict by actively listening to disputants and formally imposing a settlement on them (Cropanzano et al., 2007, p. 43). In essence, the findings revealed the importance of organisational structure, policy, and administrative role line managers, the employment relations unit, and organised labour in managing organisational justice, which employees can misunderstand. The findings also revealed that grievance management policies are an important mechanism that provides an orderly, fair, equitable, and structured process for addressing and resolving workplace disputes.

5.2.1.1 Sub-theme: Perceived organisation/supervisor support

The second reason for choosing line managers to access organisational justice structures emphasised perceived supervisors/managers' support. For instance, participants 2 and 14 believed that line managers have a better chance of understanding their point of view and, as a result, will be more willing to support them by clarifying their perspectives, fast-tracking processes, and amplifying their voices.

"…**she [line manager] give[s] like 100% support**, she even encourages [you to] to take [advantage] of this bursary scheme that they offer in the department and then also even personal support. She does that a lot for employees. She always says that we are individuals, so she gives like support in that regard." **—Participant 4**

"[In] the beginning, my manager was supportive, yeah, this is a good idea, you know I think you should try something new." **—Participant 14**

The finding is consistent with Colquitt's (2008, p. 80) claim that perceived supervisor support is a natural construct of justice in which employees believe that their supervisors or an organisation care about their well-being and value their contributions enough to support them. According to Colquitt (2008, p. 80) and Pillai et al. (1999, p. 1559), employees expectation of support is primarily due to the managerial role supervisors have in an organisation, which employees assume will yield benefits that can increase the opportunities to express heightened opinions of unfairness they experience, particularly when they have low decision and process control. Further analysis saw responses from participants 2, 3, and 12 deliberate on the quality of their relationship with their supervisors as an essential aspect of receiving support.

"I mean, if maybe [there] is a strong [director] with whom **you have a good relationship**…I mean, such a person could maybe first also talk to the senior manager and say, you know what, this is the rest of the story." **—Participant 2**

"**It's very good because he's one person that is very understanding;** he always wants to know what is happening with whatever the challenges that we are facing in our office. **We have that good relationship with him**. He makes things easier for us, and we don't feel under pressure" **—Participant 3**

"Because you oversee my work and all of that, so for me what has been easy is respect, and I like it because it both ways, it goes both ways" **—Participant 12**

The findings implied that employees who do not have a good relationship with their managers might find it difficult to access organisational justice. The findings are consistent with He et al. (2017, p. 551) with the concept of leader-member exchange, in which a high level of interactions and quality relationships between leaders and followers maintain the provision of support. The findings also supported Cropanzano and Rupp's (2008, p. 68) claims that these relationships are evoked when employees want to ensure fairness and are "built over time as a function of many repeated episodes of social interaction which is characterised by high levels of interpersonal liking, trust, and feelings of long-term mutual obligation and reciprocity" (Roch & Shanock 2006, p. 301; He et al., 2017, p. 539; Aydin-Küçük, 2020, pp. 2338-2339).

Improvements in accessing workplace justice through the line manager reemphasised the quality of interaction, support, and buy-in from managers, implying that the quality of the relationship and supervisor support can result in justice.

In essence, the findings revealed the importance of support and quality of the relationship found in line managers, which employees rely on to highlight and legitimise their claims and ensure fairness in the department.

5.2.2 Main theme: Access through the employment relations unit

The second identified main theme of how participants access organisational justice points to access through the employment relations unit. The employment relations unit was not considered the first access; however, participants who formally and informally lodged grievances based their reasons on the department structure, policies, and the employment relations unit's inherent administrative responsibility of formalising and escalating grievances.

"Basically, we just raise it with the union and the union then further encouraged us [to] make it formal with **the dtic** by raising it with the employment relations [unit] so that it's on record…**" —Participant 6**

The findings imply that employees include the employment relations unit to comply with policy and highlight and facilitate the escalation of grievances within the department. The findings support Nurse and Devonish's (2007, p. 91) view that employees primarily involve the employment relations unit in grievances because they provide a "voice" through an administrative process that creates an upward communication channel defining the conditions in which workers and their unions can assert and protect their rights. The notion that the grievance administration process escalates grievance is also valid, as formalising grievances provides a voice that draws managers' and the organisation's attention (Nurse & Devonish, 2007, p. 91). Broadly, workplace relation studies have long recognised the importance and benefits of administering grievances in the workplace for an organisation and its employees. According to Nurse and Devonish (2007, p. 91), grievance administration permits an orderly means of settlement of grievances and ensures "compliance with the contract is effected by an orderly process that allows the parties to determine whether the labour agreement has in fact been violated". The findings highlighted the importance

of administering grievances by emphasising the importance of the employment relations unit to ensure fairness in their services and justice management.

The finding, in addition, revealed the importance of promoting workplace justice, creating a voice, and understanding the roles, responsibilities, and limitations of the employment relations unit, as an access point to organisational justice is often through human resource structures in an organisation (Dzansi & Dzansi, 2010, p. 999; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1561).

5.2.2.1 Sub-theme: Employment relations unit support

The discussion that followed focused on how the employment relations unit could be improved rather than why participants chose it to access organisational justice. Highlighted first was a need for the employment relations unit's support, which participants evaluated by comparing the support they had experienced with organised labour or their line manager. The participants' remarks that access through the employment relations unit is characterised by delayed responses and administrative procedures that limit self-expression compared to organised labour were unsettling. Notably, interactions within the employment relations unit were described as impersonal, with little or no regard for the "individual" person and their feelings. In addition, other participants highlighted how less encouraged or reassured they were when lodging grievances directly through the employment relations unit compared to organised labour.

"Initially, I employed the services of the **ER** [employment relations] **as an individual employee. That didn't go any further**. It wasn't quick, the response wasn't so quick…" **—Participant 13**

"With ER [employment relations], I feel they hide behind documentation. It's very impersonal. It feels like you are dealing with a robot, a robotic system…You don't feel like you have a voice. So [there are] things you might miss, [things] that are important for your case to state because you're not a good writer…" **—Participant 6**

By comparing the employment relations unit to organised labour, the findings imply that actions of support, the quality of interactions, and the promotion of workplace

justice influence whether employees will use the employment relations unit as their first choice.

"You can try to lodge a complaint, especially to employment relations; [instead] of backing you up, they will side with the employer." **—Participant 1**

"…with the union, you have this fire and zeal, you know, you know that fight, you have a fighting spirit and [you are] encourage[d]. You have some form of backup and you have a right to raise your voice." **—Participant 6**

The findings are consistent with Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002, p. 698) claim that perceived organisational support is encouraged by employees' tendency to assign the organisation with humanlike characteristics and actions, such as reassurance, politeness, and caring, which influence their behaviour. By definition, organisational support is a general belief regarding the extent to which the organisation values, contributes, and cares about employees, influencing employee behaviour and obligation towards an organisation (Roch & Shanock, 2006, p. 303; Colquitt, 2008, p. 79). The findings supported this notion as the participants conceptualised organisational support based on personal, engaging, and encouraging interactions between themselves and the employment relations unit in the department.

"**Personal touch is important**, you know, sit and listen to a person's case. But I understand they might be understaffed as well, but the thing there might be things I didn't articulate well in my writing. So that's why I'm saying it would be nice to be warranted if given an opportunity to express myself, to sit with people, not to feel like I'm sitting with the back office." **—Participant 6**

"I feel that there **should be a lot of engagement** with employees and awareness in terms of making them aware of all the organisational policies, what they entail, where can they access them, and what is the process of accessing them without making them feel uncomfortable about [it]." **—Participant 12**

The findings further supported Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002, p. 303) claims that the personification of the organisation's support considers the organisation's policies and legal standings, but moral actions and behaviour of its agents with each action taken by agents of the organisation are viewed as indications of the organisation's intent rather than attributed solely to the agents' personal motives.

Thus, employees expect an organisation to monitor and adjust a process and enable an employee "voice" in processes and decisions, while managers and human resource units are the facilitators of this relationship (Roch & Shanock, 2006, p. 303; Colquitt, 2008, p. 79). Broadly, the finding highlights an essential aspect of organisation support, noting that personal and engaging interactions are critical elements of building trust and a positive perception of fairness within the employment relations unit. In essence, the findings revealed that sensitive, encouraging and personal interactions are forms of support and factors that increase the use of the employment relations unit as an access point to organisational justice.

5.2.2.2 Sub-theme: Organisational trust

Alongside the need for employment relations unit support, participants believed the employment relations unit needs to be independent of the department. This notion of independence, as participants 13 and 1 indicated, was based on the belief that the employment relations unit cannot interpret and apply policies correctly and is incapable of being imperial and transparent.

"I think this type of unit, which [has] to deal with justice in the workplace, [has] to be **independent, outsourced** [to] the DPSA. If they're centralised, there's no one who will be, you know, one who has a personal relationship with the employer. It will make the process transparent and it will make the process fair." **— Participant 13**

"I think that the department must stop being biased, and they shouldn't take any side; if they need to be **mediators, let them be mediators**. And if the employer is wrong, they must attend to that, that the employer is wrong. They should not move the blame to the employee. Whoever is wrong, the department must take action regardless." **—Participant 1**

The finding suggests that trust is usually found at the line manager and organised labour level, which supports employees' decision to have most grievances start with the manager and organised labour. The findings also reveal the perception of unfairness, whether observed or experienced by the employment relations unit, discourages its use as a mode of organisational justice. The findings revealed that trust is essential in institutions that manage justice, further implying that an organisation perceived to be fair creates trust in its internal governance services.

The overall findings are consistent with traditional factors of organisational trust that influence employee trust and actions, namely, the demonstration of integrity, competence, consistency, loyalty, and transparency in processes and the overall organisational social system (Wahda et al., 2020, p. 3). Participants 8 and 1's responses supported this view and highlighted the employment relations unit's need to make decisions in accordance with policies and remain unbiased, transparent, and neutral.

"So the limitation in how policies are interpreted by individuals in employee relations. The soundness or harmonisation with internal policies with the highest book legal document in this country, which is the Constitution." **—Participant 8**

"I think that the department must stop being biased, and they shouldn't take any side. If they need to be mediators, let them be mediators." **—Participant 1**

The findings confirmed Wahda et al. (2020, p. 3) and Olsen et al.'s (2012, p. 571) claim that perceptions of unfairness have a significant effect on employee's emotions, motivations, and behaviour, which disrupts the development of organisational trust and loyalty in using an organisation's internal systems. Jiang et al. (2017, p. 6) add that a positive perception of fairness experienced or observed in information, interaction, outcomes, and procedures contributes to developing high levels of trust in the organisation's ability to fulfil its obligations to employees. The findings also highlighted employee participation, emphasising the quality of the interaction and transparency as critical elements to build trust and a positive perception of fairness within the employment relations unit. From the South African governance perspective, the current contributing factor to the lack of trust in internal governance is worsened by the continuous allegations of corruption and the lack of transparency and accountability, particularly in the government's management of remuneration issues. These events have led to strike actions and public servants' overreliance on organised labour to ensure the government adheres to its policies and contractual obligations to employees. The findings further reemphasised Wahda et al.'s (2020, p. 3) claim that trust remains a variable influenced by the quality of interpersonal relations, transparency, and fair application of processes and outcomes, and, if fulfilled, can build a system of trust and equity in an organisation. In essence, the findings revealed

that adherence to policies and the application of procedures consistently, transparently, and with integrity generates a sense of equity in the outcome and trust in the use of the employment relations unit (Stinglhamber et al., 2006, p 447; Jiang et al., 2017, p. 2).

5.2.3 Main theme: Access through organised labour

The last identified main theme of how participants access organisational justice structure points to access through organised labour. Like the employment relations unit, participants' reasons centred on two aspects: organised labour's ability to escalate grievances and perceived organised labour support. As indicated by participants 6 and 13, who lodged formal grievances involving organised labour, organised labour provided greater attention and quicker responses and fostered engagements that were positive with the department.

"it much quicker and easier to have to go through the union because the **union tends to be aggressive** in the approach and as a result, the employer tends to listen for lack of a better word when the unions more than they would an individual employee" **—Participant 6**

The finding implies that employees use organised labour as a mode because it affords employees fair processes and better treatment in the department. This finding builds on Simpson and Kaminski's (2007, p. 69) claim that employees perceive organised labour as a source of securing fair processes and respectful treatment in the workplace. The findings supported this view as participants highlighted that the involvement of organised labour results in positive engagement urgency and continuous feedback as opposed to directly relying on the employment relations unit.

"When I went to the union, the response was quicker and the response was much more positive than when I engage them as an individual" **—Participant 13**

The belief that organised labour provides employees better fairness is due to its inclusion in the grievance management process and labour legislation, which gives organised labour intuitions the legal standing to challenge processes and decisions in public services (Simpson & Kaminski, 2007, p. 58). This, in addition, is aided by collective resources and expertise, allowing them to refocus attention on ordinary people, as their shared concerns, through mobilising their resources and power, which

can motivate compliance in an organisation (DeMarrais & Earle, 2017, p. 189). From a South African perspective, organised labour has had many successes in effecting administrative and policy reforms within the public sector, ensuring their relevance among employees.

The finding revealed the importance of engagement and feedback in all stages of the grievance process, particularly the early stage of initiating a grievance.

5.2.3.1 Sub-theme: Perceived organised labour support

The last reason for using organised labour as access to organisational justice points to perceived organised labour support. To evaluate organised labour support, participants highlighted that interactions with organised labour are encouraging and provide them with the confidence needed to raise their concerns within the department. Participants believed that organised labour can highlight and validate their needs through the quality of personal engagements. In addition, participants noted that organised labour provides active support, such as following up on matters and providing needed information and guidance about processes compared to the employment relations unit.

"I must say that our two organised labourers, they are very vocal, they are very supportive, and they represent the employee's interests and that gives employees confidence that at least there [are] structures internally that support [to] raise our issues if we find ourselves in situations where we need their support." **— Participant 12**

"…with the union you have this fire and zeal, you know, you know that fight, you have a fighting spirit and [you are] encourage[d]. You have some form of backup and you have a right to raise your voice." **—Participant 6**

The findings revealed that employees choose organised labour due to the quality of interactions, which highlights needs and inequalities that are not necessarily visible. The findings further imply that employees choose organised labour as a mode because it can amplify employees' voices and reward voice behaviour. The findings are consistent with Simpson and Kaminski's (2007, p. 60) claim that employees involve organised labour for support due to collective bargaining and their legal power in the workplace. Simpson and Kaminski (2007, p. 60), who add that collective bargaining

and legal power enables organised labourers to negotiate with employers on behalf of employees, provide employees with information and advice on a wide range of workplace issues, and campaign for changes to the law and government policy that benefit employees. However, an important aspect the findings highlighted that employees seek assistance from organised labour as they provide a sense of belonging and solidarity, especially for employees who feel isolated or alone in their workplace.

"Yeah, there is a huge difference because with the union you have this fire and zeal, you know, you know that fight, you have a fighting spirit and [you are] encourage[d]. You have some form of backup and you have a right to raise your voice. I think the union is there to say to you, 'Don't keep quiet, step up and you're going to be okay. No one is going to victimise you, and it is your right to actually voice your opinion.' So that's the beauty of a union." **—Participant 6**

The findings are consistent with Jha and Singh's (2019, p. 390), who claim that organised labour can attract employees due to broader overlapping socioeconomic challenges they may face in the workplace. Because of the overlapping socioeconomic challenges, organised labour can support different and reoccurring employees' needs. However, other studies have found that organised labour also gives greater attention to employees' needs, cultivates interactions and provides support to expand their interests and promote their relevance as institutions of choice in an organisation. The finding highlighted the importance of creating a voice in processes and outcomes and emphasised talking to aggrieved employees, identifying, and understanding employee's needs as a form of support.

5.3 OBJECTIVE TWO: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION(S) TO PURSUE ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

5.3.1 Main theme: Information and knowledge motive

Knowledge as a motive to take justice-related action is the first main theme. Interestingly, knowledge was also associated with participants who pointed to need/type of injustice and personality traits as motivation to take justice-related action in the department. However, as a separate motive, participants emphasised the importance of gathering information and understanding its use as a mechanism that provides needed confidence to take action.

"…because I understood the policies of the, like, the DPSA policies, so when I stood up for this…I was within the correct lane…" **—Participant 7**

"I don't allow people to dominate me when they don't have informed or appropriate researched facts…I make sure that when I put my argument across, it's supported by fact[s]." **—Participant 12**

The findings are consistent with Latham and Locke (2008, p. 322), who claim that knowledge is a critical motivator for taking action as it enables employees to determine their needs, ways to satisfy them, and behaviours required to attain them. The findings implied that information facilitates knowledge used to recognise specific needs, weigh the chances of meeting identified needs, and selecting the ideal way of achieving them. The process of seeking information and understanding its use correlates with social cognition theory's claim that individuals acquire cognitive knowledge to find various factors and mechanisms in which they work to formulate optimal ways of translating knowledge into effective practices (Lathan & Locke, 2008, p. 323). The findings support Lathan and Locke's (2008, p. 323) assertion that part of the factors and mechanisms includes "knowledge of risks and benefits of different practices, perceived self-efficacy that one can exercise control over one's performance outcomes, and the perceived facilitators and social structural impediments to the changes they seek".

"…but also so you must calculate very carefully, will I gain or will I lose because sometimes you lose a battle or you win a battle but then you lose the war." **—Participant 2**

"…you start to {weigh] the pros and cons for standing up for yourself… you check or assess which one will give you more peace and if seeking out for justice, [which one] will give you more peace, [then] you go for that." **—Participant 13**

Latham and Locke (2008, p. 322) assert that knowledge is a central characteristic of motivation and is found in other motivational theories, such as core self-evolution, self-determination, and goal orientation, in which individuals seek it to attain their goals. The findings highlighted the importance of making information regarding processes and outcomes readily available in the department to initiate processes and determine if outcomes are fair.

5.3.2 Sub-theme: Social encounters motive

The participants also highlighted how information gathered from social encounters with other employees provides additional information that influences their course of action.

Similar to information gathered about policies and outcomes, the findings imply that social encounters provide additional information not necessarily detailed or visible in grievance processes, such as the quality of treatment and the ease of processes, which influences their course of action. As participant 13 indicated, the experiences of others in the department provide information about processes and the organisational culture towards aggrieved employees, which influences one's motive to act.

"Organisational culture play a huge role. **You are much more likely to talk to colleagues before you even take steps to seek out justice** for yourself. Your colleagues will tell you of their own experiences, and based on those experiences, you'll either be motivated to seek out justice or you will be demotivated or be discouraged from doing so.". **Participant 13**

This finding is consistent with Schunk and Usher's (2012, p. 13) claim that employees who socially engage with others about their experiences of justice can gather additional information embedded in an organisational culture, which, in turn, influences task choices, effort, persistence, and behaviours necessary to produce specific performance attainments. Similar to information about processes and decisions, comparing social encounters with other employees allows aggrieved employees to determine the risks, benefits and outcomes of applying different approaches (Latham & Locke, 2008, p. 332). Knowledge gathered from justice-related information and social encounters reveals the importance of accessing processes and decision information, as employees rely on such information to determine correct processes, weigh options, and determine the fairness of outcomes. The importance of access to justice-related information as a form of motivation was emphasised as other participants viewed requesting information as bureaucracy and used to conceal relevant and adequate information. In this regard, participants advocated for transparency, particularly in unique cases and outcomes that are out of the ordinary, which they believed could motivate employees in similar situations. Fundamentally, the findings reveal that information builds knowledge that moderates employees' actions. In addition, having access to relevant and accurate information encourages

employees to pursue organisational justice by making procedures used to initiate grievances clear, weighing the possible success of grievances, and determining the fairness of outcomes.

5.3.3 Main theme: Personality traits motive

The second theme emphasised varying personality traits as motivation to take justice-related action. In this case, participants drew on several personality traits that either encouraged or hindered them from seeking justice in the department. For instance, social settings that were perceived as confrontational and required assertiveness and self-expression were viewed as a hindrance and counter-productive for some participants. In contrast, other participants credited their ability to express themselves, regardless of setting or circumstance, as their primary motivator.

"I'm the kind of a person who's not afraid to express what I'm feeling regardless of who am I dealing with." **—Participant 9**

"Just don't like confronting people even if I'm not happy, so I just decide to let things go." **—Participant 3**

The findings indicate that personality traits influence employees' decisions to take justice-related actions. The finding also indicates that domineering, suppressive, and confrontational personality traits deter those less social from taking justice-related actions. The finding supports Latham and Locke's (2008, p. 319) claim that personality traits, such as conscientiousness, agreeableness, emotional stability, extraversion, and openness to experience, influence an individual's behaviour and have been proven to be stable throughout a person's life (Barrick et al., p. 63; Sackett & Walmsley, 2014, p. 539,). Notably, the findings support the fundamental features of extravert personality traits by revealing that sociable participants are likelier to pursue justice than less social employees. According to Sackett and Walmsley (2014, p. 539), individuals who are extravert can manage social encounters by being expressive, assertive, active, and self-confident, which makes them more likely to react to discomforts. Responses from participant 9, 12, and 9 support Sackett and Walmsley (2014, p. 539), who claimed that most participants highlighted self-expression as paramount in any setting compared to others who avoid social encounters that required them to express themselves.

"I'm the kind of a person who's **not afraid to express** what I'm feeling regardless of who am I dealing with…your level or my level doesn't necessarily have an impact on that." **—Participant 9**

"**I don't allow people to dominate** me when they don't have informed or appropriate researched facts about what needs to be done. So, I make sure that when I put my argument across, it's supported by fact[s]." **—Participant 12**

The findings are also consistent with Depue and Collins (1999, p. 492), who state that extroverts are more likely to be motivated because they have high levels of interpersonal skills, which enable them to thrive in interactions, resulting in assertiveness, expressiveness, and agency to achieve their objectives.

5.3.3.1 Sub-theme: Quality of interaction and environment motive

Alongside personality traits, participants emphasised how and the environment in which disputes are handled as an additional factor that either motivates them to act or deters them from taking justice-related action. For instance, the participants expressed concerns about a lack of privacy and that the environment for reporting workplace problems is informal, hostile, and insensitive.

"Yeah, I would have preferred it to be formal in two ways, even in the verbal sense. Because I was just asked to explain it from my desk. I mean the intern could have heard everything." **—Participant 9**

"**the dtic** was very hostile to us, to be honest with you. The treatment, we were just treated like you, know, adopted kids." **—Participant 9**

The findings imply that employees are motivated to report work incidents in an environment that is formal, cordial, confidential, and comfortable. The findings also establish that adverse treatment experienced or observed by those reporting workplace incidents influence their behaviour when deciding to take justice-related action. The findings correlate with Sutanto et al.'s (2018, p. 313) study, which asserts that physical and non-physical work environment factors, such as office layout and interactional behaviour, influence employee motivation. In their study that explored the influence of work environment and employee motives, Sutanto et al. (2018, p. 313) found that a work environment perceived to be confrontable results in employees feeling secure to be active and expressive in an organisation. Meanwhile, a work

environment that is perceived to punish or victimise aggrieved employees deters them from taking grievance-related actions (Latham & Locke, 2008, p. 327).

"I think we need protection because obviously if you lodge a complaint about something you've already maybe created some, maybe enemies." **—Participant 3**

"I'm a professional and **everything should be communicated with respect and be solved with respect.**" **—Participant 12**

The findings revealed that employees who lodge grievances face victimisation, which manifests in hostile discussions and treatment. The findings revealed the importance of intrapersonal fairness justice rules, where cordial, sensitive, and respectful treatment generate a sense of fairness, or in this case, provide the level of comfort employees need to lodge grievances (Dai & Xie, 2016, p. 57). The findings also identified that quality treatment that is cordial and respectful, and encourages employees to raise their concerns in a non-hostile environment. Furthermore, the ability to express oneself and the environment in which grievances are held are essential elements that influence pursuing organisational justice in the public sector.

5.3.4 Main theme: Employee need/type of injustice motive

The type of injustice was the last theme identified as a motivator to take justice-related action. In this instance, participants examined different types of work incidents that may prompt them to take action. For instance, several participants regarded workplace harassment as something they would not stand for, while other participants considered issues that prevent them from performing their duties effectively take precedence. Highlighted as additional moderators were the level of discomfort, incident frequency, and participants needs at a particular time.

"I am not likely to seek out just this for myself. I would probably seek out just if someone has been physical with me, but if it is soft issues where there is no emotional, psychological abuse." **—Participant 13**

"**It depends on what injustice** are you pursuing…So I think it's more [a] personal preference and an ability to produce and do what I need to do for the employer in a manner that is very comfortable and satisfying to me." **—Participant 10**

The findings reveal that differing work incidents influence employees to pursue justice. The level of discomfort, frequency, and employee needs are additional factors influencing whether employees act.

The findings support Latham and Locke's (2008, p. 318) notion that the failure of an organisation to address specific needs considered important by employee's functions as the primary motivator for employees to engage in justice-related activities. As Participant 10 indicated, the "type of injustice" is primarily influenced by employees' needs, which they rank and prioritise based on the level of discomfort experienced and what they deem essential (Ramlall, 2004, p. 53).

"So I think it's more [a] **personal preference** and an ability to produce and do what I need to do for the employer in a manner that is very comfortable and satisfying to me." **—Participant 10**

Ramlall (2004, p. 53), Latham and Locke (2008, p. 318) and Fischer (2013, p. 7) assert that employees prioritise their needs as they affect their physical and physiological state, making specific outcomes appear more critical than others. According to Ramlall (2004, p. 53), these needs are the fundamental criteria that employees expect an organisation to fulfil for them to be successful and satisfied at work and may include social, personal, and essential needs employees require in a work environment. The participants highlighted essential needs as important; these are tools needed for employees to do their jobs, such as a safe and comfortable work environment, adequate tools and resources, and fair compensation. The findings reveal the importance of understanding, recognising, and meeting the basic needs of employees through engagement, primarily when grievances are raised. Promoting and adhering to the basic terms of employment provide employees confidence that the department values what they need and motivates them to report unfairness when and if they encounter it. Also highlighted was the importance of understanding, identifying, and meeting the needs of employees, as well as engagement, consolation, and employee participation in the department's processes and decisions.

5.4 OBJECTIVE THREE: WHAT IS PARTICIPANT'S PERCEPTION OF THEIR EXPERIENCE?

5.4.1 Main theme: Experiences of bias

The first main theme concerning participants' experiences of organisational justice points to experiences of bias in procedures, information, interpersonal treatment, and outcomes in the department. To conceptualise bias, participants 1 and 14 noted prejudice based on race and rank as a significant challenge, which they believed influences the treatment they receive in the department.

"You will find people complaining. Why is the department biased? Why [the] favouritism. Sometime [it] feels like [they] check the skin colour." **—Participant 1**

"I don't think they are executed fairly so that all of us feel like we are equally treated or if the circumstances are similar, you know." **—Participant** 14

The findings are consistent with Cohen-Charash and Spector (2001, p. 280), that the suppression of bias is a permanent justice rule in all components of organisational justice, which manifest differently in procedural, informational, and interactional justice.

5.4.1.1 Sub-theme procedural bias

Further analysis of bias pointed to experiences of bias in procedures. To evaluate bias in procedures, most participants raised concerns about inconsistency in the application of processes across people and time. For instance, participants 4 and 10 noted that procedures would be applied differently depending on who is aggrieved and the person handling the case.

"When you talk then about those procedures again, its people-oriented and depends on the case [and] who's handling [it]." **—Participant 10**

"I think **they look at the person […] in terms of procedures**. We don't follow procedure because they look at the person." **—Participant 4**

"…I think again it's the **miscarriage of those procedures** that makes them unfair because how they are carried [out] isn't uniform to everyone. You'll find that, that what is available to you, what you can do, is not available to somebody else." **—Participant 10**

The findings revealed that the allocation of procedures is often inconsistent, creating a perception of bias. The findings confirm Cohen-Charash and Spector's (2001, p. 280) claims that the allocation of the process should be without perceived personal self-interests across persons and over time to eliminate the perception of bias. The findings are consistent with Ledimo (2015, p. 1551), Beugr (2002, p. 1095) and Eib (2015, p. 8) that that assessment of bias predominately considers procedural justice because information, outcomes, and treatment are governed by formal procedures that enable employees to evaluate bias based on how consistent, accurate, correctable, and ethical processes are allocated during and after the outcome. Thus, suppression of bias can be exercised in all components of organisational justice structurally by comparing if procedures are applied consistently, information is accurate and socially acceptable, and treatment is ethical and transparent across time and people (Eib, 2015, p. 8; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551; Beugr, 2002, p. 1095; Ruano-Chamorro et al., 2022, p. 4). The findings reveal the importance of standardising processes and transparency related to how they are administered and applied.

5.4.1.2 Sub-theme: Bias in information

Bias in information saw participants deliberate on equity of access to information. For instance, employees who lodged and did not lodge formal grievances emphasised that information about processes and decisions. They highlighted the lack of feedback and sharing reports and process change, particularly for employees directly involved in the conflict resolution process.

"I found [what]was unfair was that feedback wasn’t given. We were side-lined, that's the honest truth. We are not called to say, 'OK, the report is out and here's the report'. I felt it was unfair that only those who were part of the conflict were given feedback." **—Participant 12**

"Somewhere you are told about the PAJA [Promotion of Administrative Justice Act], and for some, it's just given. To others, the very same information you requested, that you were told about, the PAJA, and the other person's accesses is free, like is easy access to that other person, and for the other person, they must go follow the procedure to access the very same information." **—Participant 4**

What was alarming about the finding was the view that there is bias even when employees formally request access to information. For instance, participant 10 noted that some employees are provided with information while others are expected to request the same information formally. In contrast, other participants believed that information is easily accessible to high-ranking officials, further creating the perception of bias in the distribution of information in the department (for example, as per participant 4's quote).

The findings reveal that unequal access and distribution of accurate and relevant information generates a sense of bias. The findings also revealed that supressing information bias requires that information is readily available and shared accurately and consistently among all employees. As per participants 10 and 4, this includes how appropriately information is distributed and enquiries are managed across people and time in the department.

"Information in **the dtic** is sometimes inappropriately dispersed. There is no consistency and level-headedness in how information is spread around…I'll be told, 'No, that policy does not work'. But then you go to a meeting, you meet somebody who says I'm actually being seconded to this unit, like how?" **—Participant 10**

"For me it felt like that's inconsistency, how we treat cases, how we handle [enquiries], [there] is [a] certain, certain race we need to prioritise them. [It] is like we are pushed to assistance." **—Participant 4**

The findings are consistent with Hoy and Tarter's (2004, p. 254) claims that the extent to which relevant information is shared limits the perception of bias and signals reciprocal trust and confidence that employees are not exploited. Ruano-Chamorro et al. (2022, p. 4) add that employees associate trust with information transparency as it makes the decision-making processes visible, which triggers the organisation to communicate goals and expectations at the onset, lessening perceptions of bias.

According to Hoy and Tarter (2004, p. 252), this is also because of the correctness of information and decisions that are based on evidence, promotes fairness by demonstrating that decisions are taken according to correct procedures and sound evidence and without any prejudice. Cropanzano et al. (2007, pp. 44-45) add that organisations can suppress bias by providing adequate notice of process amendments, decisions, and their standards to employees regularly, which

suppresses bias as all employees will be aware of changes. Improvements saw participants reemphasise transparency as an overarching principle and mechanism, which ensures information and outcomes are accurate and consistent, thus fostering trust in processes and decisions, which lessens the negative perception of bias.

"I think **transparency** would be one of them. That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5**

The findings support Atkins and Mahmud's (2021, p. 421) claim that the ability of the government to fulfil its obligatory role of providing access to information through timely and transparent communications erodes trust and produces positive feelings of active reciprocal relationships. The need for transparency, as well the South African public services' obligation to prove access to information, is solidified through internal communication policies and broader legislative frameworks, such as the PAIA, guaranteeing citizens' and employees' rights to access government information. The PAIA, in particular, "give[s] effect to the constitutional right of access to any information held by the State and any information that is held by another person and that is required for the exercise or protection of any rights". The department's employment relations unit facilitates the process of opiating information and is mandated by law to provide sufficient, accurate, and consistent information and policies that address HRM practices. The findings are consistent with the view that informational justice and its justice rule transparency underpins other organisational justice components.

As a justice rule, transparency is a mechanism that suppresses the perception of bias as it makes important outcome information and processes visible, including the correctness of policies and procedures, which are influenced by transparency or lack thereof in an organisation (van den Bos, 2003, p. 483). Fundamentally, the findings reveal that the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2 of 2000, is applied inconsistently across employees and, in addition, might be used to discourage or discriminate employees from accessing relevant and adequate information in the department, thus creating perceptions of bias. The findings highlight the importance of equitable access to relevant information and transparency in processes and outcomes as a mechanism that suppresses bias. Notably, equitable access to information in a transparent manner fosters trust and a fair and equitable environment

where everyone has access to the knowledge and resources needed to initiate grievances and evaluate fairness in outcomes and processes.

5.4.1.3 Sub-theme: Bias in interpersonal treatment

The second sub-theme points to bias in interpersonal interactions. To evaluate bias in interpersonal interactions, participants who lodged formal grievances deliberated on the lack of respect and courtesy in how they are treated. For instance, participants 9 and 12 stated that interactions are only respectful depending on one's seniority in the department.

"…don't respect each other here, especially when you are [on] a very low salary scale. [It] is like [you are] nothing, like you have no feelings, and at the end of the day, we are all adults. We all came to work. Manager or not a manager, but we all came to work, we are both employees." **—Participant 9**

"It is very, very wrong, we interact and respect people based on their level and not based on their expertise." **—Participant 12**

The findings reveal that bias in treatment is experienced when employees feel they are treated differently due to factors such as race, level of authority, and rank. The findings also demonstrate that interpersonal treatment is evaluated based on how respectful and courteous interactions are across people and time in the department. The findings are consistent with Johnson et al.'s (2014, p. 636) claim that bias suppression requires justice actors to suppress their preferential and prejudicial biases when interacting across people and time.

According to Johnson et al. (2014, p. 636), interpersonal justice entails demonstrating respect and similar behaviours by justice actors irrespective of the context and whom they are engaging in an organisation. Johnson et al. (2014, p. 3) add that adherence to the interpersonal justice rule of respect reduces the perception of bias in interpersonal treatment. He et al. (2017, p. 538) add that this is because experiences of interactional justice represent the social construct of organisational justice, where equity in treatment is evaluated based on how respectful and courteous interpersonal treatment is in an organisation (Kovačević et al., 2013, p. 69; Colquitt & Rodell, 2015, p. 192; Johnson et al., 2014, p. 2). Further conceptualisation of bias in interpersonal treatment saw participants 14 and 4 highlight behaviour by justice actors, such as

defying employees the opportunity for voice and differences in the quality of inquiries based on employees' rank or race in the department.

"To me, individually, it felt like a power issue. What I suffered was a power issue. I'm in charge and everybody must listen who are you." **—Participant 14**

"For me it felt like that's inconsistency, how we treat cases, how we handle inquiries, [there] is [a] certain, certain race we need to prioritise them. [It] is like we are pushed to assistance." **—Participant 4**

The findings imply that justice actors use authority and positional power to silence employees' views and opinions, mainly when employees raise concerns. Suggested improvement emphasised the need for quality treatment and called for humility in how custodians of organisational justice and leadership to engage employees in the department.

In addition, participant 12, for instance, noted the importance of professionalism, implying the need for standards in treatment as a mechanism to ensure equity in treatment.

"Leaders should lead with humility. We are not fighting them, we respect them, and I think the important thing is to respect us back. They should bring themselves down to people and they're failing to do that." **—Participant 12**

"I'm a professional and everything should be communicated with respect and be solved with respect." **—Participant 12**

The findings imply that the quality of treatment is rooted in how managers and custodians of organisation justice, for example, the employment relations unit, treat employees. The need for humility, particularly from managers, is consistent with Wang et al.'s (2019, p. 2) claim that humility in the conduct of custodians of organisational justice, particularly leaders, "substantially shapes interpersonal interactions between leaders and followers, and thus affects perceptions, attitudes, and behavioural responses". Wang et al. (2018, p. 8) add that this is because leaders are far more in control of how they treat employees in an organisation due to the proximity they have and positional power, which, to a certain extent, explains why managers are afforded tremendous respect.

He et al. (2017, p. 552) endorsed the idea put forth by Wang et al. (2019, p. 8) and emphasised that mistreatment of employees by leaders, whether observed or experienced, is never unnoticed; therefore, dignity and respect are essential even for underperforming, low-status employees and those who are not directly involved in a leader's day-to-day interactions. In addition to treatment effects on attitudes and behaviour of employees, Hoy and Tarter (2004, p. 251) add that sound interpersonal skills and polite reciprocal attitudes and behaviour in interactions create a sense of trust in leaders, processes, and decisions, promoting a strong sense of justice. The findings also reveal that interpersonal treatment standards and professionalism are mechanisms for suppressing bias in treatment. Highlighted as essential aspects of interpersonal treatment were respectful and professional conduct by leaders and custodians of justice across time and people. The findings highlight the importance of respectful interaction, particularly from leaders toward employees, and adopting professional interpersonal standards, which employees believed would suppress bias in treatment and foster a culture of quality in interpersonal treatment.

5.4.1.4 Sub-theme: Bias in outcome

The last sub-theme saw participants deliberate the bias in resources allocation and outcomes in the department. In this instance, most participants believed that outcomes are different depending on one's level of authority and who the decisions favour, which results in inequalities and perceptions of bias in the department.

"They mustn’t [be] biased. They must take both side[s] and weigh them and check who is wrong here. They must take the right decisions, even if it gets the department into trouble." **—Participant 1**

"In certain instances, outcomes in **the dtic** are fair and not fair, because in some instances, it actually depends on who their decision favours." **—Participant 13**

"Outcomes and decision are challenging [when] looking at the power dynamics. Obviously it depends on the level that you are [at] in terms of the decisions that are made, but thus far my view is that for any decisions that are made, [there] should be engagement, [they] should engage in that decision."**—Participant 12**

The findings imply that prejudice is the primary driver of bias, resulting in unequal application of procedures, information, treatment, and outcomes. Furthermore,

fairness in outcome includes the suppression of self-interest in implementing processes, information, and treatment, leading to an outcome.

The findings correlated with literature that suppression of bias manifests when events by authorities are not prejudiced and are based on a complete and open assessment of the facts, which employees believe emphasises accuracy and fairness in judgments (De Cremer, 2004, p. 294). Colquitt and Rodell (2015, p. 189) add that actions by authorities predominately include neutrality in applying policy and procedures, which include procedural justice rules, such as accuracy, decision control, ethics, and consistency. The finding are consistent with Eib (2015, p. 8) and Ledimo's (2015, p. 1556) claims that bias in distribution occurs when the actual outcomes of distribution processes are unequal and disproportionately disadvantage certain groups. Eib (2015, p. 8) adds that even if procedures are seemingly neutral, they can lead to biased outcomes due to historical patterns of discrimination or structural inequalities. Participants 12 and 10 specifically support this claim, highlighting hierarchy, power, race, and organisational structure as contributing to bias in the department.

"Outcomes and decision are challenging [when] looking at the power dynamics. Obviously it depends on the level that you are [at] in terms of the decisions that are made." **—Participant 12**

"I've had my instances in **the dtic** where I've presided over disciplinary actions, but you find that just because I am in the room, the outcome is different." **—Participant 10**

Further evaluation of bias in outcome saw some participants question procedures and policies used to arrive at an outcome while other participants questioned treatment and information exchanges during and after the outcome. For instance, participants 10 and 12 questioned the lack of consultation and engagement when decisions are made, and participant 10 questioned the inconsistency of the application of procedures.

"I think there were few people that they consulted with. You know, when this merging thing happens. They had their own meetings and then they didn't involve everybody else." **—Participant 11**

"…in terms of the decisions that are made, but thus far, my view is that for any decisions that are made, [there] should be engagement, [they] should engage in that decision." **—Participant 12**

"When you talk then about those **procedures** again, its people-oriented and **depends on the case [and] who's handling [it]**. I've had my instances in **the dtic** where I've presided over disciplinary actions, but you find that just because I am in the room, the outcome is different." **—Participant 10**

The findings imply that outcomes must comply with equity principles to be perceived as fair and unbiased. Participants supported this view by noting suppression of bias in implementing policies and processes across time and employees in the department for outcomes to be unbiased. The findings are also supported by Eib (2015, p. 8), who suggests that the assessment of bias in outcomes brings together the assessment of organisational justice construct, procedural, information, and interpersonal justice. The inclusion of procedures, information, and interactions in evaluating bias in outcomes confirmed distributive justice as a structural and social construct requiring suppression of bias in components of organisational justice. He et al. (2017, p) and McCardle (2007, p. 80) add that employees specifically associate procedural justice rules with distributive justice because structurally, the distribution of resources is primarily governed by organisational processes and policies, with managers and custodians of organisational justice structures serving as facilitators and reward allocators in an organisation. The social aspect of distributive justice, on the other hand, was demonstrated by participants' assessment of the characteristics (behaviour and treatment) of resource or decision allocators (manager/organisation), calling for consultation, engagement, and non-hostile behaviour (Cook & Hegtvedt, 1983, p. 227; Jasso et al., 2016, p. 10).

"And also the personal relationship that the culprit has with the employer is likely to influence fairness of the decision. In most cases, [the] probabilities of bullies being senior managers are very high." **—Participant 13**

Suggested improvement saw participants calling for engagement and employee participation, as well as consultation and transparency, particularly in processes and decisions.

For instance, participants 14 and 5 viewed involving and listening to employees' views in decision and polices formulation as a mechanism to foster fairness and suppression of bias in the department.

"I think that procedures and processes, when they formulate them, during the formulation involving the **people, involving the [staff],** listening to the views of the [staff] to say, 'OK, we are going to implement this and this is how it's going to look. What do you think?'" **—Participant 14**

"I think **transparency** would be one of them. That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5**

Participants' need for transparency and employee participation was consistent with Colquitt and Rodell (2015, p. 189), who claim that bias in distributive justice is suppressed by how much employees participate in decisions and how transparent information is during and after outcomes in an organisation. The findings reveal the importance of transparent processes and employee participation and engagement in processes leading to decisions as distributive justice rules that generate fairness and the suppression of bias in decisions.

5.4.2 Main theme: Ineffective communication

The second central theme of participants' experiences of organisational justice pointed to the inefficiency of communication in the department. Apart from bias in procedures, information, interpersonal treatment, and distribution, participants believed that information regarding processes and decisions is inaccessible and often irrelevant, inaccurate, and delayed.

For instance, participants 14 and 10 believed that information is shared inconsistently and often does not adequately address essential process changes and decisions in the department.

"And there's no consultancy, there's no communication…It's just implementation. We are only told there is this process going to happen and this is how it's going to happen and this is when you're going to go for training, full stop." **—Participant 14**

"Honestly, I think communication. If there can be a clear communication in terms of how one can follow a process…I don't think most people know how to trigger a process, how to do follow-ups, how to check and how to request information if you feel that you have not been given adequate information." **— Participant 12**

The findings reveal that the time information is received, including its accuracy and relevance, is part of assessing information fairness. The findings also suggest that being sensitised about changes and being provided with information about processes that lead to the change and decisions influences the perception of informational justice. The findings support van den Bos' (2003, p. 483) claim that the perceptions of informational justice are formed by assessing the efficiency of an organisation's internal communication (information) and relations (behaviour), especially when outcomes are unfavourable. The findings also confirm that information in organisational justice represents the structural part of interactional justice and reflects the "extent to which decision-makers explain and provide adequate information and justification of decisions" (McCardle, 2007, p. 7; Colquitt, 2012, p. 2). Notably, the findings demonstrate that information is valuable in making justice judgments and support the justice rules of information in which the urgency, accuracy, relevance, and accessibility of information are fundamental in assessing fairness (Dai & Xie, 2016, p. 57). What was concerning about the findings is that legislation, such as the POPIA, hindered access to information. For instance, participant 4 believed that requesting information was inconsistently applied, while participant 13 believed that the department must be transparent and do away with requesting information for justice to be effective.

"I think they need to do away with you having to request the information of all the reports. For justice to be effective, processes have to be transparent and honest. So to promote that transparency, what they need to do, by default, [is to] submit to you and your representative that information." **—Participant 13**

"Somewhere **you are told about the PAJA [Promotion of Administrative Justice Act]** and for **some, it's just given. To others, the very same information** you requested, that you were told about, the PAJA…for the other person

they must go follow the procedure to access the very same information." **—Participant 4**

The findings imply a misalignment in the implementation of the POPIA and the PAJA and requesting information as an administrative burden in the department. Notably, the findings reveal that legislation should not influence the dissemination of information, particularly information about uncommon grievances and decisions that necessitate process changes. Legislatively, the PAIA provides the constitutional right to information, while the POPIA ensures the protection of personal information. Broadly, this legislation promotes access and protection of information and underlines the importance of access to information in a democratic society by fostering a culture of transparency and accountability and ensuring information is protected. Policies within the departments underpin PAIA and POPIA by ensuring information is disseminated and protected by developing mechanisms that ensure timely responses, relevance, accuracy, and accessibility of information. The findings suggest a possible misalignment in the implantation of POPIA and PAIA and the bureaucracy of accessing information due to these legislations. To foster relevant and adequate dissemination of information, participants pointed to transparency and reducing the administration of requesting information in the department, particularly information such as processes and their outcomes, grievance stats, budget, recruitment, and performance-related information.

"Before you can implement things, allow a space of communication" **—Participant 1**

"For justice to be effective, processes have to be **transparent** and honest. So to promote that transparency, what they need to do, by default submit, [is] to you and your representative that information." **—Participant 13**

The body of research on informational justice (McCardle, 2007, p. 7; Atkins & Mahmud, 2021, p. 418) affirms that accessibility and transparency of information is an essential aspect of personal empowerment and a facilitator of communication within and between organisations for improved development.

According to Atkins and Mahmud (2021, p. 418), informational justice emphasises equity in how people participate in information processes and pays attention to the various ways they seek and receive information because individuals within an

organisation are the subjects of data collection. The current South Africa Government approach to communication views transparency as a first step toward ethical, impartial, accountable, honest, and inclusive governance. An institution such as the PSC further demonstrates strengthening transparency in the South African public services internal governance and promoting transparent by ensuring that internal administration in departments meet the legislation, polices, and Constitutional standards of South Africa. The findings highlight the importance of access and transparency of information, as well as the promotion and adherence to polices that allow easy and free access to information in internal governance.

5.4.2.1 Sub-theme: inadequate explanations and truthfulness

The second sub-theme of participants' experiences of organisational justice points to inadequate explanations and truthfulness in information in the department. As part of inefficiencies in communication, participants believed that information in the department is disseminated without explanation and the presumption that employees will know the reasons for procedural changes and decisions made. For instance, participant 4 believed that the department provides information with no explanations to silence employees, while participant 6 felt that the employment relations unit, in particular, provides inadequate explanations and or responses.

"They didn't explain. They just did what we requested just to shut us up. Yes, why was it not done that time when it was presented." **—Participant 4**

"And how ER [employment relations] has captured the information on their side and came back and given the responses you feel like you are given a textbook answer. And it's relevant to them because it's a ticking box for them." **—Participant 6**

The findings demonstrate that sufficient explanations of outcomes and processes influence how the participants feel about the fairness of outcomes. The findings further demonstrate that explanations about decisions and processes leading to a decision are used to assess fairness and the acceptance of outcomes and organisational process changes in the department. The findings are consistent with Eib (2015, p. 8), who believe "informational justice depends on receiving truthful, candid information and adequate justifications".

The findings also support Colquitt (2015, p. 194) and Dai and Xie's (2016, p. 57) claim that explanations provide information that clarifies why and how procedures were used in a certain way and why and how outcomes are distributed in a particular way. The findings also revealed that when explanations are limited, employees become uncertain and seek and rely on justice-related information and valid explanations to assess whether the outcome they have received is unjust. For instance, participant 4, even after obtaining a positive outcome, questioned why the department did not provide explanations.

"They **didn't explain**. They just did what we requested just to shut [us] up. That's how I felt, like we going to give you your upgrades, and then we're gonna back pay you whatever [you] haven't got for the past two years. Yes, why was it not done that time when it was presented? Why was it not done, maybe [you're] underqualified, maybe you, yes, of experience, like something or the value of the work that you do doesn't qualify you for that level, something." **—Participant 4**

The findings support van den Bos (2003, p. 483), who asserts that explanations are critical in informational justice as outcomes and processes leading towards the outcome are often unknown to employees and are used in most cases to support the truth. van den Bos (2003, p. 483) adds that in cases where information and explanations are inadequate, employees make social and structural comparisons based on the equity of information, which clarifies and answers what may or may not be true. In a condition of information uncertainty, people may substitute one type of justice information for another to avoid uncertainty about whether the event that they experienced was just (van den Bos, 2003, p. 484). The findings support this notion, as participants questioned information, such as grievance stats, budget allocation, and processes in the department, in search of the truth.

"It's also levels of information. There is information, which is well distributed because maybe it's absolute. They will send us disciplinary cases 18 (numbers), that one they wouldn't fake, but also wouldn't you want to know if they are 18 disciplinary cases, what are they about, why are they not telling the depth of them to see if generally are we dealing with disputes between managers is performance." **—Participant 10**

"I feel at some point at various levels of intervention, the information becomes the truthful and adequate when and even stamped when the management comes physically to explain…" **— Participant 6**

The findings reveal that information in the department is incomplete and often provided with no explanations, leading employees to question its truthfulness. The findings also imply that explanations are used to accept processes applied in decision-making and outcomes in an organisation. The findings are consistent with Muzumdar's (2012, p. 34) claim that in the absence of relevance and adequacy of information, employees rely on explanations to discover the truth about processes or decisions. van den Bos (2003, p. 483) adds that one reason employees would seek explanations is that information about an outcome allows employees to determine whether the outcome they have received is unjust, true or may not be true based on factual outcome information. The findings further support the uncertainty management model claims that in forming justice judgments, employees look first for the most relevant information in the particular situation in which they find themselves (van den Bos & Lind, 2002, p. 22). The findings imply that information without explanations sets in motion the search for justice-related information and explanations to substantiate the truth in processes and decisions. Suggested improvements in providing explanations are consistent with informational justice rules, with participants calling for employee participation, engagement, and consultation to foster transparency and the provision of explanations in the department.

"I think transparency would be one of them. That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies, or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the bush." **—Participant 5**

"Information sharing is not as open and as engaging, especially when you're talking about policies and procedures. I've really never in **the dtic** [sat] in a meeting where we were debating a policy or a procedure before it was signed into power, and I feel that it is injustice." **—Participant 10**

The findings highlight the importance of providing information and explanations and or justification of processes leading to outcomes. Furthermore, the importance of access and transparency of justice-related information and consultation and engagement as essential mechanisms in providing expansions in the department was highlighted.

5.5 OBJECTIVE FOUR: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

5.5.1 Main theme: Inequality

In addition to the themes, a central causal pattern emerged relating to how employees reconcile overall justice judgment. For instance, participants emphasised the importance of all organisational justice components; however, depending on their needs, specific components were more dominant than others. Some participants believed that unfair treatment, processes, and information, even when the outcome is positive, are considered unfair. Others believed that a positive outcome supersedes unfairness, leading to the outcome. However, most participants believed overall justice to be a balance and adherence to fairness in all organisational justice components.

" if you have to define that synergy, it would be a transparency and externalising decisions and other parts of processes within the department so that there's less biasness and there is timely action and responses. If I have a scar that I cannot remove, if I had to lose my eye for me to get the cell phone, was the cell phone worth it?" —**Participant 13**

The findings reveal that employees distinguish between sources of fairness and organisational justice component(s) that are violated to arrive at an overall justice judgment. The findings support Holtz and Harold's (2009, p. 1188) claims that all four components contribute to the perception of overall justice and determining who (person) or what (course) is being evaluated assists in clarifying the relationships between these components.

The findings are consistent with claims that justice is a multidimensional concept in which each component interacts to generate a sense of an overall justice judgment (McCardle, 2007, p. 9; Cropanzano et al., 2018, p. 9). An overall judgment will then be formed depending on a specific event and how an organisation allocates and treats its employees (Eib, 2015, p. 9). The findings highlight the importance of fairness across all components of organisational justice. Furthermore, the importance of each component of organisational justice is highlighted, solidifying the adherence of fairness, procedures, information, interactions, and distribution in the department.

The findings imply that transparency, engagement (consultation), and participation (voice) are instruments or methods by which structures can explain policies, processes, and justice-related information and justify decisions. At the centre of the employees' evaluation of overall justice judgment was the lack of equity in the department. To evaluate equity, participants made observations based on the unequal application of procedures, treatment, outcomes, and access to information in the department. For instance, participants 6 and 14 indicated the need for equal treatment, particularly regarding the provision of services in the department.

"Let all animals be equal in the zoo." **—Participant 6**

"We should all be equal. Equality is needed, regardless of skin colour, regardless of position, regardless of who's child [you are]. We all have to be equal." **—Participant 1**

"I think if we can all be equal and the service can be given equally to all of us." **—Participant 14**

"It is not fair because I was the only one who didn't get [it], and every work, it start[ed] from me, and it goes to the next person…why am I not getting it because as a team…I just couldn't understand." **—Participant 3**

The findings indicate that equity is the fundamental aspect of organisational justice and is required in all components of justice. Further, organisational justice is evaluated based on equity applied in an organisation's justice components, procedures, information, interaction, and distribution. The findings are consistent with Greenberg's (1993, p. 1) claim that organisational justice judgment is perceived by employees evaluating fairness in procedures, interactions, information, and outcomes in which an imbalance of one or a combination of these components generates distress and a feeling of unfairness. To reconcile equity or lack thereof, the participants relayed comparisons, confirming organisation justice theory's association with equity theory (Greenberg, 1993, p. 1; Dai & Xie, 2016, p. 56).

As with Edam's equity theory, the findings reveal that employees make compromises between themselves, their inputs, and their outputs, in which perceived imbalance generates feelings of inequity and dissatisfaction among employees in an organisation. Generally, the participants defined equity from the context of fairness applied to all components of organisational justice, with emphasis on rules and social

norms governing processes, interactions, and outcomes and the usefulness of information during, leading to and after the outcome (Ghosh et al., 2014, p. 631).

"Justice is fairness, justice is he giving everyone an equal chance and an equal opportunity to voice their cases, to be made to feel like they matter and their complaints or their opinions are valued by the organisation." **—Participant 6**

"All components are important a house will not properly function if there are no rules and regulations in place." **—Participant 12**

"If all aspects are being looked at, whether I was wrong or I was right and whether the outcome maybe doesn't favour me." —**Participant 9**

5.5.1.1 Sub-theme: disregard for employees' needs

Further evaluation of inequality pertaining to participants' overall justice judgment highlighted the need and or lack of consideration of the employees' needs of circumstances, which participants believe leads to the perception of inequality. For instance, participants 1 and 14, felt that the department needs to focus on the needs of employees by actively engaging to find solutions and alternatives to their needs.

"The department must focus on their employees and what they need. In doing so, employees will be happy, enjoy being here, enjoy coming up with innovative ideas, [and stop] thinking about themselves." **—Participant 1**

"Let us [interact], let us sit down let us talk, let us communicate, let us fight, but let us meet, let us come to a common ground." **—Participant 14**

The finding indicates that considering employee needs and circumstances in processes and decisions generates a sense of equity and alternatives. The findings are consist with contemporary assertions that equity manifests in distributive justice in three ways: equality, employees receiving the same inputs or resources; equality, receiving the same outcome based on the same inputs and needs; consideration of circumstance and sufficiency in distribution (Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551). Participant 5's remarks highlighted the importance of the needs of employees by emphasising that employees have different needs at different times within an organisation.

"…people have different challenges at different points in time, and therefore, we sort of…put things in an array according to how we order them and what takes priority for us at that point in time because and say at that point in time because

you know at a different point in time people, two people can have shared injustices. And then, at another point in time, peoples sense of injustice can differ according to their needs." **—Participant 5**

The finding imply that the application of processes and allocation of outcomes must consider employees' need as groups and individuals in an organisation may have different circumstances and different definitions of equity or fairness. The findings are consistent with Cook and Hegtvedt's (1983, p. 220) argument that fairness requires subjective equity where equity (to each in accordance with contributions) and equality (to each the same) need to be interrogated and balanced to generate a sense of equity. Cook and Hegtvedt (1983, p. 220) add that subjective equity includes procedural equity and equality, where an organisation recognises that not all procedures may be applicable in certain or all circumstances, and outcome equity where an organisation recognises that people may perceive equity differently, even when they are exposed to the same objective conditions. Cropanzano et al. (2007, p. 38) add that need, as a principle of distributive justice and equity, recognises that not all employees require the same assistance and outcomes. Cropanzano et al (2007, p. 38) further highlight that "organizations can balance these considerations by mixing equality and equity together", ensuring that root causes of employee dissatisfactions are identified, preventing problems developing (Whitehead, 1992, p. 10). Improvement in terms of equity emphasised how the department can identity employees' needs and highlighted creating voice through strengthening employee participation and engagement in the department. The findings reveal the importance of meeting employees' needs as it generates a sense of equity. In addition, mechanisms such as employee participation, engagements, and consultation that provide understanding and a platform for alternatives to be formed in which both employer and employee needs could be met.

5.5.1.2 Sub-theme: Policy and procedural equity

Some participants advocated the need for subjectivity in the application of producers due to different needs and circumstances, while others believed that adherence to policies and set agreements is needed to generate a sense of equity. For instance, participants 14, 6, and 12 felt that non-adherence to policies, including the fundamental rights of employees, results in a "system" that is unequal and unfair.

"…you gave me [a] certain code of conduct, treat me accordingly to those things you gave me, address my case according to what that policy is saying…they must follow the procedures." **—Participant 14**

"…let's treat people equal and fair. If you're say the system is supposed to be equal and fair and justice is about equality and fairness...Let all animals be equal in the zoo." **—Participant 6**

The findings reveal that adherence to policies and procedures that govern processes generates a sense of equity. This is consistent with Collie et al. (2002, p. 545) and Ruano-Chamorro et al. (2022, p. 6) who claim that the formal aspect of a procedural justice construct considers institutionalised policies and procedures developed to govern workplace relations, influencing how employees feel about outcomes and equity in an organisation. The findings support this notion, revealing that participants were more likely to accept the outcomes of decisions, even if they were not the outcomes they desired, if they perceived that the procedures used to arrive at the decisions were fair.

"…if all aspects are being looked at, whether I was wrong or I was right and whether the outcome maybe doesn't favour me." **—Participant 9**

"A house will not properly function if there are no rules and regulations in place. So processes and procedures are very important…they should be respected and they should be known by employees and by the employer." **—Participant 12**

The findings suggest that equity is examined from the standpoint of the fair application of policies and procedures within the bounds of the contractual agreement between the employer and the employee. In addition, the fairness experienced and observed in processes generates a sense of equity in decisions made in the department. According to Ruano-Chamorro et al. (2022, p. 6), this is because procedural fairness promotes fairness in decisions and makes clear steps and rules of engagement within a system, which stimulates a sense of control and allows employees to feel that they have been heard and respected. In addition, procedures allow employees to evaluate equity based on whether policies and procedures are applied ethically, consistently, accurately, transparency, and without bias, and if outcomes and processes represent the employee's cause (Beugr, 2002, p. 1095; Eib, 2015, p. 8; Ledimo, 2015, p. 1551; Ruano-Chamorro et al., 2022, p. 6).

Legislatively, government departments develop and adopt internal governance policies to ensure fairness in procedures and overall management of justice. To ensure adherence to fairness in departments, institutions such as the PSC and the Department of Public Administration, as well as organised labour, ensure that departments comply with the set policies and the broader values and principles of the South African Constitution (National Government, 2023). Interestingly, the findings reveal that existing legislation, policies, and contractual agreements create expectations of compliance and fairness in processes and outcomes in the department.

"If something is written on paper, it is clear that we should adhere to that, both employer and an employee." **—Participant 7**

The findings in this instance draw from social exchange theory, which claims that equity in procedures culminate in the expectation that parties involved in the exchange will follow a specific codes of conduct and stick to expected standards (Pattnaik & Tripathy, 2019, p. 62). As with social exchange, participants viewed their actions as part of their obligation and their expectation that the department and its representatives act similarly by adhering to procedural rules when making decisions (Aydin-Küçük, 2020, p. 2338).

"I think fairness and transparency, but justice is like all democratic values." **—Participant 6**

"But then if the employer now wants to deviate from what was agreed upon, then that is injustice." **—Participant 7**

The findings reveal that internal policies and procedures must comply and align with legislation and basic rights promulgated in the Constitution of South Africa, which could be due to historical human rights and public sector reforms observed and experienced in South Africa. Improvement in terms of equity calls for a system that provides equal opportunity for voice and value, with emphasis on procedural justice and its justice rule bias suppression, consistency, and transparency.

"Justice is fairness, justice is giving everyone an equal chance and an equal opportunity." **—Participant 6**

"…it would be a transparency…less biasness" **—Participant 13**

"[Policies need] to be communicated…there has to be engagement…you realise the decision was just made by a few people." **—Participant 5**

"…I think it will be when an employer [does not] give run-around…on obvious things that are also written on a paper." **—Participant 7**

In essence, the findings highlight the importance of equity in all components of organisational justice, with emphasis on policies, procedures, and considering employees' needs and the importance of transparency, employee participation, and engagement through which equity can be facelifted and generated.

5.5.2 Main theme: Lack of explanations

The last main theme of participants' perceptions of overall justice points to a lack of explanations. Participants' responses emphasised the department's ineffectiveness to provide explanations of decisions and processes leading to outcomes. For instance, participants 3 and 14 believed they must either be given what's is due to them or provided with satisfactory explanations for decisions.

"…it's either you are getting what you were complaining about **or you are getting a satisfactory response.** Where you are sitting you can see…that what they are saying is it a valid reason…I think I understand where they're coming from." **—Participant 3**

"I think **they need to give valid reasons** and also come up with the solution of that reason that you are giving me." **—Participant 3**

"It's not about me being happy. If you say you know what, ma'am, we can't give you this reason being this and **there is a valid reason for that.**" **—Participant 14**

The findings reveal that justifying negative outcomes generates a sense of fairness, which is consistent with Chen et al. (2002, p. 809), who urge that adequate, reasonable, and convincing explanations provide understanding, which lower perceived unfairness to the extent that people deem decisions fair. Chen et al. (2002, 809) add that explanations go "beyond merely providing objective information" but determining whether an action is right or wrong, thus mitigating grievances. Sołtan (1982, p. 673) and Lucas (2009, p. 252) support this view by noting that accepting

outcomes is influenced by how adequately decisions and processes leading to decisions are justified.

Another reason for demanding an explanation, as McCardle (2007, p. 7) and Colquitt (2012, p. 2) found, is that justification is required in every component of organisational justice. The findings are consist with informational justice rules, which assert that informational justice represents the structural part of interactional justice and reflect the "extent to which decision-makers explain and [provide] adequate justification for their decisions" (McCardle, 2007, p. 7; Colquitt & Rodell, 2015, p. 189). McCardle, (2007, p. 7) and Colquitt (2012, p. 2) add that informational justice focuses on equitable access to information and explanations that provide a foundation for guiding information policies and delivery systems, which is crucial in every component of organisational justice. The need for valid explanation and information draws from fairness theory, which suggests individuals consider an event unfair when processes leading to the event have alternatives; this also includes alternatives to actions of those accountable and alternatives to the outcome (Cropanzano & Rupp, 2003, p. 88). Participants 14 and 10's responses solidified the application of fairness theory as they felt that an explanation provides conversations that create alternatives and solutions that both the employer and employee can benefit from.

"Explain, make me understand, show me, look, you messed[up]…and because you've messed up here, I can't give you this but next time, if you improve here…let us all work together to achieve the objective of the department." **— Participant 14**

"It's about **being engaged to a point where I understand the circumstances…maybe the outcome might not be so valuable to me**. But at least sit me down and make me understand…" **—Participant 10**

The feeling of unfairness triggers employees to use a heuristic (fairness heuristics) to seek relevant information to form truths to moderate organisational behaviour that is used to decide, accept or reject the orders or decisions of authority (Indriani, 2015, p. 913). The participant's suggested improvements reemphasise the importance of providing relevant information and explanations, highlighting the need for consultation, engagement, and transparency as a way the department can improve the provision of

explanations. Some participants further highlighted that explanations were also expected when the outcome is favourable or executive decisions are made.

"What is missing for me, I think, yes, I was consulted, but I was told, there was no explanation. I cannot say because we never sit down and have a common agreement." **—Participant 11**

The findings reveal that decisions and or outcomes in the department are not explained, implying a misalignment of what the department deems as explanation-worthy decisions in the department. However, the findings highlight the importance of providing explanations for decisions and processes as essential for organisations to foster understanding, acceptable alternatives and outcomes, and equity in the department.

The findings also highlight transparency, engagement (consultation), and participation (voice) as instruments or methods by which structures can explain policies, processes, and justice-related information, and justify decisions.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Employee line managers, the employment relations unit, and organised labour emerged as access points to justice in **the dtic**. Organised labour and line managers were the mode of choice due to the quality of interactions and support employees received from these modes. Employee personality, knowledge and need/type of injustice emerged as employees' motives to pursue justice, with employees who are social and have information more likely to pursue justice. Experiences of organisational justice revealed bias across all components of organisational justice and inefficient communication, particularly the department's provision of explanations, access to information, and transparency. Employees' overall justice judgment drew on the sub-questions of the study and reemphasised the need for fairness across all components, with explanations, transparency, employee participation, and engagements as essential justice rules that generate a sense of fairness. Fundamentally, the findings revealed that employees reconcile their justice judgment by identifying the source and organisational justice component(s) that is or are violated, further emphasising applying fairness in each component. Overall, the chapter achieved its aim by providing a detailed discussion of the main and sub-

themes relating to the data presentation and analysis drawn from 15 semi-structured interviews and the study's objective. The following chapter provides recommendations and future research interests related to the study's findings.

CHAPTER SIX

6 RECOMMENDATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

6.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents recommendations and future research as they relate to the study's data analysis, discussion, and findings. To facilitate the chapter, each recommendation is grouped as pertaining to the research objectives. The chapter ends with the conclusion and the study's closing remarks.

6.2 OBJECTIVE ONE: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES ACCESS TO ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE, AND THE REASONS FOR THEIR CHOICE

The study's first objective revealed that organisational justice is accessed through the employee's line manager or supervisors, the employment relations units, and organised labour in the department. The findings revealed that employees are likely to approach their supervisors and organised labour as an alternative to the employment relations units due to the support, quality of treatment, and trust employees feel these modes provide. Additional reasons included the organisational structure and policies that govern the administration of grievances in the department.

The dtic must consider adopting, promoting, and sharing clear policies and standard operating procedures that clarify the services, roles, responsibilities, and limitations of the employment relations unit in the various grievance stages. In addition,

- **the dtic** must ensure that employment relations units account for the services they provide to employees by detailing the implications of unfair practices and providing means for employees to report unfair practices. Further, **the dtic** must invest in and provide regular training on sensitivity, respectful communication, and conflict resolution to create a fair and supportive work environment.
- Training will ensure that the employment relations unit is capacitated and improve the quality of treatment, engagement, and support across time and people in the department.

Furthermore, the public sector must consider developing a framework that addresses the quality of treatment in internal governance systems and services similar to the Batho Pile White Paper.

6.3 OBJECTIVE TWO: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' MOTIVATION(S) TO PURSUE ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

The study's second objective revealed that employees' knowledge, needs, or the type of injustice and personality traits are the main motives influencing employees to pursue justice in the department. Knowledge as a motive revealed the importance of access to relevant justice-related information, particularly details of processes used to arrive at decisions requiring **the dtic** to:

- Ensure that information is readily available by enhancing transparency and reviewing its access to information policy thus reducing bureaucracy that comes with requesting information.
- Ensure the proper application of the PAIA against the POPIA by developing standard operating procedures for accessing information.
- Adopt targeted information dissemination methods by proactively identifying employees' information needs and reducing the administrative barriers to requesting information in departments.

Personality traits

Personality traits as a second theme revealed that employees with strong and more expressive personality traits are more likely to pursue justice than their less expressive counterparts. In addition, the findings reveal that hostile, aggressive, confrontational environments and behaviours are a contributing factor to employees' unwillingness to report work-related incidents, requiring the **dtic to**:

- Adopt clear and comprehensive policies prohibiting harassment, discrimination, and other forms of hostile behaviour and outline reporting procedures and consequences for violating such policies.
- Invest in and provide regular training for all employees on recognising, preventing, and addressing hostile behaviour, including training on unconscious bias, respectful communication, conflict resolution, and bystander intervention strategies.

Adopting this recommendation will ensure that employees are empowered and able to report and hold accountable organisational justice custodians for any unfairness experienced.

Type of injustice (employee needs)

The type of injustice revealed that the different work conditions considered important to employees influence their motive to act – while the frequency and the level of discomfort experienced were additional factors that influenced employees' intention to take action. The findings revealed a disconnect between what the public sector and employees deem essential, requiring **the dtic** to:

- Enhance employee participation and social dialogue between departments and their employees to ensure that the needs of both parties are taken into account when making decisions, particularly with aggrieved employees.

In a broad sense, the public sector should consider using the collective bargaining process to identify employee needs rather than a platform for debating and negotiating employee demands, which could lead to strong positive employee relations.

6.4 OBJECTIVE THREE: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR EXPERIENCE

Objective three explored the perception of organisational justice in the department and revealed bias as the central theme across all organisational justice components: procedures, information, interaction, and outcome. The findings revealed seniority and race as the primary cause of bias in the implication of procedures, access to information, quality of interaction, and allocation of outcomes in the department. To mitigate averse biases in procedures, information, interpersonal, and outcomes, **the dtic** must ensure greater transparency by providing explanations, particularly decisions, which could reduce subjectivity and ensure that decisions are made based on objective criteria. In addition, **the dtic** must:

- Promote equitable access to information, ensuring that information is readily and easily accessible to all employees and encouraging open communication channels for employees to express concerns and request information, thus reducing the perception of bias in information.

- Providing sensitivity and unconscious bias training, highlighting their impact on behaviour and decision-making, allowing individuals to recognise and mitigate their biases and create more equitable interactions. The public sector must consider developing a framework similar to the Batho Pile, which government departments can use in policies, standards, and practices, systematically ensuring that treatment is equitable, fair and without bias.
- Lastly, **the dtic** must ensure employee participation, engagement, and transparency in processes leading to decisions, participially for aggrieved employees.

Inefficiencies in how the department communicates and disseminates information emerged as the second central theme, with a lack of explanations and truthfulness in information as sub-themes. **the dtic** must consider adopting targeted information dissemination methods, proactively providing explanations and identifying employees' information needs. In addition, **the dtic** must:

- Reduce the administrative hoops employees jump through to request information, particularly generic information. Considering these recommendations will reduce the administrative barriers to requesting information in departments, particularly for employees involved in disputes.

Broadly, the public sector must ensure proper application of the POPIA and Promotion of Information by developing an integrated framework, in which the department can adopt its policies, practices, and standards with emphasis on transparency and the explanation aspect of disseminating information.

6.5 OBJECTIVE FOUR: PUBLIC SECTOR EMPLOYEES' OVERALL PERCEPTIONS OF ORGANISATIONAL JUSTICE

Objective four revealed inequality, lack of explanations, and disregard for employees' needs, with great emphasis on procedural fairness and the consideration of employees' needs in decisions. The findings drew on the prior sub-questions and demonstrated that employees know which justice components are violated and justice rules are in each, requiring the **dtic to**:

- Practically and proactively create targeted engagements and consultation platforms that provide a voice and alternatives, particularly for aggrieved employees.

Considering these recommendations will ensure the provision of explanations and a platform for employees to voice their needs, fostering understanding, alternatives, and acceptance of processes and outcomes within the department.

6.6 FUTURE RESEARCH

Fundamentally, the study found that rank and race create biases that influence procedures, interactions, information, and outcomes in the department. Considering these findings, further research can be conducted into how positional and leadership power causes biases and their impact on procedural, informational, interpersonal, and distributive justice in the public sector. The other fundamental aspect of the findings revealed inefficiency in communication and legislation as an impediment to accessing relevant, adequate justice-related information and explanations used to generate a sense of equity, accept outcomes, and motivation to pursue organisational justice. Considering these findings, further research is required to establish how legislation that protects and promotes information, such as the POPIA, impacts access to justice-related information and relevancy, adequacy, and explanation in the public sector. This study represented a vital step towards a better understanding of organisational justice through the experiences of public sector employees in the department.

6.7 CONCLUSION AND CLOSING REMARKS

The chapter achieved its aims by providing recommendations and future research related to the study's data analysis, discussion, and findings. The line manager, organised labour, and the employment relations unit were indicated as modes employees use to access workplace justice in the department. Employee choice was influenced by policies, processes, and organisational structure, with line managers and organised labour being the preferred modes due to their support and quality of interactions, emphasising the importance of organisational support in structures of organisational justice. Personality traits and knowledge were revealed as strong motivations that provide employees with the confidence to pursue justice, emphasising the importance of providing informational justice and empowering employees.

Experiences of organisational justice in the department built on imperial evidence revealing bias across all components of organisational justice, emphasising explanations, transparency, and employee participant justice rule as generators of fitness. Employees' overall justice judgment, which was the main research question built on the three research sub-questions, reemphasising fairness across all organisational justice, consideration of employee needs, procedural fairness, and the explanation aspect of informational justice. Fundamentally, the study revealed that employees can distinguish between what component and justice rules within each component are violated, supporting the need for fairness in each component. The study provides a vital step in understanding how employees reconcile justice judgments and highlights generic justice rules important in managing justice in an organisation. The study met its purpose by answering its four research questions; (1) how do employees access organisational justice, and reasons for their choice (2) what motivates employees to take justice-related actions, (3) what are public services employees experiences of organisational justice in the department, as well as its main research question (4) what are public services employees overall justice judgment in the Department. In closing, the study provided recommendations for **the dtic**, the public services and future research with the hope the research finding can be integrated within policies and management of organisational justice. main research question: In light of their experiences. Finally, the study made recommendations for **the dtic** and public services, as well as future research, based on the study's findings, with the goal of enhancing internal governance and managing organizational justice.

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Appendix A

the dtic
Department:
Trade, Industry and Competition
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Private Bag X84, PRETORIA, 0001, the dtic Campus, 77 Meintjies Street, Sunnyside, 0002, Tel: (012) 394 0000
the dtic Customer Contact Centre local: 0861 843 384 International: +27 12 394 9500, www.thedtic.gov.za

Enquiries: Ms A. Ontong
Telephone: (012) 394 5980
E-mail : AOntong@thedtic.gov.za

Mr Floyd Dimakatso Maluleke
1413 Block GG
Soshanguve
Pretoria
0152

Dear Mr Maluleke

RE: REQUEST FOR APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT the dtic

Your submission requesting approval to conduct research at the Department of Trade, Industry and Competition **(the dtic)** refers.

the dtic is in support of your research request towards the Masters of Management at the University of Witwatersrand and is willing to provide you with the necessary support to make your studies a success. We trust that the recommendation you provide will assist the Public Service of the Republic of South Africa at the National Government level.

Kindly note that approval has been granted on the following conditions:

a) That you complete a Confidentiality Declaration form to ensure compliance with Departmental policies;
b) That you participate in a briefing discussion with the Vetting Unit before commencement of the research;
c) That you provide **the dtic** with a detailed research plan and draft questionnaires, surveys and/or interview questionnaires (where applicable); and
d) That you submit a copy of your research report once you have published the final document.

Should you have any further enquiries regarding the content herein, please contact the Director: Human Resource Development, Ms Angie Ontong on 012 394 5980 or email AOntong@thedtic.gov.za.

Yours sincerely,

Nkosiyomzi Madula
Mar 8 2022 1:28 PM

NJ Madula
CHIEF DIRECTOR: ERPC

Appendix B

Participant Information Sheet



University of the Witwatersrand, School of Governance
1 Jan Smuts Ave
Braamfontein
Johannesburg
2000

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Floyd Dimatso Maluleke a master's student in the School of Governance at Wits University in Johannesburg. As part of my programme, I must undertake a research project titled "exploring experiences of organizational justice in the Gauteng Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition".

As part of the research project, I would like to invite you to take part in an interview pertaining to your experiences on how you access and engage structures of Organizational justice in the Department, your motivations and your perception of your experiences. Your insight, knowledge, and experience on how you access OJ structures will be highly appreciated and assist in guiding this topic area.

- **Organizational justice is defined as the perception/ view of procedures, interactions (treatment), information and outcome of a decision in an organization. Sources of organisational justice can be direct – meaning an employee lodging a complaint or indirectly and the organization making a decision that affects an employee.**

It is not compulsory to take part in the study. If you decide to participate, you will be required to sign a consent form. If you decide to participate but later change your mind, you may do so at any time without giving a reason.

About the interview:

- Participation in the interview is voluntary
- The interview will take 30 to 60 minutes and will be recorded with your signed consent
- You may not answer any question you deem unconformable
- You may choose to stop participating in the interview and withdraw from the study at any time.
- No personal identities or personal information will be collected to keep your identity anonymous.
- The data collected will be kept confidential.
- Participants will be known to the researcher; however, the interview will be confidential.
- No mention of your name or anything that could potentially identify you in the report.
- The final study report will use a pseudonym (fake identity) to reflect your participation.

To participate, you must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- You must have been employed in the Department of Trade Industry and Competition for a minimum of three (3) years
- You must be employed directly with the Department not its agencies

Interview logistics

Please click on the link below to book for an appointment for an interview if you meet the above criteria: https://calendar.app.google/LnTLMB8Wfk94KFb78

Indicate if you would prefer a;

- Virtual interview – which will be administered on Ms teams or
- A face-to-face interview – which will be held in Block D 3rd Floor.
- Both interviews with be recorded with participants consent

The report

This research will be published as a research report, which will be accessible on the university library's website. If you would like a summary of this report, please let me know and I will gladly give it to you (optional). If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about this study's ethical processes, please contact the University Human Research Ethics Committee (non-medical), phone +27(0)11 717 1408, or email Shaun.Schoeman@wits.ac.za.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. Floyd Dimatso Maluleke,
2484368@students.wits.ac.za,
0712232221

Supervisor
Dr. Christine Holden,
christine.hobden@wits.ac.za,
074 796 5628

Thank you for your time in reading this document. This information sheet is for your personal use only.

Appendix C

Participant consent form

Research purpose: "exploring experiences of Organizational Justice in the Department of Trade, Industry, and Competition, Gauteng Province, South Africa"

Researcher: Mr. Floyd Dimatso Maluleke

I, ..., agree to take part in this research project. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve. I agree with the following:

I confirm that I have read the information sheet, and all questions pertaining to it have been answered satisfactorily.	Yes	No
I am participating in this study voluntarily and understand that I may withdraw at any time without providing any reason (s).	Yes	No
I agree that my participation will remain anonymous in the report.	Yes	No
I agree that the researcher may use anonymous quotes in his / her research report.	Yes	No
I agree that my information will be kept confidential during the study for 2 years.	Yes	No
I agree that my information will be kept confidential during data collection?	Yes	No
I agree that the interview may be audio recorded.	Yes	No
I agree that the information I provide will be disposed of after the study.	Yes	No
I agree that the research report will be shared with the Ethics committee of the Department.	Yes	No
I understand, that I can ask for information I provided at any time, and ask for it to be discarded.	Yes	No

....

Participate Name **Date** **Signature**

....

Researcher's Name **Date** **Signature**

Appendix D

Semi-structured Interview Schedule

Organizational justice is the perception or view of processes, interpersonal treatment, information, and decision in an organization. It is usually administered by HR units and arises from HR practices indirectly through changes that affect employees in the work environment.

- **Procedural:** level at which policies and procedures are utilised to achieve the final outcome are perceived as fair; such as prompt and responsible resolutions.
- **Interactional:** level at which an individuals' personal interactions with a firm's employees are perceived as fair, such as; "the extent to which the parties are polite, courteous and respectful of each other"
- **Informational:** where truthful, adequate, appropriate and relevant explanations are provided
- **Outcome:** the level at which to the final outcome is perceived as fair, including compensating customers and fixing the problem

Gender		*Male*	
		Female	
		Other	
Race		*African*	*White*
		Coloured	*Asian*
		Other	
Home language			
Salary Level (Rank)	*Senior Manager (13-14)*		
	Junior Manger (09-12)		
	Entry level (07-09)		
	*Other, Specify*_____		
Yes of experience			
Union Membership		*Yes*	*No*
Year of Membership			

Age	
< 20 years	
20 - 35 Years	
36 - 50 years	
51 - 65 years	
> 65 years	

BACKGROUND
1. Tell me about your work and what you do. 1.1 What does your work involve? 1.2 Would you say you understand the policies and structures of OJ in the Department?
DEFINING RESEARCH GAP
2. Accessing OJ (methods/modes)?
2.1 Tell me about an instance where you had to pursue justice in the Department? 2.1.1 What type of injustice was it? 2.1.2 Who did you involve first, and what steps (method/ mode) did you take to resolve the injustice? 2.1.3 Reasons for using such a method/approach? 2.1.4 What are the most important elements in your experience/ or what stood out during the process 2.1.5 Challenges and advantages of using this access point? 2.1.6 What could have been improved? **(Probe based on HR structures, other access point Union, chapter institutions she ease of the method, reasons, and experience, who was involved)**
3. Reasons or motivations for choosing those methods/modes?

3.1 **What are the reasons you decided to pursue this injustice?**

3.1.1 What were your main motivations in pursuing this injustice (Personal Reasons)?
3.1.2 Was there any external influences?
3.1.3 And what were the inputs of those external influences?
(Probe based on Trust in Org OJ structures & its Policies, Support from family, Union, Manager, Org, Outcome perception, Union interest)

4 Considering your experience, what is your perception of OJ structures looking at the procedures, interaction, information and outcome in the Department?

Procedures (level at which policies and procedures are utilised to achieve the final outcome are perceived as fair; such as prompt and responsible resolutions)

4.1.1 Based on your experience, can you share or reflect on procedures taken or used?
4.1.2 What were some of the challenges you experienced, and what were some pleasant experiences experienced?
4.1.2 Where procedures explained, consistent, timely response, without bias
4.1.3 What are some of the challenges you experienced
4.1.4 What could have been improved?
(Probe based on decision-making, ethics, consistently, accurately, without bias, are correctable, and representative of their course leading to a decision, the accuracy of information)

Interactions level at which an individuals' personal interactions with a firm's employees are perceived as fair, such as; "the extent to which the parties are polite, courteous and respectful of each other"

4.1.5 Tell me about your experience or view of the treatment you received during these processes?
4.1.6 Who was part of those interactions (HR, Managers, Colleagues, Union, and Family)?
4.1.7 Interaction after the decision was made on your injustice?
4.1.8 What are some of the challenges you experienced?
4.1.9 What was important and can be improved?
(Probe based on: their personal beliefs and culture, general sensitivity, respect, politeness, and ethical behavior and support of HR, Manager & Division, whom they interacted with, the importance of those interactions, and how they made them feel)

Information (informational justice, where truthful, adequate, appropriate and relevant explanations are provided (Bradley & Sparks, 2012; Colquitt, 2001).)

4.1.11 Tell me how information was shared and explanations were provided.
4.1.11 Who shared and explained or clarified information and processes?
4.1.1.3 In what manner were they explained – and was the information relevant and explanations satisfactory?
4.1.9 What are some of the challenges you experienced?
4.1.10 What was important to you and can be improved?
Probe base on:

Distribution (the level at which to the final outcome is perceived as fair, including compensating customers and fixing the problem (Lamont, 2017; Hocutt, Chakraborty & Mowen, 1997).

5.1.8 Looking at your experience, was the decision fair or not fair?
5.1.9 What made it fair or unfair?
5.1.10 What are some of the challenges you experienced in the Department in reaching this decision?
(Probe based on departmental power, equality, equity)

5 Overall Perception of their experience?

5.1 Looking at your experience in terms of procedures, interactions, information, and decisions made, what is your overall view of OJ structures in the Department?
5.2 What could have been viewed as justice to you in this instance?
5.3 What was the most challenging aspect of this experience,
5.4 What can be improved?
5.5 How have these experiences changed you and your work?

(Probe based on trust, commitment, interpersonal traits, Org & Management support)

Appendix E

Thematic analysis sheet

OBJECTIVE 1. WHAT METHODS AND MODES DO EMPLOYEE USE IN PURSING OJ IN THE DEPARTMENT			
Direct quotes P.2 "I mean if maybe the is a strong directors with whom you have a good relationship, but he's also not in an empowered position, but I mean such a person could maybe first also talk to the senior manager and say, you know what, this is the rest of the story, what you might not be aware of or tone down a little it might be good for this person's personality. So I think yeah that informal chat, who has the power to influence the senior manager in an informal session. Improvement P2. "You know, there's also the problem, in the DTIC, there is no real space for private discussions, because, I mean, if you discuss if there's a discussion in the chef directors office, even if the door is closed, the people sitting close to it can hear",	Main Theme Manger/Line	Topics – Positional power	Improvement – Confidentiality – Positional power
P.4 "Account manager, remember either done the union and the ER, every employee should start with the account managers to raise their concerns because that's their responsibility to assist so we raised it with the account managers and she took it upon herself, she even went to the DG". Improvement P4. "The only thing that I feel they can improve ne, it's remember that also ER, falls within the very same management that makes decisions. So sometimes I feel like even though ER they have their own policy, their own way of doing things, they can make their own decision. But I feel like the management impose like a certain pressure there, especially when they handle certain cases" BIASE. Maybe if ER was a unit on its own without the very same management that is responsible for the enter organization yes.	Manger/Line	– Procedural protocol	– Less bias
P5. "our supervisor which is in the unit, who felt it was good initiative. He was in total agreement. And then we went to the operations unit within our division and they said that was beyond their jurisdiction. And they're the ones who said we should go directly to HR". P5. "Managers manage the unit, you know, if there was anything that would need signing or even buy in it would have to be authorized within the unit first before it went outside of the unit and at my level I'm not an authorizer, I can only recommend I know sorry. Yeah, so that was very easy." Improvement P5: "What can be proved is supervisors showing their buy in more because I mean, at the end of the day, there isn't apart from Cc-ing a person to show that you're involving them in something. Verbal conversations cannot hold water. I think if everybody's part of the dialogue it can really assist and maybe fast track processes" P5. "So I think the level of engagement is just lacking, but also I think it would be something else if it was the case where now the Chief director rights to Chief Director HR but doesn't CC maybe the initiator of the of the whole thing"	Manger/Line	– Protocol – Authorization – Support	– Buy in, support – Level of engagement
P7. The reason was when you deal with your problem you must understand the structures because when you just go up straight the first question that will be asked did you ask your line manager. So I had to ensure I do the basic steps to resolve the problem" Line Manager. They didn't provide any support, I stood up for myself. P7. I first spoke with the COO, and he said that he was going to sort me out I must be patient, and then after two days I saw that, you know, that our previous COO used to run around mos, so I noticed that after two days now he's not coming back to me and then I decided to sent him an e-mail.	Manger/Line	– Protocol – Procedures	– No responses

OBJECTIVE 4. WHAT ARE EMPLLOYEES PERCEPTION OF OJ IN THE DEPARTMENT			
Direct quotes *P.1: Well "I don't know how to answer that, a Department Is just a Department" You will find people complaining that why is the department biased- why "the is favouritism, sometime if feels like the check the skin colour".* *Improvements* *P1. They mustn't "biased, they must take both side and weigh them and check who is wrong here." "They must take the right decisions even if it gets the Department into trouble".*	*Theme* - *Bias*	*Topics* - *Less Bias both in procedures & decisions* *- Organizational culture*	*improvements* - *Voice*
P4. "Not really, because sometimes as much as we have policies, I think ohk, the don't really, the policy is there, it states everything that's supposed to be done, but I think they look at the person when they it in terms of procedures, we don't follow procedure because they look at the person. And sometime they look at the situation, so they don't always, stick to what the policy is saying when they do the procedures they look at that person" *P4. I think this organisation or most government departments they don't run the organisations they let the unions run or rule the organization in that way, there's no consistency even if you have procedures, it's not going to fly because Labour Organisation or the unions they think they are in charge of the Department. So we end up deviating from the actual procedures or the policies. "I think with the unions, as long as they are not happy with how the procedure is – as long as the procedure does not suit their client, the client that they are fighting for then that's not a procedure, its wrong, then they start finding all sorts of loop holes in new policies or procedures".* *For me it felt like that's inconsistency how we treat cases, how we handle equerries, the is certain, certain race we need to prioritize them, is like we are pushed to assistance."* *Improvement* *I think, remember when they organisation do the policies, yes they must follow certain regulations by DPSA, and they put their own departmental rules, I think they must stick to the one the governs us, the DPSA because in that way there is no way you're going to say, "but" if it's, like the regulation, we cannot deviate from that. Because if we do the departmental rules. If it is Departmental policies someone will say the DPSA is saying this, why are you saying this to me, then we end up not using the very same procedure that we are saying it's our procedure.*	- *Bias* - *Consistency*	- *ER, Management inconsistency which courses bias in applying correct procedures* - *Union contributes to this as well (P2 also shared the same experience)*	- *Alignment*

P5. "No, I don't think it was a fair because there was an example of the same thing happening in another Division for another intern, but when we were inquiring, we're told it's no longer applicable we were even told that the department is struggling to absorb officials who are employed on a temporary basis we were even given Justifications that were outside of our request" which I thought was rather desperate. They were trying too hard to show that it just cannot be done" P5. "I think transparency would be one of them. That, you know, there's a notice that indicates that certain policies, or practices are no longer valid so that we don't waste our time and they don't have to beat about the Bush. I also think, you know, senior management can improve and you know, sometimes some things well can be done or they can be assigned. But we've had instances where they can't even write a single e-mail or a single document" Improvements Yeah, It needs to be communicated, but not only communicated, but there has to be engagement in some because you find that something, a policy, is changing and the changes are just not making sense and you realize the decision was just made by a few people somewhere who were focusing on one area of um, you know, one aspect of this policy and there wasn't enough engagement.	- Bias - Transparency	- Lack of transparency, leads to Inconsistency in applying procures, which leads a sense of bias	- Transparency - Engagement
P6. "There is a lot of bias and in that and I feel they are also influenced by leadership somewhere somehow, they may never admit they are not neutral people but in my case I sense there's no neutrality. They are just told draw and go tell that one this is the decision and this is the final say and that they must take it or leave it". P6. "I submitted the case was assigned to whoever but I feel they could have done more in terms of creating a tool of you know you know you're keeping it a timeline thing that says case received case registered case, assigned case, opened file number, case number. You know those things, they are more hidden, they're the back office more than for you as a personal complaining to see them. But it would be nice to move at that digital platform level, if I may say." P6. "No, I'm not sure that it was without bias because I felt that ER takes your case because you stating it and then for them it's like filing of some sort, we have received this match will forward it for it and then we'll hear what the superiors are saying and we'll bring it back to this person to say accept, but the way they bring it back, you see as well that it's a take it or leave it type of bring back. Even if you were to insist that they fight or they find the resolution there isn't room for that" IMPROVED P6. I think like I said the could be digital, we could have a platform to say so and so has been assigned to your case and is looking at it two, it would be great to have an outside voice not the internal ER people just handling the cases, it would be best to get outside expertise, somebody who's not even involved with particular who gives a non-biased opinion of looking at the cases.	- Bias - Transparency	- Lack of transparency, leads to Inconsistency in applying procures, which leads a sense of bias	- Transparency - Voice
P9. Looking at the DTIC as big as it is, I think they do follow a procedure, otherwise I believe they will be in trouble. I think being treated equally, and, given enough time to explain my story, whether through representative or not, but given enough time to, yeah, to share my story and judgment should be done on based on evidence.	- Bias)		- voice
P3. "I think it's just being transparent people to know where to go, and what happens and who you speak to, were does it starts, do I go straight to those door or first I address it with the manager from the manager it goes , because I understand that the are steps that need to be followed, but now if maybe I have an issue with the manager now, is it now safe for me to go straight to him or is there another alternative person that I can speak to?" P3. I think so in terms of telling us of giving us feedback telling us OK if this fails, this is what you must do. And also protecting people also in their offices. I think we need protection because obviously if you lodge a complaint about something you've already maybe created some maybe enemies so they need to protect us.	- Transparency - Feedback	- Transparency by providing feed back	- Transparency

Improvement P3. "For me, I feel, um, transparency and training and people must not feel like if you are lodging a complaint now, you are now shooting yourself in the foot or maybe you are getting yourself into trouble. We need to feel comfortable. Yeah, because maybe people are not lodging complained because they scared of what might happen, you might lose your job or something".			
P10. "So if you if you think about procedures, maybe there's two things you have to think about its documentation, it's how well they are written for you to follow which I think that is very explicit is very clear" looking at any policy in the department. Even as senior manager as we have what they call a management manual or directors manual they are well written, but I think the unfairness comes in how they are implemented". P.10. When you talk then about those procedures again its people oriented and depends on the case, who's handling. I've had my instances in the DTIC where I've presided over disciplinary actions, but you find that just because I am in the room, the outcome is different P10. It's at the execution that's the problem which for me is really unfair if we really want to talk about fairness, I don't think they are executed fairly so that all of us feel like we are equally treated or if the circumstances are similar you know" P10. I remember presiding over apparently a similar case and this person was complaining with the other guy got a different outcome than me. So I feel that unfairness comes there. We where told that the rotation policy at some point doesn't exist but you can tell people are moving and you ask yourself, does this policy exist or not. Why is it easy for other people to run with this thing, and it's difficult for others Improvement P10. "Follow-ups in terms of procedures and just making sure one, things (cases) are treated with urgency because if you don't follow up, it is left handing. Two is about "firm leadership because I feel like leadership and people who sit in this position sometimes are not firm about what must be done and how to carry this justice (justice related procedures). And "thirdly, is about really being explicit continued information sharing about what's new, what's not" and also unpacking it". P10. "What I feel is that they would share these policies with us, on newsflesh, and you can see it is signed, "but there's never an opportunity where one we are giving an opportunity to input one on that policy or to debate that procedure. it's almost like it's one way and you only find out it is not suitable for you the day you're supposed to use it.	- Bias	- It is bias based on, applying procedures, influence by	- Engagement - Voice - urgency, - Feedback
P14. "And it will look as if something is happening, something will be formed very quickly, but you're going nowhere slowly. The is a lot of bias from management against employees especially when it comes to this post thing, whereby I feel the department, it's very much unfair". P14: To me individually it felt like a power issue, what I suffered was a power issue. I'm in charge and everybody must listen who are you. "I don't think they were easy to access because there was a there was a time when I felt like management has grouped against me to say we are going to gang against her, we are going to make sure that whatever she's looking for, she's not getting it that's how I felt". P14. "Going through the processes, you know, you go through the processes, sometimes you just hit a hard wall and then you sit down and you kind of recoup and say, OK, I'm just hitting a hardware what do we do now, there's nobody to talk to in the DTIC, actually because if you go to what is this directory where the supposed to be helping employees you find that they support managers". Improvement P14. And there's no consultancy, there's no communication, lack of communication, it's just implementation, we are only told there is this process going to happen and this is how it's going to happen and this is when you're going to go for training full stop. P14: "I think that procedures and processes when they formulate them during the formulation involving the people involving the stuff listening to the views of the stuff to say OK, we are going to implement this and this is how it's going to look what do you think.	- Bias - Information	- Bias influenced by power, lack of communication, consultation makes procedures hard.	- Engagement - voice