

PERCEPTIONS OF INJUSTICE AND ALIENATION DYNAMICS WITHIN THE WORKPLACE

Nirmala Sookoo
nirmala_sookoo@yahoo.com

Criminology Unit, Department of Behavioural Sciences, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago

This study examined the relationship between perceptions of injustice and alienation dynamics within the public service in Trinidad. The two dimensions of organisational justice – procedural and distributive justice – were expected to predict alienation. In addition, the study explored the mediating role of disconfirmed expectations on the relationship between perceived organisational injustice and work alienation. Using multistage cluster sampling, 494 individuals between the ages of 18 and 65 years participated in the study. A series of Pearson correlation, regression and a path analysis were used in the study. The findings revealed that both distributive and procedural justice influenced alienation at the bivariate level of analysis. However, at the multivariate stage, only procedural justice had a direct effect on alienation. Disconfirmed expectations had a significant positive relationship with alienation. The path analysis indicated that disconfirmed expectations mediated the relationship between both dimensions of organisational justice and alienation. There was partial support of the proposed conceptual model.

Keywords: Procedural justice, distributive justice, alienation, disconfirmed expectations

Introduction

For profit reasons, numerous work organisations appear to be concerned with the impact workers have on their agency, rather than the reverse, that is, the impact that the workplace has upon their workers. However, they should be concerned as employees' behaviours and attitudes influence employee job performance. Thus, employers cannot risk their employees becoming alienated. Alienation often refers to feelings of despair, isolation, self-estrangement, meaningless and powerlessness (Blauener 1967). It also pertains to feelings of despair, anomie, isolation, anxiety, dissociation, loss of identity and a mind numbing experience (Allan 2012). Furthermore, this phenomenon is popularly seen as a key influence over work performance, intention to quit, job commitment, burn-out and loyalty to the organisation.

Alienation has been identified with a number of problems and negative consequences. These problems were found within the work organisation; however, it has wider social and psychological consequences. The unconstructive consequences of alienation identified within the workplace were; employee turnover, employee dissatisfaction, lower worker commitment, absenteeism, employee sabotage (Hodson and Sullivan 2011), lower productivity (Abraham 2000), and aggression amongst individuals, and groups (Freudenberger 1980), and employee burnout, which further decreased workers' productivity (Abraham 2000). Employees who were victims of alienation were more likely to care little about their jobs, expend little energy, work

for external or instrumental rewards (salary) and more likely to quit their jobs (Abraham 2000). Agarawal (1993) also claimed that alienated employees showed an increase of undesirable work attitudes and behaviours. Symptoms of these negative attitudes and behaviours identified by Hodson and Sullivan (2011) included absenteeism, sabotage and theft which contributed towards lowered worker commitment to the workplace, engagement in work, and a decline in overall productivity.

Although, alienation is seen as a negative influence over work consequences, there is limited research available in Caribbean with the exception of one study in Cuba (Banai and Reisel 2003). At the same time, it has been recognised as a source of concern within the region. There are poorly motivated and disaffected personnel within the public service in Barbados. There has been an increase in

“...customary, practice of avoiding, delaying, stalling, dithering and hesitating. Avoiding facing or dealing with certain challenging situation, delaying key decisions or disposal of current or pending work, avoiding dealing with certain personnel or certain unhelpful propensities, avoiding responding to written or verbal communications” (Khan and Charles-Soverall 2007:176).

Thus, the study seeks to address this research void and therefore the intention is to investigate the influences of employee alienation in the public service in Trinidad.

Organisational justice is one of the dynamic factors which influence alienation. In this study two types of organisational justice were examined; distributive (which is concerned about a particular outcome, such as income) and procedural (which is concerned about the fairness in reaching a decision). When employees believe that they are treated fairly in each aspect, they are predisposed to demonstrate more positive attitudes and behaviours.

Although, workers' perceptions regarding organisational justice are imperative, a few studies have focused on this topic (Lee 2000). There have been numerous studies on the effect of organisational justice upon worker job satisfaction (Cohen-Charash and Spector 2001) and worker commitment (Tallman, Phipps, and Matheson 2009; Aryee, Budhwar, and Chen 2002), yet there are only two studies which directly investigated the impact of organisational justice upon alienation (Sulu, Ceynan and Kaynak 2010; Ceylan 2011).

Although organisational justice may be an important variable in determining alienation at the workplace, one should not to forget that workers enter the workplace with expectations, and confirmation or disconfirmation of their expectancies can determine alienation. White collar jobs were often seen as promising success based on materialistic acquisition, autonomy and opportunities to career development. If these expectations are not confirmed, workers experience alienation (Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang 1981). However, not all employees may have expectations of career success and fair treatment and this could reduce the impact that organisational justice has upon alienation (Kanungo 1990). Therefore, this suggests that disconfirmed expectation has a mediating effect between organisational justice and alienation.

Literature Review

Alienation of the workforce emerged as a problem during the era of industrialisation (Marx 1959) and continues to permeate the workforce in contemporary society. Marx (1959) claimed that the worker lacked control over the labour process, and experienced powerlessness and dissociation from the inner self. Workers have no control over the conditions of their work and the commodity they produce. Therefore, they have limited ability to develop their potential as creative human beings. Thus, work becomes *external to the worker*, work is no longer an element of his/her being and he/she denies him/herself and feels a sense of misery.

Employees who were victims of alienation were more likely to care little about their jobs, expend little energy, work for external or instrumental rewards (salary) and more likely to quit their jobs (Abraham 2000). Agarawal (1993) also claimed that alienated employees showed an increase of undesirable work attitudes and behaviours. As such, alienation is often seen as an agent of dehumanisation, as the person becomes an object who merely responds to work rather than seeing work as a fulfilment of the self.

There is a plethora of antecedent factors known to influence alienation, such as bureaucracy, job characteristics, and work locus of control, worker centrality, technology and demographic variables. However, this research is limited to organisational justice and disconfirmed expectations.

Organisational Justice

Organisational justice is a multidimensional concept inclusive of many characteristics such as, payment, treatment of employees and managers, and the procedures by which rewards are allocated. However, this study is limited to understanding the effects that distributive and procedural justice has upon alienation.

According to Longres and Scalon (2005, 448), distributive justice refers to the approach used to determine how “*economic and social goods and services are distributed in a society*” and Colton (2002) claimed that it concentrates on the just allocation of income or rewards. Distributive justice defines perceived fairness of decision outcomes which includes pay, bonus or promotion workers obtained in an exchange relationship with the workplace. Distributive justice is judged by evaluating and comparing the outcome to a standard or rule and/or to the outcome by a referent, such as a co-worker or past experience. Employees perceived distributive injustice when rewards do not match investment (Greenberg and Colquitt 2005). Procedural justice is the seeming equality of the process of regulating distributive rewards such as pay, schedules, evaluations and promotions (Thibaut and Walker 1975) and the voice afforded to workers in the allocation process (Folger and Konovsky 1989). Procedural justice focuses on the amount of input that the organisation seeks from their employees, and the ability of employees to challenge decisions made in the organisation (Folger and Konovsky 1989). The implicit difference between distributive and procedural justice is that the former concept concentrates on ends and the later focuses on means (Lambert et al. 2005).

These two dimensions of organisational justice have been associated with employees’ attitudes and behaviours such as satisfaction, and intention to quit (Gilliland and Chan 2001). Low levels of organisational justice can influence counterproductive work behaviour, withdrawal, (Khan et

al. 2009), outrage (Greenberg 1993) and retaliation (Skarlicki and Folger 1997). Such actions can be considered consequences of employee alienation.

Although organisation justice has been associated with work outcomes, little empirical research exists on the nature and the magnitude of the relationship between organisational justice and workplace alienation (Ceylan 2011). Most empirical investigations have narrowed their focus on work commitment and job satisfaction and only two empirical articles were found which explicitly examined the relationship between organisational justice and workplace alienation (Sulu, Ceylan and Kaynak 2010; Ceylan 2011). In a study on work commitment of 383 health care workers in private and public hospitals in Istanbul, Turkey, Sulu, Ceylan and Kaynak (2010) found that both distributive and procedural justice were associated with alienation (measured at two dimensions powerlessness and social isolation). Distributive injustice was significantly correlated with powerlessness with ($r = .271, p < .01$), and social isolation ($r = .267, p < .01$). The r values with their associated p -values have illustrated that distributive justice had a significant correlation with alienation. Procedural justice was also significantly positively related to powerlessness ($r = .480, p < .01$), and social isolation ($r = .472, p < .01$). The results indicated that as measures of perceived organisational injustice increases, there was an associated increase in alienation.

Ceylan (2011) found that both distributive and procedural justice were associated with powerlessness and social isolation amongst health workers in Turkey. A significant positive relationship was found between Distributive injustice and powerlessness ($r = .264, p < .01$), and social isolation ($r = .259, p < .01$). Procedural injustice was significantly positively related with powerlessness ($r = .474, p < .01$), and social isolation ($r = .478, p < .01$). These results from the correlation coefficients were similar to the previous study by Sulu, Ceylan and Kaynak (2010). However, Ceylan and Kaynak (2010) claimed that procedural injustice was more important in explaining the two dimensions of alienation, he further explained that when workers experience distributive injustice, they examine if the allocation process is just.

However, a multivariate analysis of alienation completed by Nair and Vohra (2010) found that both distributive and procedural justice was insignificant in predicting variance in alienation of information technology specialists in India. However, they did not consider extraneous variables that could have impacted upon the phenomenon such as power-distance and the socialisation and cultural beliefs of people in India. It is essential to note that the culture of India is different from Western countries in which organisational justice was found to be significant in producing variance in job satisfaction, commitment to work and intention to leave. India is widely regarded as high power-distance (Ralston et al. 1993). In a high power-distance nation, employees have the general belief that they should play the role of sub-ordinates and take instructions (Hofstede 1980) and therefore they may not expect to get involved in decisions implicating the allocation of resources and rewards.

Although most of the research have focused on organisational justice and work commitment or job satisfaction, the literature is still significant as alienation significantly reduces commitment and job satisfaction (Hodson and Sullivan 2008). Research has found that distributive and procedural justice predicted intention to stay, job satisfaction and worker commitment to both the work organisation and the supervisor (Folger and Konovsky 1989). According to McFarlin and Sweeney (1992) distributive justice is associated with attention to stay and job satisfaction, whilst procedural justice has been associated with supervisor and organisational commitment.

Dailey and Delaney (1992) found that both dimensions of organisational justice are antecedents in job dissatisfaction and intent to stay. Even outside Western societies such as Saudi Arabia dimensions of organisational justice are seen as predictors of organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Ali and Ali 2010; Elamin and Alomaim 2011). In a study of 366 school teachers in Pakistan, Zaman, Ali and Ali (2010) found that both distributive and procedural justice accounted for the variance computed in job satisfaction, commitment and turnover.

Disconfirmed Expectations as a Mediator

Although organisational justice has been shown to significantly influence work related attitudes and behaviours, there are other influential antecedent variables, such as disconfirmed expectations. Workers may not necessarily perceive alienation if they did not expect organisational justice. For example, results from knowledge workers in India, reported that employee alienation was not predicted by organisational justice (Nair and Vohra 2011).

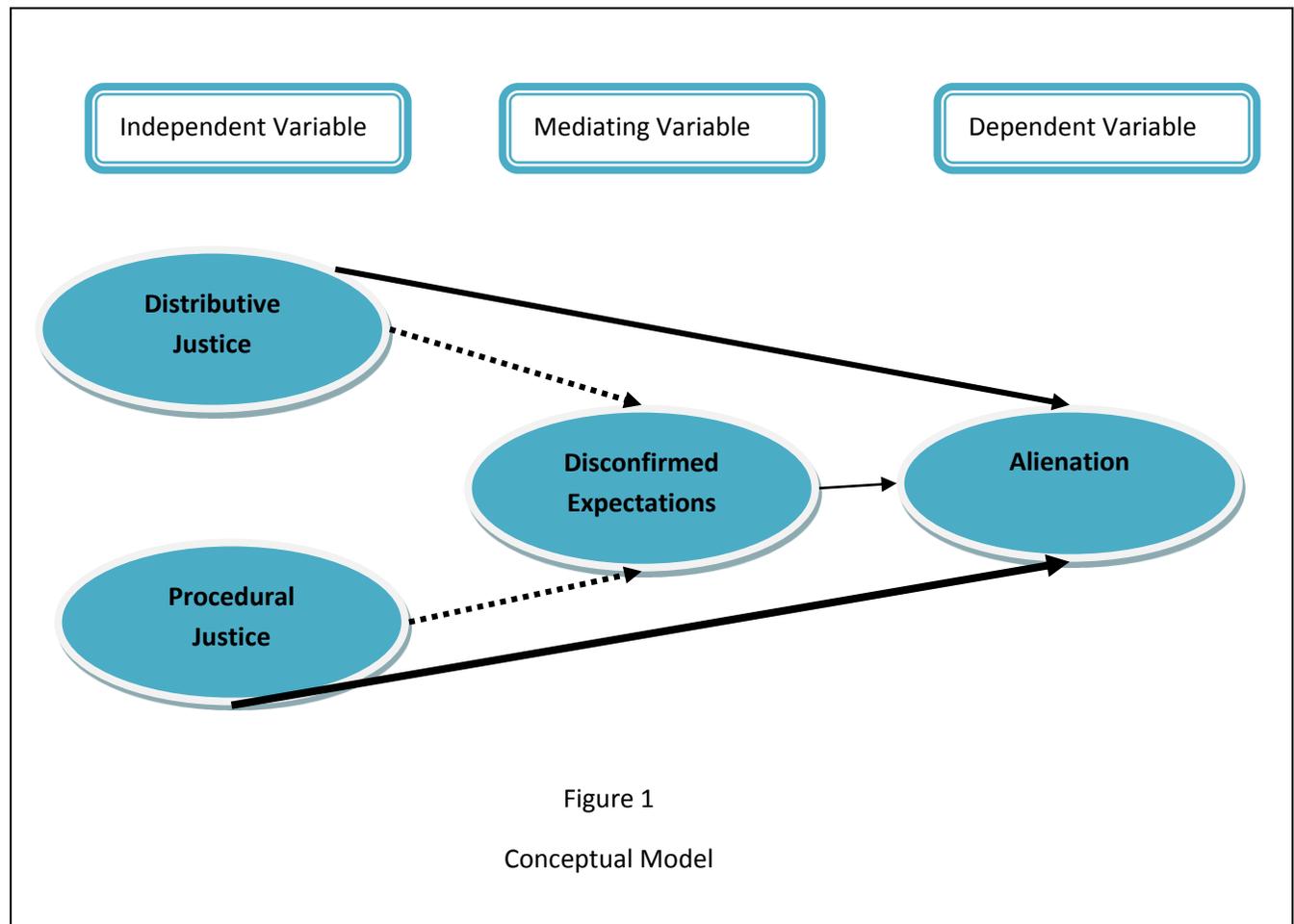
Disconfirmed expectations is taken from the expectancy theory, which proposes that employees' expectations of the outcome of their performance influences their behaviour and attitudes at work, such as employee burn-out, work satisfaction, work involvement and employee alienation. Expectancy theory claims that an individual will choose to perform or behave in a particular manner because of what they expect or anticipate. Therefore, the expected result is what influences the individual's behaviour (Vroom 1964, Chaing 2006). In short, the motivation of a particular behaviour is impacted upon the attractiveness of the result. Furnham (2005) suggested that people are motivated to work due to their expectancies. Alternatively, when workers' expectations are disconfirmed in the workplace, poor work outcomes are the result, such as alienation (Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang 1981), burnout (Fredenberger 1980), disillusion (Sarason 1977) and demotivation (Furnham 2005).

Disconfirmed expectations and alienation have been directly investigated. Results reported by Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang (1981), Burke and Deszc (1982) and Lang (1985) have showed that high expectations can often lead to disillusionment and perceived personal and social alienation. Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang (1981) from their study on alumni and evening MBA students reported that disconfirmed expectations had a significant positive relationship with personal alienation ($r = .59, p < .01$) and with social alienation ($r = .52, p < .01$) among the alumni. Amongst the MBA students, disconfirmed expectations had a significant positive correlation with personal alienation ($r = .53, p < .01$) and social alienation ($r = .44, p < .01$). Also, it was seen that alienation scores increased as the level of education increased. Burke and Deszca (1982) from their research on senior managerial and managerial staff found that disconfirmed expectation was positively correlated with personal alienation ($r = .31, p < .05$), social alienation ($r = .25, p < .05$), personal and negative work experiences ($r = .24, p < .05$).

The review of the literature regarding disconfirmed expectations and alienation revealed that high expectations whether internally or externally imposed could lead to feelings of disillusion, burnout, lower job involvement, demotivation and personal and social alienation. Disconfirmed expectations is an important variable when examining alienation and can act as mediating variable in understanding the relationship between structural variables and alienation (Nair 2010; Nair and Vohra 2011).

Research Model and Hypotheses

In the light of the explanations provided in the literature, it is expected that the two dimensions of organisational justice would predict alienation. In addition, disconfirmed expectations were incorporated as a mediating variable in this study to investigate whether it mediated perceived organisational injustice and work alienation (see figure 1). The conceptual model is presented in figure 1, and is followed by the hypotheses.



The theoretical model illustrates the direction of the relationships, in which the two dimensions of organisational justice simultaneously influences the mediating and criterion variable. As such, the independent variables can effect alienation either directly or indirectly through their effect upon the mediating variable.

Hypotheses

Research has shown that distributive and procedural justice are determinants in work outcomes (Sulu and Ceylan 2010; Ceylan 2011). When employees perceive that they are treated unfairly, the key outcome is negative emotions at work (Latham and Pinder 2005). Therefore, it hypothesised that:

H_{1a}: Distributive justice influences alienation of public servants in Trinidad.

H_{1b}: Procedural justice predicts alienation of public sector employees.

Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang (1981) reported that disconfirmed expectations were associated with personal and social alienation amongst white collar employees. In this research, it is therefore proposed that disconfirmed expectation will mediate the relationship between organisational justice and alienation. Therefore, it is hypothesised that:

H₂: Disconfirmed expectations affect employee alienation.

H₃: Disconfirmed expectations mediate the relationship between organisational justice (both distributive and procedural) and alienation of public service employees.

Methodology

Sample

The study used primary data collected by the main researcher. The data were collected from employees from 11 randomly selected Ministries. A total of 494 persons between the ages of 18 and 65 years participated in the survey. The sample size was based upon Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula for determining sample size. The given population of public servants in Trinidad was 27,399 (Mori report 2008), with .05 margin of error and 95% confidence interval, a sample size of 379 was needed to normally represent the population. However to compensate for non-responses, 600 questionnaires were distributed and 494 were returned. Thus, the response rate was 82.3%.

Employees were sampled using the multistage stage cluster sample design. The clusters were defined by the various government ministries. The entire procedure was completed in steps, the total population was divided in naturally occurring groups (ministries) and then subdivided (into offices) and then the employees within these offices were invited to participate in the study.

Measures

A closed ended questionnaire containing 106 items was utilised in exploring factors affecting alienation. Before initialisation of the questionnaire, employees were given instructions and the assurance of their anonymity and confidentiality. Likert scales were used for all measurements, from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5).

In this present research, alienation was measured in terms of self-estrangement/disassociation and disengagement from work. The alienation scale utilised for this particular study was developed using a combination of Nair and Vohra's (2009), MaddiKobasa and Hoover's (1979) alienation scale items, as well as self-constructed items. Five out of eight questions were adopted from Nair and Vohra's alienation scale which measured alienation by testing work enjoyment, boredom, work as a chore, estrangement and the inability to reach one's goals at work. The entire scale developed by Nair and Vohra (2009) was not used and the author selectively removed three items because these items had factor loading below .70. The factor loading of the remaining five questions used in the questionnaire were between .75 and .81.

To measure alienation, a ten item scale developed by Maddi, Kobasa and Hoover (1979) and adapted by Hirschfeld and Fields (2002) was utilised. Three statements from the scale were used; these statements sought to measure perceptions of fatalism, resignation at work and the extent to which the employee maintains a low level of positive feelings toward the world of work. The reliability of the scale was measured by Hirschfeld and Field (2000) and the cronbach alpha was calculated at 0.80.

Furthermore, three additional items were included to the two aforementioned scales. These items questioned employees about whether they found their job unfulfilling, boring and if he/she intended to leave. In total, there were eleven items measuring alienation. The reliability of the scale was tested using cronbach alpha test, which reported a score of .95.

Disconfirmed expectations

The measurement for disconfirmed expectations was created for this present research. The scale was fashioned using the logic of the disconfirmed expectations theory which states that worker alienation is as a result of the discrepancy between prior expectations and actual outcomes (Oliver 1980). Workers expect a good salary, work security, recognition, autonomy, expression, diversity, responsibility, fair distribution of rewards and protocol in observing the distribution of rewards. The cronbach alpha for this scale was .92.

Organisational Justice

The items measuring distributive justice were adapted from Price and Mueller (1986). The scale questioned participants if they were fairly rewarded considering their responsibilities, level of education and stresses of the job. Fields (2002, 172), reported that the cronbach alphas ranged from .75 to .94. For this study, the cronbach alpha was .92.

Procedural justice was measured using four out of six items developed by Niehoff and Moorman (1993). Items on this scale were based on how fair manager decisions were, if workers were allowed to challenge decisions, about employers' concerns of the rights of the employee and the removal of personal biases in the decision making process. Results from Niehoff and Moorman (1993) reported a cronbach alpha of 0.85; therefore there was evidence of high reliability. Additionally, a score of .83 was attained in this investigation.

Statistical Procedures

To test the predictors of alienation in the public service in Trinidad, a number of statistical procedures were used. Initially, descriptive statistics were calculated, followed by the bivariate statistical tests, which included correlation and regression. Subsequently, multivariate tests such as, multiple regression tests and recursive path analysis were employed to test the theoretical model. The general test for mediating variables in a conceptual model is a path analysis (Olobatuyi 2006). Researchers popularly use path analysis, a form of Structural Equation Modelling to investigate and analyse conceptual models which include a series of paths (Chrisler and McCreary 2010). In path analysis, the researcher uses a series of multiple regression analyses to estimate the influence of the independent variable on the dependent variable while controlling the effect of the mediator (Whitley and Kite 2013).

Results and Analysis

A series of pearson correlation and regression tests were used to test the hypotheses 1, 2 and 3. Distributive justice was negatively correlated with employee alienation (see table 1), $r = -.233$ ($p < .001$). Additionally, the regression coefficient shown that distributive justice significantly predicted variance in alienation, $r^2 = .054$ ($p < .001$). Thus, the more workers perceived distributive injustice, the greater their feelings of alienation.

Table 1. Model Summarising Regression Coefficients for Alienation as the Predictor Variables

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error
1. Distributive Justice	-.233	.054	.52	.038
2. Procedural Justice	-.379	.144	.142	.043
3. Disconfirmed Expectations	.521	.272	.270	.041

Predictor Variables: Distributive justice, Procedural Justice, Disconfirmed Expectation
 Dependent Variable: Alienation

There was a negative association between procedural justice and employee alienation, $r = -.379$ ($p < .001$) and $r^2 = .144$ ($p < .001$) respectively. The independent variable accounted for 14.4% of the variance in alienation scores. Thus, when public servants believed that procedural justice was reduced, there was an increased in alienation. The results have shown that both distributive justice and procedural justice were both significant independent predictors of alienation.

Using multiple regression, the two dimensions of organisational justice and alienation had a total r of $.386$ ($p < .001$) and r^2 of $.149$ (table 2).

Table 2. Model Summary of the Effects of Organisation Justice on Alienation

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.386	.149	.145

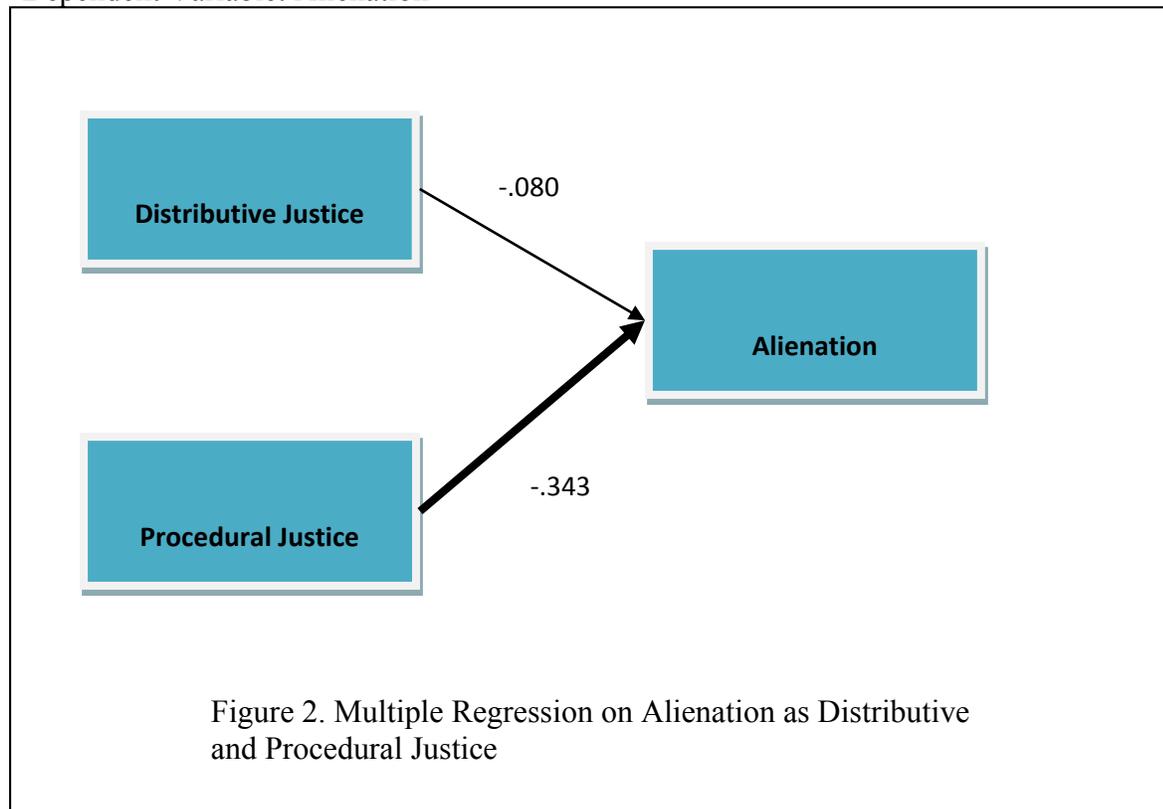
Predictor: Distributive Justice; Procedural Justice
 Dependent Variable: Alienation

In table 4 which summarises the values of multiple regression equation for alienation, there were negative relationships between each of the predictors and alienation. For this model, procedural justice; $t(484) = -7.307$ ($p < .001$) was the only significant predictor of alienation. Distributive justice had a β value of $-.080$ and procedural justice had a β value of $.343$. Thus, the relationship between procedural justice and alienation was stronger and more significant than the relationship between distributive justice and alienation.

Table 3. Coefficients for Alienation as Predicted by Distributive Justice and Procedural Justice

	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	4.502	.150		29.963	.000		
Distributive Justice	-.069	.040	-.080	-1.714	.087	.803	1.246
Procedural Justice	-.348	.048	-.343	-7.307	.000	.803	1.246

Independent Variable: Distributive Justice, Procedural Justice
 Dependent Variable: Alienation



The third hypothesis which sought to measure the influence of mediator variable on the criterion was tested via both correlation and regression. There was a positive correlation between disconfirmed expectations and employee alienation, $r = -.521$ ($p < .001$). Furthermore, $r^2 = .272$ ($p < .001$). Consequently, when public sector employees felt that their prior expectations of the job were not met they experienced higher levels of alienation.

The final hypothesis proposed that disconfirmed expectations would mediate the relationship between both dimensions of organisational justice and alienation. The theoretical model was tested by means of a recursive path analysis, which is a decomposition of multiple regression analysis (Olobatuyi 2006). There were two layers in multiple regression analysis:

1. Layer one consisted of disconfirmed expectations as the criterion and distributive and procedural justice as the independent variables.
2. Layer two comprised of alienation as the outcome and distributive and procedural justice as the predictors.

Layer One

According to Baron and Kenny (1986) there are a number of conditions that must be fulfilled in performing mediation tests. First the independent variables must be related to the dependent variable. Both distributive justice ($\beta = -.149, p < .001$) and procedural justice ($\beta = -.299, p < .000$) had significant influences upon disconfirmed expectations (see table 5). Both predictors correlated with disconfirmed expectations ($r = .389, p < .000$). Also, the multiple regression test revealed that distributive and procedural justice accounted for 15.1% of the variance in the outcome ($r^2 = .151, p < .000$).

Table 4. Multiple Regression Coefficients for Disconfirmed Expectations

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.389 ^a	.151	.148

Predictors: Distributive Justice, Procedural Justice
 Dependent Variable: Disconfirmed Expectations

Table 5. Multiple Regression Coefficients for Disconfirmed Expectations

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	B	Std. Error	Beta				
1 (Constant)	4.605	.140		32.820	.000		
Distributive Justice	-.120	.037	-.149	-3.214	.001	.806	1.240
Procedural Justice	-.286	.044	-.299	-6.446	.000	.806	1.240

Predictors: Distributive Justice, Procedural Justice
 Dependent Variable: Disconfirmed Expectations

Layer Two

The two components of organisational justice as well as disconfirmed expectations correlated with alienation ($r = .559, p < .001$). From the multiple regression analysis on disconfirmed expectations, the independent variables accounted for 31.2% of the variance in the criterion (see table 6).

Table 6. Multiple Regression of Alienation as Predicted by Organisational Justice and Disconfirmed Expectations

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	.559 ^a	.312	.308

Predictors: Distributive, Procedural Justice, Disconfirmed Expectations
 Dependent Variable: Alienation

It was also noted that procedural justice ($\beta = -.208, p < .001$) and disconfirmed expectations ($\beta = -.411, p < .001$) had significant influences upon alienation. Thus, another assumption of mediation tests was met, in that the mediator must be related to the dependent variables (Baron and Kelly 1996).

Table 7. Multiple Regression Coefficients on Alienation as Predicted by Distributive, Procedural Justice and Disconfirmed Expectations

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	2.348	.241		9.736	.000		
Distributive Justice	-.015	.036	-.017	-.408	.683	.787	1.270
Procedural Justice	-.210	.045	-.208	-4.717	.000	.740	1.352
Disconfirmed Expectations	.467	.044	.441	10.718	.000	.852	1.174

Predictors: Distributive Justice, Procedural Justice, Disconfirmed Expectations
 Dependent Variable: Alienation

Path Analysis

The final hypothesis was partially supported since all the assumptions of the conceptual model were not met. The first assumption is that both distributive and procedural justice would influence disconfirmed expectations, which were met. The second assumption was that disconfirmed expectation would effect alienation, which was met. The third assumption was that both distributive and procedural justice would influence alienation, which was partially met, as only procedural justice had a significant effect upon alienation. The final assumption was that disconfirmed expectation would mediate the relation between distributive justice and alienation and procedural justice and alienation, both which were met. Figure 3 illustrates the path analysis.

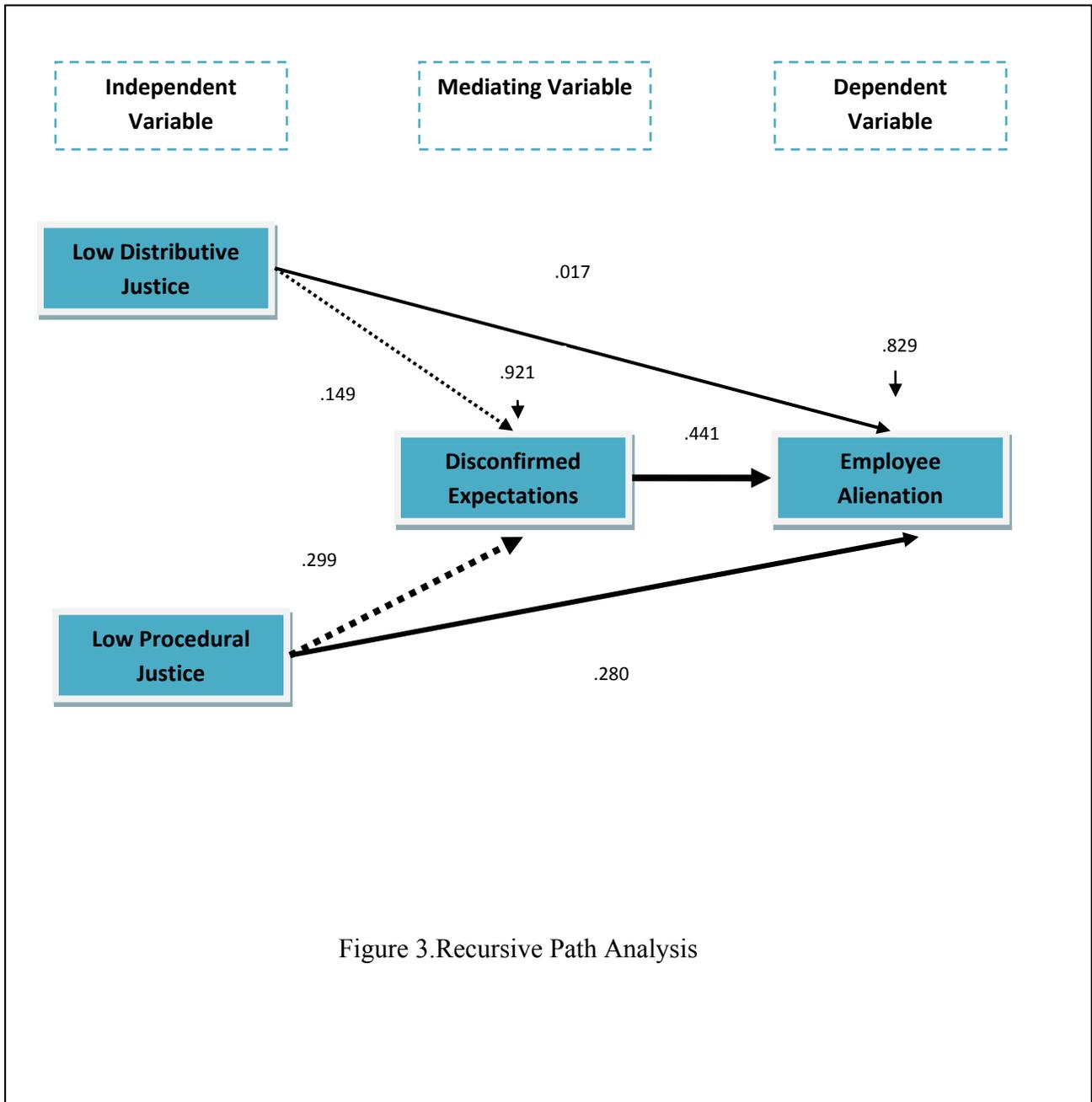


Figure 3. Recursive Path Analysis

In examining the path diagram it was noted that:

1. Both procedural and distributive justice had direct influences upon the mediator.
2. The mediator variable had a direct effect upon the dependent variable.
3. Procedural justice and disconfirmed expectations had direct effects on employee alienation. Conversely distributive justice had no direct influence upon alienation.
4. Although distributive justice had no direct influence upon alienation, through its direct effect upon disconfirmed expectation, it had indirect effect upon alienation. This was calculated by multiplying the direct effect (β – standardised beta weights) of the independent variable upon the mediator by the direct effect (β – standardised beta weights) of the mediator on the dependent variable (Everitt and Dunn 1991). Following this equation, low decision making had an indirect effect of (low distributive justice \rightarrow disconfirmed expectations \rightarrow alienation = $.149 \times .441 = .066$).
5. Additionally, low procedural justice had a direct effect upon alienation ($\beta = .280$). Nonetheless, there was an indirect effect. The indirect effect –was calculated at $.123$ (low procedural justice \rightarrow disconfirmed expectations \rightarrow alienation = $.280 \times .441$).
6. Thus, an estimate of the total effect that disconfirmed expectations had on employee alienation was $.63$ ($.066 + .123 + .441$). The total effect was calculated by adding the direct effect of the mediator on the dependent variable plus all the significant indirect effects that the independent variables had on the criterion through the mediator (Everitt and Dunn 1991).

Discussion

The present research sought to determine sources of alienation among public servants in Trinidad. This research is one of the two studies conducted in Caribbean using Western management theory and methodology. Additionally, the findings of the study offered a preliminary insight into employees' experiences of alienation.

At the bivariate stage of analysis, both distributive and procedural justice influenced alienation. However, at the multivariate stage, only procedural justice had a direct impact upon the criterion. Ceylan (2011) reported that procedural justice was a more robust predictor of employee alienation. He explained that when workers experience distributive injustice, they examine if the distribution process is just. If they observe that the distribution process is inequitable, they may perhaps experience higher levels of powerlessness and social isolation. Employees are more disposed to acknowledge decisions when they believe that decision procedures are fair (Korsgaard et al. 1995). Moreover, Lowenthal (1980) claimed that there cannot be just rewards devoid of fair procedures. Therefore, perceived distributive injustice is not generally the more effective form of injustice but rather procedural justice, which the results of the present study reported.

Another important finding in this research is that disconfirmed expectations had a significant positive relationship with alienation amongst employees and it predicted 27.2 % variance in alienation scores. These results were consistent with research findings which targeted employee alienation (Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang 1981; Burke and Deszca 1982). Employees who had high expectations whether imposed internally or externally (Sarason 1977) were more likely to be disillusioned and alienated when their expectations were disconfirmed in the workplace. Disconfirmed expectations had the highest correlation and regression coefficients ($r = .521$, $r^2 =$

.272) and thus indicated that it was a robust predictor of alienation. Perhaps, employees have more expectations that work could fulfil their intrinsic and extrinsic needs and when those expectations are not met, they become alienated. Also, with the expansion of tertiary education (Korman, Wittig-Berman and Lang 1981; Lang 1985), the expectations of workers are being increased. Employees may expect more autonomy, diversity, recognition and rewards and once these expectations are not met there are heightening rates of alienation.

The results from the path analysis revealed that both procedural justice and disconfirmed expectations had direct effects upon alienation. Although distributive justice had no direct effect on alienation, there was an indirect effect through its significant direct impact upon disconfirmed expectations. Moreover, disconfirmed expectations mediated the relationship between both dimensions of organisational justice and alienation. Thus, the conceptual model was partially supported. Although, most of the assumptions of the theoretical model were met, the results have their limitations. Most of the variance in both disconfirmed expectations and alienation was not accounted for. Thus, there were other variables both within and external to the work organisation which predict alienation. Possible predictors could include bureaucracy, job characteristics, worker centrality and work locus of control (Aiken and Hage 1966; Nair and Vohra 2011).

Conclusion

In this research paper, public sector employees were the units of analysis. The research found that work organisations with low levels of organisational justice had alienated employees. Additionally, workers who failed to have met their expectations were also alienated. Furthermore, disconfirmed expectations mediated the relationship between organisational justice and alienation. Not only were the hypotheses supported, but the measures adopted from Western scales were highly reliable within the local context.

Additionally, this research adds to the body of knowledge about employee alienation. According to Heinz (1991), there is a fading romance with the idea of alienation. Also, in the Caribbean, there is little research dedicated to the phenomenon with the exception of Banai and Reisel's (2003) research in Cuba. The research indicated that the work institution contains dimensions that explained employee alienation, such as organisational justice. This was consistent with the existing body of research in organisational sociology, management and public administration, in which the structural mechanisms, such as, bureaucracy, technology and job characteristics influence alienation.

Author Bio: Nirmala Sookoo is a PhD student in Criminology and Criminal Justice System in the Department of Behavioural Sciences, University of the West Indies, St Augustine Campus and has a Masters in Sociology. She recently co-authored a book chapter with Dylan Kerrigan entitled "White Collar Crime in Trinidad" in the edited collection by Seepersad, Randy and An-Marie Bissessar, *Gangs in the Caribbean*. Her research specialisation includes sociology of workplace, white collar crime, poverty, and quantitative methodology. Additionally she tutors and guest lectures at the University of the West Indies and was a research assistant for four years.

REFERENCES:

- Agarwal, Sanjeev. 1993. "Influence of Formalization on Role Stress, Organisational Commitment, and Work alienation of Salesperson: A Cross-national Comparative Study." *Journal of International Business Studies* 24 (4): 715-739.
- Aiken, Micheal and Jerald Hage. 1966. "Organisational Alienation: A Comparative Analysis." *American Sociological Review* 31(4): 497-507.
- Aslam, Rabia, Sadaf Shumaila, ShamaSadaqal, Hira Bilal and Mehwish Initizar. 2012. Organizational Justice as a Predictor of Job Satisfaction among Teachers: A Case Study on University of Punjab." Proceedings of 2nd Annual International Conference on Business Management. Lahore.28-29th March 2012.
- Aryee, S., P.S Budhwar, and Z.X Chen. 2002. "Trust as a Mediator of the Relationship between Organisational Justice and Work Outcomes: Test of a Social Exchange Model." *Journal of Organisational Behavior* 23, 267–285.
- Banai, Mosche and William Reisel. 2003. "A Test of Control – Alienation Theory Among Cubans." *Management Research* 1 (3): 243-252.
- Burke, Ronald J. and Eugene Deszca. 1982. "Preferred Organisational Climates of Type A Individuals." *Journal of Vocational Behavioural* 21 (1): 50-59.
- Ceylan, Adnan. 2011. "Organisational Injustice and Work Alienation." Modified April 1 2011. <http://www.faqs.org/periodicals/201104/2392749441.html>
- Chrisier, Joan C., and Donald R.McCreary. 2010. *Handbook of Gender Research in Psychology*. New York: Springer Science and Business Media 2010.
- Cohen-Charash, Yochi, and Paul E. Spector. 2001. "The Role of Justice in Organisations: A Meta-Analysis." *Organisational Behaviour and Human Decision Processes* 86 (2): 278-232.
- Colquitt, Jason A, Donald E. Conlon, Michael J. Wesson, Christopher O.L.H. Porter, and Yee K Ng. 2001. "Justice at the Millennium: a Meta-analytic Review of 25 years of Organisational Justice Research." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 86 (3): 425-445.
- Elamin, Abdullah and Naser Alomaim. 2011. "Does Organisational Justice Influence Job Satisfaction and Self Perceived Performance in Saudi Arabia Work Environment." *International Management Review* 7 (1): 39-49.
- Elanain, H.M.A. 2009. "Job Characteristics, Work Attitudes and Behaviours in a Non-Western Context: Distributive justice as a Mediator." *Journal of Management Development* 28 (5): 457 – 477.
- Folger, Robert and Mary A. Konovsky. 1989. "Effects of Procedural and Distributive Justice on Reactions to Pay Raise Decisions." *Academy of Management Journal* 32 (1): 115130.

Fried, Jacob, Morris Weitman, and Milton K. Davis. 1972. "Man-Machine Interaction and Absenteeism." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 56(5): 428-429.

Freudenberger, Hebert J. 1980. *Burn-Out: The High Cost of High Achievement*. Garden City: Anchor.

Furnham, Adrian. 2005. *The Psychology of Behaviour at Work: the Individual in the Organisation*. New York: Routledge.

Gilliland, Stephen W and David Chan. 2001. "Justice in Organisations: Theory, Methods, and Applications." *Handbook of Industrial, Work, and Organisational Psychology* 2: 143-165.

Greenberg Jerrold S. and Jason A. Colquitt. 2005. *Handbook of Organisational Behavior*. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hodson, Randy, and Sullivan, 2008. Theresa. *Social Organisation of Work*. Belmont: Wadsworth.

Hofstede, Geert. 1991. *Culture and Organisation: Software of the Mind*. London: McGraw-Hill.

Khan, Adul, Jean Marie Perretti, and Samina Quratulain. 2009. "Envy and Counterproductive French-speaking HR/OB Research Scholarly Association, Toulouse, France, September 9–11, 2009. Behaviors: Is Fairness Always Preferred." Paper presented at the 20th AGRH Conference of the

Korman, Abraham K. and Rhoda W. Korman. 1980. *Career Success/Personal Failure*. Prentice-Hall: Englewood Cliffs.

Korman, Abraham. K., Ursula U. Wittig-Berman, and Dorothy Lang. 1981. "Career Success and Personal Failure: Alienation in Professionals and Managers." *Academy of Management Journal* 24(2): 342-360.

Lambert, Eric G., Terry Cluse-Tolar, and Nancy L. Hogan. 2007. "This Job is Killing Me: The Impact of Job Characteristics of Correctional Staff Job Stress." *Applied Psychology in Criminal Justice* 3 (2): 117-142.

Lang, Dorothy. 1985. "Preconditions for Three Types of Alienation in Young Managers and Professionals." *Journal of Occupational Behavior* 6 (3): 171-182.

Lee, H.R. 2000. *An Empirical Study of Organisational Justice as a Mediator of the Relationships among Leader-Member Exchange and Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment, and Turnover Intentions in the Lodging Industry*. Virginia: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.

Longres, John. And Edward Scalon. 2001. "Social Justice and the Research Curriculum." *Journal of Social Work Education* 37 (3): 447-463.

Marx, Karl. 1959. *Economic and Philosophical Manuscripts*. Translated by Martin Mulligan. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

McFarlin, Dean and Paul Sweeney. 1992. "Distributive and Procedural Justice as Predictors of Satisfaction with Personal and Organisational Outcomes." *Academy of Management Journal*.35 (3): 626 – 637.

Mori Caribbean. 2008. Trinidad and Tobago 2008. "Public Service Employee Survey: Overall Findings (Full Data)." Accessed July 9, 2011. <http://www.mpa.gov.tt/cms/>

Morris, Michael and Kwok Leung. 2000. "Justice for all? Progress in Research on Cultural Variation in the Psychology of Distributive and Procedural Justice." *Applied Psychology* 49 (1): 100-132.

Nair, Nisha and Neharika Vohra. 2009. "Developing a New Measure of Work Alienation." *Journal of Workplace Rights* 14 (3): 293-309.

Nair, Nisha and Neharika Vohra. 2010. "An Exploration of Factors Predicting Work Alienation of Knowledge Workers." *Management Decision* 48 (4): 600-615.

Olobatuyi, Moses E. 2006. *A User's Guide to Path Analysis*. University Press of America: Maryland.

Ralston, David A., David J. Gustafson, Fanny M. Cheung, and Robert H. Terpstra. 1993. Differences in Managerial Values: A Study of U.S, Hong Kong and PRC Managers." *Journal of International Business* 24 (2): 249-275.

Robbins, T. L., Summers, T. P., and J.L Miller. 2000. "Intra- and Inter-justice Relationships: Assessing the Direction." *Human Relations*, 53(10): 1329-1355.

Sarason, Seymour B. 1977. *Work, Aging and Social Change*. New York: Free Press.

Skarlicki, Daniel. P. and Robert Folger. 1997. "Retaliation in the Workplace: The Roles of Distributive, Procedural, and Interactional Justice." *Journal of Applied Psychology* 82(3): 434-443.

Thibaut, John and Laurens Walker. 1975. *Procedural Justice: A Psychological Analysis*. New York: Erlbaum.

Viswesvaran, C. and D.S Ones. 2002. "Examining the Construct of Organisational Justice: A Meta-analytic Evaluation of Relations with Work attitudes and Behaviors." *Journal of Business Ethics*38 (3): 193-203

Vroom, Victor H. 1964. *Work and Motivation*. New York: Wiley.

Webley, Paul and Stephen Lea. 1997. "PSY6003 Advanced Statistics: Multivariate Analysis II: Manifest Variables Analyses." Modified February 21, 1997.
www.people.exeter.ac.uk/SEGLlea/multvar2/pathanal.html

Whitley, Bernard E. and Mary E. Kite. 2013. *Principles in Behavioural Sciences*. New York: Routledge.

Zaman, Gohar, Nadar Ali and Nazim Ali. 2010. "Impact of Organisational Justice on Employees Outcomes." *Abasyn Journal of Social Sciences* 3 (1): 44-53.