

The role of organisational justice on employee engagement within a public service organisation in South Africa

Dr Ophillia Ledimo (Corresponding author)

Department of Industrial and Organisational Psychology, University of South Africa,
P.O. Box 392, Pretoria, South Africa, 0003

Tel: +27 12 429 8219 Email: manetom@unisa.ac.za

Ms Veronica Hlongwane,

Department of Human Resource Management, University of South Africa,

Tel: +27 12 429 8219 Email: hlongvc@unisa.ac.za

Abstract:

The objective of this study was to explore the relationship between organisational justice and employee engagement in a South African public service organisation. The Organisational Justice Measurement Instrument (OJMI) was used as a measure of organisational justice and Utrecht Work Engagement Scale measured the participants' levels of work engagement. These measuring instruments were administered to a random sample size of public service organisation employees (n=289). Descriptive statistics and correlational analysis were conducted to analyse the data. The results of the correlational analysis indicated a significant correlations between organisational justice and work engagement dimensions namely; vigour, dedication and absorption. In terms of contributions and practical implications, insight gained from the findings may be used in proposing organisational development interventions to enhance employees' work engagement levels as well as to conduct future research.

Key words: work engagement, organisational justice, public service, injustice

1. Introduction

Research on organisational justice proposes that justice has an impact on performance related factors in organisations. Colquit (2001) indicated that organisational justice perceptions lead to employee commitment and trust. Cropanzano, Prehar, and Chen (2002) also argued that justice improves employees' job performance in an organisation. Employees who perceive justice in their organisation are inclined to want to perform better as a form of reciprocity (Gaudet, Trambley & Doucet, 2014). Organisational justice affects what employees believe about the organisation as a whole because when the internal processes are perceived as just, employees' show greater loyalty and are more willingness to behave in the organisation's best interests (Cropanzano, Bowen & Gilliland, 2007). Bowen, Gilliland and Folger (1999) suggested that a just treatment of employees would lead to organisational citizenship behaviours that "spill over" to customers. In other words, organisational justice has a positive impact on employees' organisational citizenship behaviour, loyalty and customer satisfaction.

In South Africa, there is paucity of studies investigating organisational justice in relation to work engagement. The constructs organisational justice and work engagement have been studied in isolation. Studies locally on organisational justice focussed only on its relationship with employment equity (Esterhuizen, 2008); disciplinary procedures (Van der Bank, Engelbrecht, & Stumper, 2010) and organisational attractiveness (Pilvinyte, 2013). Similarly, studies locally and internationally on work engagement focussed on its relationship with leadership, commitment, culture, workaholism, performance, burnout and career development (Werner, 2005; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Marelli, 2011; Bowen et al, 1999; Shimanzu & Schaufelli, 2009). Hence, there is limited research that could be found regarding organisational justice and work engagement within the context of the South African public service. This study seeks to investigate the relationship between organisational justice and work engagement in a South African public service organisation, namely government department.

The public service organisation is the relevant context in which to explore the relationship between these variables because government departments requires engaged employees who are intrinsically motivated in order to fulfil their mandate of service delivery. Work engagement denotes a positive, fulfilling, work related state of mind that is characterised by vigour, absorption and dedication (Taris, Schaufelli & Shimazu, 2010). Kahn (1990) defined engagement as how employees express themselves in task behaviours that promoted connections to work, as presented through their personal (physical, cognitive and emotional performance) and active performances. Work engagement is positively related to employee performance. Hence work engagement is important for public service organisations because they need employees who are engaged and are able to

perform better; in order to realise their fundamental purpose of providing services to satisfy public needs as government departments (Dorasamy, 2010). According to Marelli (2011) employee engagement is associated with a high level of motivation to perform well at work, which is combined with passion for the work and a feeling of personal connection to the team and the organisation. Against this background, it is evident that there is a need to explore the role of organisational justice on the work engagement of employees in a public service organisation. More specifically, a study that determines the relationship between these constructs within a sample of employees in a South African public service organisation or government department.

2. Literature review

The following literature review firstly focuses on the definition of organisational justice and its dimensions. Secondly, the discussion explores the construct employee engagement and its dimensions. Lastly, the theoretical relationship between these two constructs is explored.

2.1 The construct organisational justice

Greenberg (1987) introduced the construct organisational justice as referring to an employee's perception of their organisation's behaviours, decisions and actions and how these influence the employees' own attitudes and behaviours at work. In other words, organisational justice is a personal evaluation of the ethical behaviour of all organisational members (van der Bank *et al.*, 2010). According to Cropanzano *et al.* (2007) this definition of organisational justice is a descriptive approach which seeks to understand why employees view certain events as just, as well as the consequences that follow from these evaluations. Hence, justice within the organisation is viewed as a subjective and descriptive concept because it captures what the individual employees believe to be right, rather than an objective reality or a prescriptive moral code.

Colquitt (2001) highlighted the four types or dimensions of organisational justice; namely, procedural justice, distributive justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice. *Distributive justice* is the first fairness construct studied that focuses on the perceptions of fairness in the distribution and allocation of outcomes (Pilvinyte, 2013). It focuses on the organisational reality that not all employees are treated alike, and that the allocation of outcomes is differentiated in the organisation (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). Secondly, *procedural justice* refers to the means by which outcomes are allocated, but not specifically to the outcomes (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). It relates to the fairness of the formal procedures required by the organisation and its policy on the method of decision-making (Moorman, 1991; Colquitt, 2001). Thirdly, *interactional justice* refers to the perceived fairness of the interpersonal treatment used within the organisation to determine outcomes (Colquitt, 2001). It focuses on the sensitivity, politeness and respect employees receive from their superiors during procedures. This serves primarily to alter reactions to outcomes, because sensitivity can make people feel better even if the outcome is unfavourable (Pilvinyte, 2013). Lastly, *informational justice* is described as to whether one is truthful and provides adequate justifications for their actions and decisions in the organisation (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). According to Pilvinyte (2013), it refers to the explanation, justification or information provided by decision-makers as to why outcomes were distributed in a certain way. This type of justice requires that the information should be comprehensive, reasonable, truthful, timely and candid in nature.

In addition to the four dimensions, there are five dimensions that explain organisational justice namely, ethical leadership and management, strategic direction justice, service delivery innovation, customer relations and diversity management justice. According to Cropanzano *et al.* (2007), organisational justice is a positive perception of the ethical and moral standing of the organisation's leadership and managerial conduct or practices. *Ethical leadership and management* as an aspect of justice implies that the leader and manager possess and promote justice values in the organisation such as honesty, integrity, openness, compassion, humanity, equality, trust, recognition and empowerment (Werner, 2005). Creating a justice-oriented *strategic direction* for the organisation is one of the ways in which the organisation is able to indicate its concern for fair development and ethical execution of its purpose. Fair development of the strategic direction focuses on consultation with the relevant stakeholders during the decision-making process, which includes employees, managers, clients, customers and labour organisation (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). *Service delivery and innovation* as a dimension of justice highlights the responsibility of employers and employees in ensuring that they create a just and fair image of the organisation with regard to the development and delivery of services or products. Goldstein, Johnston, Duffy and Rao (2002) have argued that regardless of how the service organisation defines their service and how customers or clients perceive the service; a delivered service should function seamlessly in order for customers to perceive it correctly (fair and just). *Customer relation justice* is basically concerned with maintaining positive relationships with customers, increasing customer loyalty, and expanding customer lifetime value (King & Burgess, 2008). Therefore, customer relations practices in the organisation that are fair

and just can help organisations manage customer interactions more effectively. An organisation that is devoted to *diversity management justice* is able to give the impression that the organisation has established systems which fairly evaluate, promote, and compensate its employees based upon performance and ability rather than on criteria such as gender, race, nationality, or age (Magoshi & Chang, 2009).

In contrast to the positive influence of organisational justice on employee attitudes and behaviour, an injustice within an organisation is perceived as a corrosive solvent that can dissolve bonds within the organisation; hence unfair practices within the organisation are hurtful to employees and harmful to the organisation itself (Cropanzano *et al.*, 2007). Van der Bank *et al.* (2010) have argued that the results of unfair treatment by employees may include emotions of anger and resentment, lower production quantity and quality, greater absenteeism, greater turnover, less initiative, lower morale, lack of cooperation, spread of dissatisfaction to co-workers, fewer suggestions and less self-confidence. It is therefore, essential that organisations are able to identify and address factors within the organisation that are likely to engender their employees' positive perception of organisational justice.

2.2 The construct employee engagement

Various definitions have evolved from academic and practical perspectives due to the recent popularity and buzz around engagement. Hence for the purpose of this study the adopted definition of work engagement is based on Kahn (1990) that it refers to the harnessing of organisational employees to their work roles. As a result they employ and express themselves physically, cognitively and emotionally during their role performance (Kahn, 1990). This definition suggests that employee engagement is a multifaceted and dynamic construct comprising of the cognitive, behavioural and emotional components. The cognitive aspect focuses on what an employee thinks about the organisation, and the employee's experience of absorption and involvement. The physical or behavioural component focusses on the employee's involvement in the task and how employees conduct themselves in relation to the organisation. Lastly, the emotional or affective component involves employees' feelings about their organisation by showing commitment and dedication as well as being connected to their job (Kahn, 1990; Schaufelli, Salanova, Gouzalet-Roma & Bakker, 2002). These three aspects suggests that work engagement enables employees to positively associate with their jobs or roles on multiple levels (Christian, Garza & Slaughter, 2011).

The dimensions of work engagement that are used to describe the cognitive, behavioural and emotional aspects are vigour, dedication and absorption. *Vigour* is the energy and enthusiasm that the employee brings to the work place; that is characterized by high levels of energy, effort, resilience, persistence, and motivation to invest in their work (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Kravina, Falco, De Carlo & Andreassen, 2014). *Dedication* is being devoted, inspired and believing work is purposeful or meaningful; it is characterized by involvement in the work, enthusiasm, a sense of pride and inspiration (Schaufelli, Taris, & Bakker, 2008; Taris *et al.*, 2010). *Absorption* is being immersed in the work to the extent that it is difficult for an employee to leave and time becomes less relevant to the employee; this dimension is characterized by immersion in one's work and the sense of time passing quickly (Bakker *et al.*, 2011; George, 2011). This implies that engaged employees work hard (vigour), they are involved (dedicated) and they feel happily engrossed (absorbed) in their work.

According to Kravina *et al.* (2014) work engagement is important in today's organisations because it includes high levels of energy, willingness and passion to perform well and to deliver above and beyond what is required of an employee. It is positively associated with job satisfaction and the physical health of employees (Schaufelli *et al.*, 2008). Engagement has often been associated with positive consequences in organisations because it involves employee's ability to identify with one's work and the feeling of profound personal connection to the task, team and organisation. The benefits of work engagement in organisations are also high productivity and profitability; the customers become more satisfied and loyal, the employees are inclined to experience positive emotions such as, happiness, joy, and enthusiasm (Bowles & Cooper, 2012; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Kravina *et al.*, 2014). In addition, the positive organisational outcomes of work engagement also include increased job performance, organizational commitment, work motivation, high levels of self-control, high co-worker support, and staff retention (Bakker, Albrecht & Leiter, 2011; Salanova, Agut & Peiró, 2005; Schaufelli & Salanova, 2007).

Work engagement is the opposite of burnout and workaholism. According to Schaufelli and Bakker (2003) contrary to those who suffer from burnout, engaged employees have a sense of energy and effective connection with their work activities and they see themselves as being able to deal well with the demands of their job. Burnout employees display exhaustion, cynicism and reduced professional efficacy in their roles (Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Christian *et al.*, 2011). While the workaholic employees are unable to balance between their private

life and work life; they denote an uncontrollable desire to work incessantly, excessively and compulsively (Kravina *et al*, 2014; Shimazu & Schaufelli, 2009; Schaufelli *et al*, 2008). This implies that work engagement is a positive organisational outcome when compared to burnout and workaholism.

2.3 The theoretical relationship between organisational justice and employee engagement

Organisational justice as the employees' perceptions of fairness in their employment relationship suggests that these perceptions of justice are likely to influence employee behaviour and attitudes in a positive or negative manner (Colquit, Greenberg & Zapata-Phenan, 2005). Greenberg (2001) argued that organisational justice attempts to describe and explain the role of fairness in the workplace. Both organisational justice and work engagement have the potential to create positive implications for organisations and employees such as greater trust and commitment, improved job performance, more helpful citizenship behaviours, improved customer satisfaction, and diminished conflict (Kravina *et al*, 2014; Macey & Schneider, 2008; Cropanzano *et al*, 2007). Shibaoka, Takade, Watanabe, Kojima, Kakinuma, Tanaka and Kawakami (2010) also highlighted that organisational justice has recently attracted attention as a predictor of employee's mental and physical health. Similarly, Bakker *et al* (2011) also argued that work engagement is positively associated with employees' job satisfaction and health. Work engagement and organisational justice are relevant and important in today's organisations because organisations are seeking affordable and effective means to improve employees' psychological health and to prevent costs related to mental health problems such as low performance and absenteeism (Gaudet *et al*, 2014; Christian *et al*, 2011). In addition, Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler and Schminke (2001) argued that the following are the three reasons organisational justice is important to employees. Firstly, it is the long-range benefit that implies employees prefer justice because it allows them to predict and control the outcomes they are likely to receive from their organisations. Secondly, it is the social consideration because employees are social beings who prefer to be accepted and valued by important others. They regard being exploited or harmed by powerful decision-makers in their organisations as a form of organisational injustice. Thirdly, it is the ethical consideration because employees are concerned about fair practices in their organisation. They believe it is the morally appropriate way others should be treated in an organisation.

The above descriptions of the variables organisational justice and work engagement suggest that the organisational justice dimensions in particular could possibly be related to work engagement. However, there is paucity on research that specifically explores the relationship between organisational justice and work engagement in a public service organisation. Scientific information about this relationship is therefore needed in order to initiate relevant interventions to enhance employee engagement in a South African public service organisation. Based on the aforementioned problem statement and literature review, the objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between organisational justice perceptions and work engagement levels of the employees of a South African public service organisation.

It is against this background that it is hypothesised that:

There is a statistically significant positive relationship between organisational justice and employee engagement in a public service organisation.

3. Research design and methodology

The study was quantitative in nature. In order to achieve the purpose of this study; a cross-sectional survey was used which refer to a design that collects data at one point in time from one sample representing the larger population (Wellman, Kruger & Mitchell, 2009).

In this section, the participants and sampling strategy and measuring instruments of this study are discussed.

3.1 Participants and sampling strategy

The population consisted of permanently employed government department or public service organisation employees situated in Gauteng. To determine the sample size, the study adopted a random sampling technique based on the guidelines of TerreBlanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006). The participants were requested to complete the questionnaire, resulting in a final sample size of 289 respondents.

In terms of table 1, the sample size was skewed towards females whom are 59.5% (n= 172) and 40.5% (n=117) were males. With regard to the different race groups of the participants, 78.9% (n=228) were African; 9.7% (n = 28) were white; 8% (n= 23) were coloured and 3.5% (n = 10) were Indian. Among the participants, approximately 22.1% (n = 64) were born between 1946 and 1964; 38.1% (n = 110) were born between 1965 and 1977 while 39.8% (n = 115) were born between 1978 and 2000.

In terms of the participants' current position, 17% (n = 49) are in management positions; 46.3% (n = 134) occupied professional and specialist position while 36.7% (n = 106) are employed as general workers. In addition, 56.8% (n = 164) of the participants have between 1 to 5 years of service with the organisation.

Table 1: Demographic profile of participants

Parameter	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	117	40.5
Female	172	59.5
Race		
African	228	78.9
Coloured	23	8.0
Indian	10	3.5
White	28	9.7
Age group		
Born between 1978 and 2000	115	39.8
Born between 1965 and 1977	110	38.1
Born between 1946 and 1964	64	22.1
Years of service		
1 - 5 years	164	56.8
6 – 10 years	63	21.8
11 – 15 years	41	14.2
Over 16 years	21	7.2
Current position		
Management	49	17
Professional and specialist	134	46.3
General workers	106	36.7

3.2 Measuring instruments

The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A measured the participants' biographical details which included race, age group, gender, years of service and current position.

Section B consisted of the measuring instruments Organisational Justice Measurement Instrument (OJMI) and the Utrecht Work Engagement Survey (UWES) (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004).

The Organizational Justice Measurement Instrument (OJMI) which is virtually self-administering survey and consists of 59 statements measuring the nine dimensions of justice; namely, strategic direction, distributive, procedural, interactional, informational, service delivery innovation, customer relations, diversity management, ethical leadership and management. The statements of the questionnaire were configured using the five point Likert scales ranging from 1 as strongly disagree and 5 as strongly agree. In the present study, the reliabilities of the dimensions were used to assess the construct validity and it was measured using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the nine organisational justice dimensions are presented in table 2 below. The results of the coefficients are considered to be satisfactory because they were significantly greater than the recommended 0.70 (Terreblanche *et al*, 2006). They vary from 0.946 (distributive); 0.942 (ethical leadership and management); 0.909 (service delivery innovation); 0.884 (strategic direction); 0.862 (interactional); 0.887 (informational); 0.863 (procedural); 0.815 (diversity management) and 0.799 (customer relations). Overall, the reliability coefficient of the OJMI is 0.952.

The UWES was used to measure work engagement. UWES comprises of 21 item and three subscales or dimensions; namely, vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Each item is rated on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 as never and 7 as always. In the present study, the Cronbach alphas of the dimensions were also considered to be satisfactory. Overall the reliability of the UWES is 0.937; while the dimensions vary from 0.837 (vigour); 0.855 (dedication) and 0.799 (absorption).

Table 2: Number of items and reliabilities for the OJMI and UWES dimensions

Dimensions	Number of items	Reliability
Organisational justice dimensions (OJMI)	59	0.952
Distributive justice	12	0.946
Ethical leadership and management	11	0.942
Service delivery innovation	6	0.909
Strategic direction justice	5	0.884
Interactional justice	5	0.862
Informational Justice	7	0.887
Procedural justice	5	0.863
Diversity management justice	4	0.815
Customer relations justice	4	0.799
Work engagement dimensions (UWES)	21	0.937
Vigour	7	0.837
Dedication	7	0.855
Absorption	7	0.799

3.3 Research procedure

A cross-sectional quantitative survey research design was used for this study because it allows for the collection of data from respondents about their perception (Wellmann *et al*, 2009; Terreblanch *et al*, 2006). The ethical clearance to conduct the research in the organisation was granted by the management and the Ethics Committee of the department and research institution. The invitation to participate voluntarily in the study was sent to the employees. The questionnaire was completed during a group administration process facilitated by the researchers and it included a covering letter. The covering letter explained the purpose of the study and it explained ethical concerns such as anonymity, confidentiality, feedback and freedom of choice to participate in the study. Completed questionnaires were collected immediately by the researchers and were kept in a secure place.

3.4 Statistical analyses

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS version 20) was used to analyse the data of the empirical study. In order to determine the internal consistency reliability of the two measuring instruments; the descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) and Cronbach's alpha coefficients were conducted. Correlational analysis and multiple regression analysis were also performed in order to achieve the objective of this study.

4. Results

In addition to the Cronbach alpha results presented above in table 2; the means and standard deviations as the descriptive statistics were also conducted for both the independent variable organisational justice and the dependent variable work engagement.

Table 3: Means and standard deviations for the OJMI and UWES dimensions

Dimensions	Mean score	Standard deviation	Position in rank order
Organisational justice dimensions (OJMI)	3.63		
Distributive justice	3.31	0.978	9
Ethical leadership and management	3.39	0.935	8
Service delivery innovation	3.58	0.836	5
Strategic direction justice	3.62	0.933	4
Interactional justice	3.83	0.862	1
Informational Justice	3.71	0.840	3
Procedural justice	3.41	0.929	7
Diversity management justice	3.54	0.946	6
Customer relations justice	3.73	0.824	2
Work engagement dimensions (UWES)	4.30		
Vigour	4.20	1.187	2
Dedication	4.35	1.175	1
Absorption	4.11	1.093	3

Table 3 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the measures used in this study. The summated means for the nine organisational justice dimensions in the OJMI indicate that interactional justice was ranked highest ($m=3.83$); followed by customer relations ($m= 3.73$); informational ($m=3.71$); strategic direction ($m= 3.62$); service delivery innovation ($m= 3.58$); diversity management ($m=3.54$); procedural ($m=3.41$); ethical leadership and management ($m= 3.39$) and distributive justice ($m= 3.31$). This ranking of the means score results indicates that this government department employees have a high positive perception of justice and fairness in the dimension interactional than the other eight dimensions of justice. However, the fact that the mean scores for all the nine dimensions and the overall mean score of OJMI ($m=3.63$) are between the “agree” and “strongly agree” ratings on the Likert scale reflect that the employees of seem to have satisfactory or positive perceptions of organisational justice.

With regard to the work engagement dimensions, the sample of the participants reflected positive work engagement perceptions. They obtained the highest mean score on the dimensions dedication ($m=4.35$); followed by the dimension vigour ($m=4.20$) and the lowest mean was on the dimension absorption ($m=4.11$). The mean scores for all the three dimensions and the overall mean score of UWES ($m=4.30$) are also between the “agree” and “strongly agree” ratings on the Likert scale; indicating the employees have high levels of work engagement.

Table 4: Intercorrelations of the OJMI dimensions and reliabilities

<i>Factors</i>	<i>D1</i>	<i>D2</i>	<i>D3</i>	<i>D4</i>	<i>D5</i>	<i>D6</i>	<i>D7</i>	<i>D8</i>	<i>D9</i>
D1:Distributive justice	0.946								
D2:Ethical leadership and management	.779**	0.942							
D3: Service delivery innovation	.672**	.791**	0.909						
D4:Strategic direction	.633**	.581**	.576**	0.884					
D5:Interactional justice	.399**	.434**	.378**	.596**	0.862				
D6:Informational justice	.648**	.720**	.665**	.631**	.591**	0.887			
D7:Procedural justice	.801**	.811**	.697**	.669**	.499**	.773**	0.863		
D8:Diversity Management	.633**	.664**	.600**	.566**	.589**	.831**	.705**	0.815	
D9:Customer relations	.629**	.741**	.643**	.657**	.640**	.785**	.679**	.715**	0.799
n = 289; Alpha coefficients are presented in bold values. ** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed): $p < 0.01$ $p < .01$.									

The intercorrelations between the dimensions of organisational justice measured by the OJMI are presented in Table 4. All the dimensions of organisational justice correlate significantly with each other; namely, strategic direction, distributive, procedural, interactional, informational, service delivery innovation, customer relations, diversity management, ethical leadership and management. Their correlations range from a minimum of $r=0.399$ ($p < 0.01$) to a maximum of $r= 0.831$ ($p < 0.01$).

Table 5 also presents the intercorrelations between the dimensions of organisational justice measured by OJMI and the work engagement dimensions measured by UWES. The results indicate that the three dimensions of the UWES intercorrelate significantly. The correlation between vigour and dedication is equal to 0.878; that between absorption and vigour is equal to 0.861; and between dedication and absorption is 0.834.

Table 5: Intercorrelations of the OJMI and UWES dimensions

Dimensions	Vigour	Dedication	Absorption
Distributive justice	.543**	.539**	.517**
Ethical leadership and management	.614**	.557**	.583**
Service delivery innovation	.588**	.530**	.538**
Strategic direction justice	.589**	.526**	.560**
Interactional justice	.497**	.438**	.455**
Informational Justice	.618**	.587**	.563**
Procedural justice	.596**	.539**	.558**
Diversity management justice	.560**	.490**	.489**
Customer relations justice	.554**	.525**	.527**
Vigour	1 (0.837)	.878**	.861**
Dedication	.878**	1 (0.855)	.834**
Absorption	.861**	.834**	1 (0.799)

n = 289; Alpha coefficients are presented in bold values. * * Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed): $p < 0.01$

In addition, table 5 indicate the correlations that were computed between each of the organisational justice dimensions in the OJMI and the work engagement dimensions in the UWES to determine the covariance of the constructs being measured. *Vigour* correlates significantly ($p < 0.01$) with all the dimensions of organisational justice ranging from $r = 0.618$ for informational justice to $r = 0.497$ for interactional justice. *Dedication* also correlates significantly at the 0.01 level with all the organisational justice dimensions ranging from $r = 0.587$ for informational justice to $r = 0.438$ for interactional justice. *Absorption* also correlates significantly at the 0.01 level with all the organisational justice dimensions ranging from $r = 0.583$ for the ethical leadership and management dimensions to $r = 0.455$ for interactional justice.

In table 6 the results of a standard multiple regression analysis are presented with the dimensions of organisational justice as the independent variables and the three dimensions of work engagement; namely, vigour, dedication and absorption as the dependent variables. The regression analysis was conducted to determine the predictive effect, if any, organisational justice has on work engagement. It was also conducted to test the hypothesis of this study in order to determine the magnitude of the correlation between the dependent and the independent variables. In order to determine the portion of the total variance of each of the work engagement variables is being explained by the nine organisational justice dimensions; the three standard multiple regression analysis were conducted in this study, one for each of the work engagement dimensions.

The standard multiple regression analysis was also conducted in order to determine how much each independent variable contributes to the overall relationship. For the dependent variable *Vigour*, the regression ($R = 0.733$) is statistically significant ($F = 35.958$; $p < 0.000$); accounting for 52% (Adjusted R Square = 0.522) of the variance. There are five organisational justice dimensions that indicate a unique contribution that is significant for the prediction of *Vigour*; namely, Ethical leadership and management ($t = 1.766$; $p < 0.078$), Service delivery innovation ($t = 2.675$; $p < 0.008$), Strategic direction justice ($t = 3.449$; $p < 0.001$), Interactional justice ($t = 2.278$; $p < 0.023$) and Informational justice ($t = 1.936$; $p < 0.054$).

The regression ($R = 0.670$) is also statistically significant for the dependent variable *Dedication* ($F = 25.293$; $p < 0.000$); accounting for 43% (Adjusted R Square = 0.432) of the variance. Only three organisational justice dimensions that indicate a unique contribution that is significant for the prediction of *Dedication*; namely, Service delivery innovation ($t = 1.851$; $p < 0.065$), Strategic direction justice ($t = 2.095$; $p < 0.037$) and Informational justice ($t = 2.804$; $p < 0.005$).

In terms of the dependent variable *Absorption*; the regression ($R = 0.682$) is also statistically significant ($F = 26.913$; $p < 0.000$); accounting for 44% (Adjusted R Square = 0.447) of the variance. There are four organisational justice dimensions that indicate a unique contribution that is significant for the prediction of *Absorption*; namely, Ethical leadership and management ($t = 2.022$; $p < 0.044$), Service delivery innovation ($t = 1.733$; $p < 0.084$), Strategic direction justice ($t = 3.293$; $p < 0.001$) and Interactional justice ($t = 1.811$; $p < 0.071$).

Table 6: Multiple regression statistics summary: Work engagement dimensions as the dependent variables and organisational justice dimensions as the independent variables

Model	Non-standardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	T	P
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Vigour					
(Constant)	-.123	.263		-.466	.641
Distributive justice	-.058	.085	-.048	-.679	.498
Ethical leadership and management	.178	.101	.140	1.766	.078*
Service delivery innovation	.202	.075	.170	2.675	.008*
Strategic direction justice	.257	.075	.202	3.449	.001*
Interactional justice	.168	.074	.122	2.278	.023*
Informational Justice	.193	.100	.137	1.936	.054*
Procedural justice	.101	.091	.079	1.103	.271
Diversity management justice	.100	.079	.080	1.264	.207
Customer relations justice	.054	.089	.037	.605	.546
	R=0.733	R Square =0.537	Adjusted R Square = 0.522		
Dedication					
(Constant)	.411	.284		1.445	.150
Distributive justice	.124	.092	.103	1.349	.178
Ethical leadership and management	.082	.109	.065	.750	.454
Service delivery innovation	.151	.081	.128	1.851	.065*
Strategic direction justice	.169	.081	.134	2.095	.037*
Interactional justice	.126	.080	.093	1.582	.115
Informational Justice	.302	.108	.216	2.804	.005*
Procedural justice	.032	.098	.025	.324	.746
Diversity management justice	-.014	.086	-.011	-.166	.868
Customer relations justice	.118	.096	.083	1.230	.220
	R=0.670	R Square =0.449	Adjusted R Square = 0.432		
Absorption					
(Constant)	.428	.260		1.645	.101
Distributive justice	-.025	.084	-.023	-.300	.765
Ethical leadership and management	.202	.100	.173	2.022	.044*
Service delivery innovation	.129	.075	.118	1.733	.084*
Strategic direction justice	.243	.074	.208	3.293	.001*
Interactional justice	.132	.073	.104	1.811	.071*
Informational Justice	.148	.099	.114	1.502	.134
Procedural justice	.095	.090	.080	1.050	.294
Diversity management justice	.005	.078	.004	.065	.949
Customer relations justice	.093	.088	.070	1.054	.293
	R=0.682	R Square =0.465	Adjusted R Square = 0.447		
* $p < 0.01$					

5. Discussion and implications

To date, there has been little research on organisational justice and work engagement within the context of a public service organisation. The reason for this may lie in the fact that both variables were studied in isolation to explain their relationships with other organisational outcomes and factors. An examination of the literature review indicates that both organisational justice and work engagement are positively associated to work performance, commitment, trust, retention, job satisfaction and employee wellness. The aim of this study was to explore the role of organisational justice on employees' levels of work engagement.

The results indicate that both the OJMI and the Utrecht UWES have acceptable levels of internal consistency within the multicultural context of the South African public service organisation. The results of the mean as the descriptive statistic indicates that employees of the public service organisation seem to have positive perception of all organisational justice dimensions; namely, interactional justice; customer relations; informational; strategic direction; service delivery and innovation; diversity management; procedural; ethical leadership and management and distributive justice. Similarly, the mean results of this sample indicated that the employees of the public service organisation seem to have high levels of work engagement in the dimensions, vigour, dedication and absorption.

The correlational analysis shows that there is a positive correlation between organisational justice dimensions and the work engagement dimensions, vigour, dedication and absorption. The relationship between organisational justice and vigour indicate that employees who have a positive perception of justice in their organisation are likely to show high levels of energy and mental resilience at work (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004; George, 2011; Schaufelli & Bakker, 2004). The results also indicate that employees who have a positive perception of justice in their organisation; are inclined to show high levels of dedication. In other words, the employees will demonstrate high levels of involvement in their work and they are likely to experience high levels of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and challenge in their roles (Halbesleben, 2011; Schaufelli *et al*, 2008). In addition, the relationship between organisational justice and absorption suggests that a positive perception of organisational justice is likely to influence employees' high levels of absorption at work. This indicates that the employees will show significant levels of concentration and they will be happily engrossed in their role (May *et al*, 2004; Bakker *et al*, 2011; Taris *et al*, 2010).

Regression analysis results indicate that work engagement outcomes can be predicted by organisational justice. Firstly, the results show that 52% of the variance in vigour is explained by the following organisational justice dimensions; namely, ethical leadership and management, service delivery innovation, strategic direction justice, interactional justice and informational justice. This implies that when employees in this context experience organisational justice in these dimensions, those employees may experience some increase in vigour. Secondly, the results indicate that the organisational justice dimensions that explain 43% of the variance in dedication are service delivery innovation, strategic direction justice and informational justice. Therefore, the results suggest that public service organisation employees who perceive organisational justice in service delivery innovation, strategic direction justice and informational justice are inclined to be dedicated and highly involved in their work. Lastly, the results shows that 44% of the variance in absorption is explained by the following organisational justice dimensions; namely, ethical leadership and management, service delivery innovation, strategic direction justice, and interactional justice. This implies that when employees experience organisational justice in these dimensions, those employees will display high levels of absorption in their work. While these findings provide new insight on the relationship between the variables organisational justice and work engagement; previous studies exploring similar constructs could not be found in support of these findings.

This study has several practical implications for employees and organisations. Firstly, these findings are noteworthy because it gives organisations inexpensive means of promoting their employees' work engagement levels. Secondly, practitioners and managers in public service organisations need to recognise organisational justice dimensions that influence employee work engagement levels. Lastly, organisations are able to develop relevant interventions to ensure positive perceptions of organisational justice; ultimately, this may help to create a more engaged workforce in the public service organisation.

6. Conclusions, limitation and recommendations for future research

This study aimed to provide insight into the role of organisational justice on employee's levels of work engagement. The purpose of this study was achieved because the results demonstrate the important role of organisational justice dimensions in explaining the level of employee work engagement in a public service organisation.

In terms of limitations, this study cannot be generalised to other organisational context other than the one from which data were gathered. The respondents of this study sample are from a single organisation in a specific public service organisation. Although, this approach reinforces the internal validity of this study; it nonetheless limits its external validity. In addition, using a cross-sectional design rather than a longitudinal design makes it impossible for us to establish a causal relationship between the variables being studied.

It is therefore recommended that future research should be conducted in a variety of organisational context in order to allow the results to be extrapolated to other context. In addition, future research using longitudinal studies would assist in establishing a causal relationship between organisational justice and work engagement.

References

- Bakker, A.B. & Demerouti, E. (2007). The job demands-resources model: State of the art. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 22, 309–328.
- Bakker, A.B.; Albrecht, S. L & Leiter, M.P. (2011). Key questions regarding work engagement. *European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology*, 20, 4 – 28.
- Bowles, D. & Cooper, C. (2012). *The high engagement work culture: Balancing me and we*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Bowen, D. E., Gilliland, S. W., & Folger, R. (1999). HRM and service justice: How being just with employees spills over to customers. *Organizational Dynamics*, 27, 7–23.
- Christian, M. S., Garza, A.S. & Slaughter, J.E. (2011). Work engagement: A quantitative review and test of its relations with task and contextual performance. *Personnel Psychology*, 64, 89 -139
- Colquitt, J. A. (2001). On the dimensionality of organizational justice: a construct validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 386–400.
- Cropanzano, R., Rupp, D. E., Mohler, C., J & Schminke, M. (2001). Three roads to organizational justice. *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management*, 20, 1–113.
- Cropanzano, R; Bowen, D. E., & Gilliland, W. (2007). The management of organizational justice. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, November, 34 -47.
- Cropanzano, R., Prehar, C. A., & Chen, P. Y. (2002). Using social exchange theory to distinguish procedural from interactional justice. *Group and Organizational Management*, 27, 324–351.
- Dorasamy, N. (2010). Enhancing an ethical culture through purpose –directed leadership for improved public service delivery: A case for South Africa. *African Journal of Business Management*, 4 (1), 56-64.
- Esterhuizen, W. (2008). Organisational justice and employee responses to employment equity. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. University of South Africa.
- Esterhuizen, W. & Martins, N. (2008). Organisational justice and employee responses to employment equity. *South African Journal of Labour Relations*, 32 (2), 65 – 85.
- Gaudet, M. C., Tremblay, M., & Doucet, O. (2014). Exploring the black box of the contingent reward leadership-performance relationship: The role of the perceived justice and emotional exhaustion. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 23 (6), 897 -914.

- George, J. M. (2011). The wider context, costs and benefits of work engagement. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 20*, 53 -59.
- Goldstein, S. M., Johnston, R., Duffy, J., & Rao, J. (2002). The service concept: the missing link in service design research? *Journal of Operations Management, 20*, 121–134.
- Greenberg, J. (1987). Reactions to procedural injustice in payment distributions: Do the means justify the ends? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 72*, 55–61.
- Halbesleben, J. R. (2011). The consequences of engagement: the good, the bad, and the ugly. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology, 20*, 68 - 73.
- Kahn, J. (2006). Factor analysis in counselling psychology research, training, and practice: principles, advances and applications. *The Counselling Psychologist, 34*-684.
- Kahn, W. A. (1990). Psychological conditions of personal engagement and engagement at work. *Academy of Management Journal, 33* (4), 692 – 724.
- King, S. F., & Burgess, T. F. (2008). Understanding success and failure in customer relationship management. *Industrial Marketing Management, 37*, 421–431.
- Kravina, L; Falco, A; De carlo, N.A & Andreassen, C.S. (2014). Workaholism and work engagement in the family: The relationship between parents and children as a risk factor. *European Journal of Work and Organisational Psychology, 23* (6), 875 – 883.
- Macey, V. H. & Schneider, B. (2008). The meaning of employee engagement. *Industrial and Organisational Psychology, 1*, 3 – 30.
- Magoshi, E., & Chang, E. (2009). Diversity management and the effects on employees' organizational commitment: Evidence from Japan and Korea. *Journal of World Business, 44*, 31–40.
- Marelli, A. F. (2011). Employee engagement and performance management in the federal sector. *Performance Improvement, 50* (5), 235 - 249.
- Maslach, C. & Leiter, M.P. (1997). *The Truth About Burnout: How Organizations Cause Personal Stress and What To Do About It*. Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, CA.
- May, D, Gilson, R. & Harter, L. (2004). The psychological conditions of meaningfulness, safety and availability and the engagement of the human spirit at work. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology, 1*, 3 – 30.
- Moorman, R. H. (1991). Relationship between organizational justice and organizational citizenship behaviors: Do fairness perceptions influence employee citizenship? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 76*, 845–55.
- Pilvinyte, M. (2013). Perceptions of organisational justice, restorative organisational justice, and their relatedness to perceptions of organisational attractiveness. Unpublished Masters Dissertation. University of Witwatersrand.
- Salanova, M., Agut, S. & Peiró, J.M. (2005). Linking organizational resources and work engagement to employee performance and customer loyalty: The mediating role of service climate. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*, 1217–1227.
- Schaufelli, W. B. & Bakker, A. B. (2003). *UWES- Utrecht work engagement scale: Test manual*. Utrecht University (Occupational Health Psychology Unit).
- Schaufelli, W. B. & Bakker, A. B. (2004). Job demands, job resources and their relationship with burnout, engagement: A multi-sample study. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour, 25*, 293 – 315.
- Schaufelli, W.B. & Salanova. M. (2007). Efficacy or inefficacy, that's the question: Burnout and engagement, and their relationships with efficacy beliefs. *Anxiety, Stress, & Coping, 20*, 177–196.

Schaufelli, W. B., Salanova, M., Gonzalez-Roma, V. & Bakker, A. B. (2002). The measurement of engagement and burnout: A two sample confirmatory factor analytic approach. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 3, 71 – 92.

Schaufelli, W. B., Taris, T. W. & Bakker, A. B. (2008). It takes two to tango: Workaholism is working excessively and working compulsively. In R. J. Burke & C. L. Cooper (Eds). *The long work hours culture: Causes, consequences and choices* (pp 203 – 225). Bingley, Emerald.

Shibaoka, M., Takade, M., Watanabe, M., Kojima, R., Kakinuma, M., Tanaka, K., & Kawakami, N. (2010). The development and validation of the Japanese version of the organisational justice scale. *Industrial Health*, 48, 66 - 73.

Shimanzu, A. & Schaufelli, W. B. (2009). Is workaholism good or bad for employee well-being? The distinctiveness of workaholism and work engagement among Japanese employees. *Industrial Health*, 47, 495 – 502.

Taris, T. W.; Schaufelli, W. B. & Shimanzu, A. (2010). The push and pull of work: the difference between workaholism and work engagement. In A. B. Bakker & M. P. Leiter (Eds). *Work engagement: A handbook of essential theory and research* (pp. 39 – 53). Hove: Psychology Press.

TerreBlanche, M., Durrheim, K., & Painter, D. (2006). *Research in practice: applied methods for the social sciences*. Cape Town: University of Cape Town Press.

SPSS Inc. (2006). SPSS version 14.0 for the Microsoft Windows platform. Chicago: SPSS Inc.

Van der Bank, L., Engelbrecht, A., & Stumpher, J. (2010). Perceived fairness of disciplinary procedures in the public sector: an exploratory study. *South African Journal of Human Resource Management*, 6(2), 1-8.

Welman, C., Kruger, F., & Mitchell, B. (2009). *Research methodology*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Werner, A. (2005). *Organizational behaviour: A contemporary South African perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.