

# Inclusion, organisational justice and employee wellbeing

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between employee perceived well-being and the four dimensions of organisational justice, namely, procedural, distributive, interpersonal and informational justice, and how dimensions of organisational justice affect employee well-being in the Australian tourism industry.

**Design/methodology/approach** – The sample is selected from employees who work in the tourism industry in Australia, and the survey was conducted online ( $n = 121$ ). Factor analysis is used to identify key items related to perceived organisational justice, followed by multiple regression analysis to assess the magnitude and strength of impacts of different dimensions of organisational justice on employee well-being.

**Findings** – The results support the established view that organisational justice is associated with employee well-being. Specifically, informational justice has the strongest influence on tourism employee well-being, followed by procedural justice, interpersonal justice and distributive justice.

**Research limitations/implications** – The authors acknowledge key limitations in the study such as a relatively small sample size and gender imbalance in the sample.

**Practical implications** – The authors provide strategies for managers to increase levels of organisational justice in the tourism sector such as workgroup interactions, a consultation process, team culture and social support.

**Originality/value** – This study builds on limited literature in the area of inclusion and organisational justice in tourism organisations. The study provides a new path to effective organisational management within the context of a diverse workforce, adding to the current debate on which dimensions of organisational justice contribute to improving employee well-being.

**Keywords** Tourism, Organizational justice, Inclusion, Employee well-being, Welfare, Service industries

**Paper type** Research paper

## 1. Introduction

This paper applies organisational justice theory to workplace inclusion in the context of the tourism sector. It aims to extend the literature on the organisational view of organisational justice and employee well-being through a lens of inclusion (we refer to the social aspect of inclusion, which is also termed “social inclusion”; Fujimoto *et al.*, 2014; Le *et al.*, 2014). Roberson (2006) posits that, as the workforce of the twenty-first century is increasingly diverse with the participation of ethnic minorities as well as women in the Western context, effective management of the diverse workforce should focus on addressing the issue of inclusion. This view emphasises a move from diversifying the organisational demography to a removal of any barriers to maximise



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the contribution of individual employees' skills and competencies in organisations (Roberson, 2006). Thus, as Roberson indicates, the term "diversity" has been replaced with the term "inclusion" to suggest a new workplace diversity management approach that aims at helping organisations address diverse employees' needs and achieve competitive advantages within the sector.

The definition of inclusion at the organisational level often adopts "a work perspective" (Fujimoto *et al.*, 2014, p. 520). Inclusion is defined as "the degree to which an employee is accepted and treated as an insider by others in a work system" (Pelled *et al.*, 1999, p. 1014). In a similar vein, Roberson (2006) adopts a sociological perspective to treat the organisation as a social entity. Inclusion was, therefore, defined as involving all members of the organisation, and focusing on increasing the participation and engagement of all employees, with a clear aim of leveraging the positive impact of diversity for organisational "competitive business advantage" (Roberson, 2006, p. 220). Thus, inclusion means acceptance of diverse employees, making them feel accepted and included in work environments (Roberson, 2006; Shore *et al.*, 2011).

Workplace inclusion perspectives align well with organisational justice, particularly interactional justice and procedural justice. These two concepts refer to employees' perceptions of fairness in various areas such as the quality of treatment between managers and employees during the decision-making process (interactional justice) (Bies and Moag, 1986) and employees' involvement in and their perceived fairness of the decision-making process in organisations (procedural justice) (Thibaut and Walker, 1975). If the employees perceive that organisational procedures and the treatment they receive are just and that their view is respected, they feel included as part of the workgroup, which would lead to increasing employee job satisfaction and well-being. The outcomes of inclusion in the workplace are organisational commitment, job satisfaction, work retention and task effectiveness (Mor Barak, 2000), all of which are similar to the outcomes of organisational justice.

While the literature surrounding inclusion in the social work and psychology spaces is extensive, very few studies specifically look through a theoretical lens of inclusion and organisational justice with a focus on employee well-being in tourism organisations. The concept of inclusion in tourism tends to focus on means to enhance accessibility for tourists, especially tourists with disabilities. There has been less focus on evaluation of the relationship between employees' perceived organisational justice and their well-being in the workplace. This is despite the fact that tourism remains one of the largest industries globally (including Australia), both in terms of its contributions to GDP and as a major employer (World Tourism Organization, 2011). As the tourism sector relies significantly on its human resources, determining the sustainability of the sector (Zopiatis *et al.*, 2014), and employee health and well-being are pivotal to maintaining a strong and sustainable tourism sector. For this reason, tourism and hospitality managers are aware of the effect of stress on employee well-being, and of escalated costs concerning sick leave and absenteeism (Ross, 2005). Nonetheless, the research on justice and its impact on employee well-being is tangentially addressed in the tourism literature. Thus, our paper aims to address this peripheral area and to report on the impact of perceived organisational justice on employee well-being, which has implications for enacting sustainable human resource management (HRM) in the tourism industry.

The relationship between organisational justice and employee well-being is purported to cut across a range of disciplines, including health, psychology, business, and occupational health and safety (Fujishiro and Heaney, 2009). In this study, employee well-being means overall wellness of employees including their physical and mental health.

Across the disciplines, studies consistently show that low perceived organisational justice can lead to poor employee health (Fujishiro and Heaney, 2009). Subsequently, employees with work-related stress often have reduced performance, absenteeism and low motivation (Noblet and LaMontagne, 2006). Work-related stress also leads to decreased job engagement, job satisfaction and overall organisational commitment (Colquitt, 2001; Rodwell *et al.*, 2011). However, little attention has been given to examining the relationship between organisational justice and employee well-being in tourism organisations.

The tourism sector presents an attractive type of organisation to investigate this relationship because the industry has a large number of employees. Sustainable HRM is, therefore, important to maintain the continuation of an organisation (Kramar, 2014). Prior research found that employees in tourism and hospitality industries often have high rates of job stress, job burnout or depression and low levels of job satisfaction (Shani and Pizam, 2009) as well as low levels of job security (Zopiatis *et al.*, 2014). While prior studies pay great attention on job burnout/work-related stress/mental health issues among hospitality employees (e.g. Karatepe *et al.*, 2012; Pienaar and Willemse, 2008; Shani and Pizam, 2009), we know little about similar issues among employees in the tourism industry. Such an omission is critical given that issues related to employee well-being have significant direct and indirect effects on financial performance for tourism/hospitality organisations (see, Shani and Pizam, 2009, for a review). Furthermore, the achievement of HRM sustainability – through ensuring equity/fairness for and well-being of employees – could reinforce corporate profitability and survival (Wilkinson *et al.*, 2001). Hence, understanding justice and employee well-being from the employee's perspective in the tourism industry would have greater potential to improve the people management practices of tourism organisations. If a growing number of tourism organisations were perceived as champions for inclusion, they would be more able to attract and retain quality and talented employees, which could have a positive impact on their job performance and overall organisational sustainability.

This study examines the relationship between employee well-being and the four dimensions of organisational justice, namely, procedural, distributive, interpersonal and informational justice, and how these dimensions could affect overall employee well-being. We conducted our research among employees in the Australian tourism industry. Our aim was to answer the following key questions:

- (1) How does organisational justice affect employee well-being?
- (2) What dimensions of organisational justice contribute most to improved employee well-being?

The contribution of our study is threefold. First, our study builds on limited literature in the area of inclusion and organisational justice, especially among employees in tourism organisations. Second, the investigation of the link between inclusion, organisational justice and employee well-being is timely as it provides a new path to effective organisational management within the context of a diverse workforce in multicultural countries. Finally, by answering the research questions, this paper also contributes to understanding the relationships between procedural, distributive, interpersonal and informational justice and employee well-being as part of a broader field of organisational research. It adds to the current debate on which dimensions of organisational justice contribute to improving employee well-being and inclusion. As a result, the paper offers practical implications to assist organisations, in general, to develop effective strategies to enhance employee well-being, especially among service organisations such as tourism.

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## 2. Literature review

### 2.1 *Inclusion and organisational justice in the tourism sector*

The literature surrounding inclusion in the workplace is quite limited and, according to Shore *et al.* (2011), is still being developed. One research area that is evolving in this field is that of creating organisational environments where employees feel included (Mor Barak, 2000; Roberson, 2006; Shore *et al.*, 2011). Contextualising the issue in the tourism workplace, Ross (2005, p. 134) indicates that tourism organisations also need to embrace diversity, inclusion and anti-discrimination policies and practices in order to gain benefits from inclusive workplaces. Therefore, non-discriminatory and inclusive practices are increasingly becoming an important part of overall organisational climates in tourism organisations. Yeh (2013) indicates that engaged and satisfied employees contribute to high performing organisations. Not surprisingly, many critics call for employees in tourism organisations to become “the organisation’s most important asset” (Ross, 2005, p. 134).

Few studies have explored workplace issues in the tourism and/or hospitality industry. A range of factors and relationships between constructs have been tested, such as turnover intention (Karatepe and Shahriari, 2014), organisational commitment, job satisfaction and organisational justice (Fulford, 2005). Ross (2005), for example, points to specific aspects of the tourism industry workplace that are undesirable, unpleasant or, at times, debilitating due to the poor treatment of workers and employee dismissal procedures. Zopiatis *et al.* (2014) posit that “routinisation”, lack of promotional opportunity and role conflict (which link with the perceptions of organisational justice) can affect levels of job satisfaction and have deleterious effects on a tourism organisation. However, tourism organisations are investigating workplace issues affecting employees to find appropriate strategies to improve organisational performance (Zopiatis *et al.*, 2014).

The literature generally agrees that there is a positive association between employees’ perceived fair treatment and their willingness to provide better services, higher levels of organisational commitment and job satisfaction (Fulford, 2005). Yet, insufficient evidence from the above studies was shown to relate to organisational justice and their influence on employee well-being in tourism organisations.

### 2.2 *Occupational stress, employee well-being and sustainable HRM*

Employee well-being is often a self-rated construct concerning work-related issues affecting either employees’ physical or psychological well-being, or both. Occupational stress (also called workplace/work-related stress or job stress) is often a major cause of issues in employee health and well-being (Noblet and LaMontagne, 2006). The stress and well-being literature features three major categories of workplace stressors and strains which include: stressors arising from the work itself (Noblet and LaMontagne, 2006); social relationships in the workplace (Botero and Van Dyne, 2009; Rodwell *et al.*, 2011); and the organisational environment in general (Todorova *et al.*, 2014). Exposure to stressful situations such as heavy workload, lack of managerial support and limited or no input into the decision-making process, lack of job autonomy and control, role ambiguity and perceived unfairness can negatively impact on employees’ levels of stress and well-being (Qin *et al.*, 2014). Prior studies have generally recognised that poor employee well-being can have negative consequences for both employees and organisations, such as reduced performance, higher staff turnover, absenteeism, low motivation, and disloyalty (Holland *et al.*, 2013; Hon *et al.*, 2013), and other impacts on organisational functioning and productivity (see, Danna and Griffin, 1999, for a review).

Given the importance of employee well-being in relation to job satisfaction and organisational performance, achieving sustainable HRM is critical for any industry, including tourism. The tourism industry is labour-intensive with substantial reliance on its workforce to determine organisational viability (Zopiatis *et al.*, 2014). For many tourism industry employees, especially those working in frontline positions which operate 24/7, it is difficult to maintain work-life balance and a healthy lifestyle (Deery and Jago, 2009). They suffer from work-related depression/stress (Ross, 2005; Shani and Pizam, 2009), job burnout (Karatepe *et al.*, 2012), low job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Shani and Pizam, 2009), and high turnover (Karatepe and Shahriari, 2014). A range of factors that are likely to cause employee stress in the tourism industry include having intense interactions with abusive customers (Shani and Pizam, 2009), lack of promotion or career opportunities, lack of organisational justice (Karatepe and Shahriari, 2014; Ross, 2005), and lack of job control and job security (Bradley *et al.*, 2015). The existing literature highlights the necessity to build further understanding of sustainable HRM issues in the tourism industry so as to ensure the viability of the sector in an increasingly competitive environment. The current study intends to address the issue of organisational justice with concerns for developing sustainable HRM policies and practices by examining the state of employee well-being in the tourism industry.

### *2.3 Organisational justice and employee well-being*

According to Colquitt (2001, p. 386), “the notion of fairness, or justice, has become an increasingly visible construct in the social sciences over the last three decades”. Nonetheless, the relationship between organisational justice and employee well-being has only garnered attention since the early 2000s (Fujishiro and Heaney, 2009). It is noted that organisational justice plays a crucial role in employee health and well-being, and, as a consequence, lack of justice would have a negative impact on health and well-being (Elovainio *et al.*, 2001, 2005; Tepper, 2001).

Prior literature also shows evidence of the link between employee perceptions of organisational justice and various health issues after undergoing prolonged stressful processes (Elovainio *et al.*, 2003; Kivimäki *et al.*, 2003). Experiences of injustice – whether actual or perceived – have been found to be a source of job stress (Greenberg, 2004; Judge and Colquitt, 2004) and health complaints leading to absenteeism (de Boer *et al.*, 2002). Low levels of organisational justice intensify negative health effects for employees (Elovainio *et al.*, 2005) such as “unhealthy patterns of cardiovascular and immunological response” (Elovainio *et al.*, 2003, p. 288) and poor sleeping patterns (Elovainio *et al.*, 2003; Heponiemi *et al.*, 2011).

Perceptions of organisational justice have been categorised into three generally accepted dimensions: procedural justice, distributive justice and interactional justice (Colquitt, 2001; Colquitt *et al.*, 2001; Cropanzano and Schminke, 2001). Procedural justice is an employee’s perception of justice in the organisational process, including decision-making processes and organisational procedures in order to determine employees’ work outcomes (Leventhal, 1980; Thibaut and Walker, 1975). Key predictors of procedural justice are employee levels of job control and whether or not employees are involved in decision-making processes/procedures that influence job outcomes (Thibaut and Walker, 1975). Further, job satisfaction, a key measure of job outcomes, has an association with employees’ participation in the decision-making process (Lange, 2015) and job autonomy (Lange, 2009). Thus, the literature highlights the influence of procedural justice on employee well-being.

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Prior research has shown associations between procedural justice and employee health (Elovainio *et al.*, 2001, 2005; Judge and Colquitt, 2004; Kausto *et al.*, 2005). Specifically, low levels of procedural justice contribute to depressive symptoms in employees (Ybema and van den Bos, 2010) and/or cause health complaints and, subsequently, absenteeism (de Boer *et al.*, 2002; Elovainio *et al.*, 2005). The literature indicates that lack of control (i.e. in procedures, rules, jobs and decision-making processes) leads to increased anxiety, which negatively affects employee well-being (Elovainio *et al.*, 2001). We, therefore, predict that:

*H1.* Procedural justice is positively associated with employee well-being.

Distributive justice is the employees' perception of justice about the decision outcomes (such as pay, reward and promotion) in relation to their work contribution (Adams, 1965). Prior research shows inconsistent results regarding the association between distributive justice and well-being. For example, researchers confirm that employees who perceive distributive unfairness often have work-related psychosocial health risks, causing them to seek sickness absence from work (de Boer *et al.*, 2002; Ybema and van den Bos, 2010). However, Judge and Colquitt (2004) find that distributive justice has relatively weak effects on employees' perception of stress. Moliner *et al.* (2008, p. 342) conclude that there is no direct effect between distributive justice and employee well-being.

In spite of contradictory results, Adam's theory of inequity (known as distributive justice) suggests a positive relationship between distributive justice and well-being. According to Adam's theory, employees feel unjust when they perceive that the reward they receive from an employer is less than their expectation or, especially, less than the reward of others (under-reward inequity). Subsequently, employees feel dissatisfied with the outcomes and alter their work performance to balance the input-output ratio (Cropanzano and Schminke, 2001). Drawing on Adam's theory of inequity, Greenberg (2004, p. 353) explains: "[...] people desire to be equitably rewarded for their work – that is, benefited in proportion to their contributions". Greenberg (2004) discusses underpayment inequity as a cause of perceived injustice and a source of stress for employees. Taken together, we predict that:

*H2.* Distributive justice is positively associated with employee well-being.

Interactional justice is explained as the quality of the interaction that employees experience from their direct supervisors or authoritative figures (Bies and Moag, 1986). This form of justice can include the degree to which people perceived that authorities treated them with courtesy, dignity and respect, and whether authorities provided appropriate justifications or explanations about why certain practices, decisions or outcomes were distributed in a certain way (Colquitt, 2001). Truthfulness among authorities and employees could also be included. Interactional justice is often divided into interpersonal justice (treatment that employees receive) and informational justice (clear explanations or justifications of work procedures and/or outcomes to employees) (Colquitt, 2001). Judge and Colquitt (2004) find that interpersonal justice has strong effects on employees' perception of stress at work (see also, Moliner *et al.*, 2008), hence, it is related to employee well-being. Thus, we hypothesise that:

*H3.* Interpersonal justice is positively associated with employee well-being.

Informational justice refers to the quality of the communication/explanation of decision-making procedures that organisational management offers to individual employees. It is believed that the timing and accuracy of the information managers

convey to their subordinates would have an effect on individuals' perceptions of fairness (Kernan and Hanges, 2002). Often the perceived fairness of how decisions are enacted by management is fostered by adequate and honest communication about the procedure (Kim, 2009). Thus, Greenberg (2004) argues that informational justice is associated with system-related attitudes that can affect long-term organisation-centred outcomes, as open and candid communications provide employees with the information necessary to assess the systemic bases of existing procedures. Kim's (2009) study shows that there is a significant correlation between informational justice and low turnover intention, while low turnover intention was mediated by better working relationships between managers and subordinates, which were built on regular information exchanges and trustworthy communication.

However, existing literature does not provide conclusive results on measuring the direct relationship between informational justice and employee well-being. Employee well-being, such as mental health (Spell and Arnold, 2007), physical health and perceived stress (Zheng *et al.*, 2016), and job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Lawson *et al.*, 2009), have been measured by various constructs. Judge and Colquitt (2004) found that informational justice has relatively weak effects on employees' perception of stress. Lawson *et al.* (2009), however, conclude that four dimensions of organisational justice have significant associations with the psychological health of employees. Therefore, managers could help enhance perceived fairness by providing timely, honest and accurate information to their subordinates, which is likely to lead to better employee well-being (Heponiemi *et al.*, 2011). In light of the above discussion, we predict that:

*H4.* Informational justice is positively associated with employee well-being.

In summary, despite well-established literature on organisational justice, little research focuses directly on the relationship between organisational justice and employee well-being in tourism organisations through the lens of social inclusion. There is also debate in the literature in relation to which dimensions of organisational justice will contribute the most to improvement in employee well-being. Our study adds to this debate by attempting to explain the above inconsistent findings using empirical evidence from the tourism sector.

### **3. Methodology**

#### *3.1 Sample and procedure*

As mentioned in the introduction, the tourism industry provides a good environment in which to investigate the phenomenon of employee perceptions of organisational justice and well-being, given the limited literature in this area. Findings from this study could have significant implications for the tourism industry as well as for the service sector as a whole.

The sample is selected from employees who work in the tourism industry in Australia, and the survey was conducted employing an online panel ( $n = 121$ ). The use of online access panel surveys has received criticism because of the higher numbers of responses such as "don't know/unsure" received, and because sampling coverage and the sampling frame cannot include the entire general population (Loosveldt and Sonck, 2008). However, as seen in the literature, this method of data collection is used because of the ability to obtain a suitable/eligible sample while achieving cost savings in comparison with a face-to-face survey (Duffy *et al.*, 2005). Therefore, this method lends itself as a suitable method for data collection, as it allows us to access participants from

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tourism organisations throughout Australia, whereas it would be difficult, expensive and time-consuming to collect data by other methods.

The demographic characteristics of the sample are: 74 per cent of the respondents were female and 26 per cent were male. Gender imbalance is common in the tourism industry, as reported in the formal tourism workforce (World Tourism Organization and UN Women, 2011). The majority of respondents were from 20 to 49 years old, while fewer respondents were from older age groups (only 18 per cent of respondents were from 50 to 64 years old). An imbalance between young and older tourism workers is a reflection of the Australian age distribution, as 34 per cent of the Australian population is under 49 years old, while 12 per cent of the population is from 50 to 74 years old (Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2007). With regard to tenure, 51 per cent of respondents had worked at the current organisation from 1 to 5 years, 21 per cent had worked from six to 11 years, and 27 per cent had worked for more than 11 years. The respondents held a range of positions in tourism organisations such as travel/senior travel consultants, managers, clerks, administrative officers, tour guides, receptionists and ski instructors. In total 24 per cent of respondents came from ethnic backgrounds (i.e. Italian, Greek, Spanish, Dutch, Vietnamese, Chinese, Indian and Lebanese).

### 3.2 Measures

One outcome variable was used in this study: employee well-being, which was a key focus of our research. The survey item was “Have the current inclusion programmes or practices positively affected your well-being?” The use of a single item measure has also been tested and supported by prior studies (see, Wanous *et al.*, 1997; Nagy, 2002). These researchers argue that a single item measure is highly correlated with multiple-item measures of job satisfaction in their studies. Thus, using a single item measure (i.e. employee well-being as a proxy in our study) is equally as good for achieving validity and may be easier, less expensive and take less time to complete when compared with multiple-item measures (Nagy, 2002). Specifically, in order to reflect the different dimensions of well-being, a single question can be used to reflect the broad summative ratings of well-being (e.g. psychological and physical dimensions), and is said to be most appropriate when it is used as an outcome variable (Fayers and Hand, 2002).

The predictor variable used (independent variable) was organisational justice. The organisational justice scale was adapted from Colquitt (2001), including a 20-item scale. However, we modified the scale slightly to suit our research aims, with 18 items included in the final questionnaire. Items were rated on a ten-point scale with anchors of 0 = strongly disagree and 10 = strongly agree. Below we discuss the process of using Colquitt’s (2001) four subscales of organisational justice.

Procedural justice was measured using seven items (Colquitt, 2001). We adapted this scale to suit our research aim via the inclusion procedure within tourism organisations. An example item is “Have you been able to express your views and feelings during inclusion policy decision-making processes?” A higher score on this scale indicated a greater level of perceived procedural justice. Distributive justice was measured using four items. An example item is “Does your reward reflect the effort you have put into your work?” Interpersonal justice was originally measured by four items, with three first items of “treated in a polite manner”, “treated with dignity” and “treated with respect” (Colquitt, 2001). These three items were merged into one as they appear to be measuring the same thing. Thus, a two-item scale was used to measure interpersonal justice in the current study. The modified item is now worded as “Has the authority figure treated you with politeness, respect, and dignity when you discuss with him or



her your concern at work?" The wording of the second item of interpersonal justice is "Has (he/she) refrained from improper remarks or comments?" which is the same as in Colquitt's (2001) study. Informational justice was measured by a five-item scale. An example item is "Has the authority figure been open, frank and honest in (his/her) communication with you about your work relationship concerns?" (Colquitt, 2001).

We controlled for variables including age, gender, ethnicity and years of service in the current organisation (see Table I). Age was coded as six categories: 1 = under 20; 2 = 20-29; 3 = 30-39; 4 = 40-49; 5 = 50-64; and 6 = 65+(mean = 3.36). Gender was coded as 1 = Female; 0 = Male (mean = 0.74, representing 74 per cent of female respondents). Similarly, ethnicity was coded as 1 = those with English speaking backgrounds; and 0 = those with non-English speaking backgrounds (mean = 0.76, representing 24 per cent of ethnic groups). The control variables could have an association with employee well-being. For example, age was found to have a positive association with depression among employees, "with older workers tending to be more depressed but more satisfied with the intrinsic aspects of their work" (Holman, 2002, p. 46). Mor Barak and Levin (2002) examine the relationship between diversity characteristics, inclusion, fairness, stress and social support and the outcomes of job satisfaction and well-being. They show that women and members of racial/ethnic minorities are more likely to feel a sense of exclusion, and that feeling excluded is linked to job dissatisfaction and an overall lower sense of well-being. A higher sense of exclusion (i.e. from supervisors) by ethnic groups can lead to higher levels of organisational counterproductive behaviours (behaviours or actions harmful to organisations) (Hitlan and Noel, 2009). Therefore, the control variables above were tested in the current study.

### 3.3 Data analysis

Independent variables measuring four dimensions of organisational justice contained many items, all of which were validated (Colquitt, 2001). Despite the four dimensions having been well tested in prior empirical studies, Colquitt *et al.* (2001) argued that "the literature on organisational justice is still marked by a debate over whether the domain includes one, two, three, or four dimensions of justice" (p. 427). Thus, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to determine whether there were any overlapping items that might measure the same dimension of justice. This approach serves to uncover the latent structure (or dimensions, in this study) of a set of variables (Hair *et al.*, 2010). The correlation matrix in Table I shows that the majority of the correlation coefficients (excluded control variables) were values larger than 0.5, indicating that latent constructs exist among items evaluated. Factor analysis is, therefore, chosen to identify potential latent constructs (Hair *et al.*, 2010).

The fit procedures were run to determine whether it was appropriate to use EFA for the current study. As EFA is based on the common factor model, fitting procedures are used to estimate the factor loadings and unique variances of the model. There were several factor analysis fitting methods to choose from. Based on Hair *et al.* (2010), we used the total variance with orthogonal varimax rotation methods to specify the factor matrix (see Table II). In order to determine the number of factors to be extracted, Kaiser's (1960) eigenvalue-greater-than-one rule, scree plot and percentage larger than 70 for the total variance explained, were used. In addition, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to examine the appropriateness of using the factor analysis.

It was found that, when setting the eigenvalue-greater-than one, four factors were extracted, explaining over 90 per cent of the total variance. The scree plot also

VS	Means	SD	n	QA1	QA2	QA3	QA4	QA5	QA6	QA7	QB1	QB2	QB3	QB4
QA1	5.12	2.89	82	1										
QA2	4.95	3.01	80	0.766**	1									
QA3	5.38	2.55	84	0.749**	0.626*	1								
QA4	5.86	2.76	84	0.675**	0.411**	0.793**	1							
QA5	5.81	2.48	83	0.702**	0.480**	0.806**	0.834**	1						
QA6	4.92	3.01	73	0.702**	0.689**	0.697**	0.655**	0.666**	1					
QA7	6.52	2.74	86	0.635**	0.446**	0.681**	0.739**	0.700**	0.506**	1				
QB1	5.37	2.83	98	0.593**	0.449**	0.528**	0.506**	0.515**	0.433**	0.582**	1			
QB2	5.03	3.07	99	0.579**	0.411**	0.484**	0.466**	0.526**	0.416**	0.515**	0.902**	1		
QB3	4.95	3.07	99	0.534**	0.399**	0.449**	0.426**	0.463**	0.401**	0.519**	0.847**	0.902**	1	
QB4	4.79	3.21	99	0.509**	0.297**	0.463**	0.476**	0.482**	0.374**	0.440**	0.463**	0.883**	0.850**	1
QC1	6.63	2.68	90	0.420**	0.176	0.438**	0.544**	0.523**	0.338**	0.466**	0.486**	0.461**	0.421**	0.430**
QC2	6.52	2.83	90	0.437**	0.178	0.468**	0.544**	0.490**	0.284*	0.450**	0.503*	0.468**	0.381**	0.472**
QD1	6.67	2.48	92	0.473**	0.242*	0.526**	0.525**	0.567**	0.426**	0.468**	0.531**	0.481**	0.422**	0.468**
QD2	5.41	3.05	86	0.464**	0.382**	0.518**	0.534**	0.483**	0.412**	0.419**	0.413**	0.338**	0.319**	0.372**
QD3	5.88	2.51	85	0.536**	0.386**	0.642**	0.663**	0.587**	0.547**	0.540**	0.466**	0.398**	0.370*	0.409*
QD4	5.42	2.88	86	0.560**	0.421**	0.583**	0.539**	0.515**	0.482**	0.458**	0.454**	0.445**	0.448*	0.393**
QD5	5.68	2.82	88	0.475**	0.409**	0.589**	0.551**	0.578**	0.534**	0.511**	0.586**	0.437**	0.461**	0.496**
WB	5.34	2.84	90	0.479**	0.394**	0.570**	0.519**	0.528**	0.534**	0.462**	0.584**	0.498**	0.548**	0.563**
YRS	1.89	-	105	0.005	0.098	-0.099	-0.010	-0.004	-0.133	-0.169	-0.048	-0.062	-0.015	-0.079
AGE	3.36	-	121	0.083	0.141	0.017	0.041	0.107	-0.074	0.051	0.039	0.003	0.029	-0.033
GEN	0.74	-	121	0.033	-0.068	0.128	0.103	0.120	-0.037	0.106	-0.056	-0.010	-0.048	-0.022
ETH	0.76	-	121	0.073	0.046	0.061	0.055	0.042	0.198	0.135	0.133	0.121	0.106	0.125

(continued)

**Table I.**  
Means, SD and the  
correlation matrix  
between key  
variables

Table I.

VS	Means	SD	<i>n</i>	QC1	QC2	QD1	QD2	QD3	QD4	QD5	WB	YRS	AGE	GEN	ETH
QA1	5.12	2.89	82												
QA2	4.95	3.01	80												
QA3	5.38	2.55	84												
QA4	5.86	2.76	84												
QA5	5.81	2.48	83												
QA6	4.92	3.01	73												
QA7	6.52	2.74	86												
QB1	5.37	2.83	98												
QB2	5.03	3.07	99												
QB3	4.95	3.07	99												
QB4	4.79	3.21	99												
QC1	6.63	2.68	90	1											
QC2	6.52	2.83	90	0.857**	1										
QD1	6.67	2.48	92	0.758**	0.796**	1									
QD2	5.41	3.05	86	0.604**	0.608**	0.645**	1								
QD3	5.88	2.51	85	0.691**	0.681**	0.720**	0.886**	1							
QD4	5.42	2.88	86	0.641**	0.568**	0.697**	0.813**	0.869**	1						
QD5	5.68	2.82	88	0.697**	0.615**	0.719**	0.695**	0.770**	0.699**	1					
WB	5.34	2.84	90	0.545**	0.467**	0.599**	0.669**	0.745**	0.704**	0.787**	1				
YRS	1.89	-	105	-0.070	-0.061	-0.040	-0.024	-0.095	-0.033	-0.074	-0.012	1			
AGE	3.36	-	121	0.128	0.162	0.038	0.107	0.013	0.037	0.047	0.123	0.096	1		
GEN	0.74	-	121	0.011	0.106	0.048	-0.039	0.076	0.029	0.009	-0.115	0.053	-0.081	1	
ETH	0.76	-	121	0.200	0.166	0.232*	0.012	0.088	0.015	0.204	0.135	0.126	0.107	-0.073	1

**Notes:** VS, variables – please refer to full statement of each code of variables from QA1 to QD5 in Table II; WB, well-being; YRS, years in service; AGE, age of participant; GEN, gender; ETH, ethnicity. Two-tailed Pearson correlation is significant at \*\* $p < 0.01$  and \* $p < 0.05$

Items included in the exploratory factor analysis	Component			
	1	2	3	4
<i>Procedural justice</i>				
QA1 – have you been able to express your views and feelings during inclusion policy decision-making processes?	0.693	0.223	0.243	0.463
QA2 – have you had influence over the outcome arrived at by certain inclusion policy decisions?	0.766	0.321	0.193	0.342
QA3 – have those inclusion policies and practices been applied consistently?	0.919	0.262	0.178	0.046
QA4 – have those inclusion policies and practices been free of bias?	0.919	0.259	0.178	0.045
QA5 – have those inclusion policies and practice decisions been based on accurate information?	0.864	0.329	0.136	0.128
QA6 – have you been able to appeal the outcome arrived at for inclusion policy decisions?	0.622	0.314	0.137	0.384
QA7 – have those inclusion policies and practices upheld ethical and moral standards?	0.854	0.203	0.191	0.284
<i>Distributive justice</i>				
QB1 – does your reward reflect the effort you put into your work?	0.240	0.272	0.890	0.082
QB2 – is your reward outcome appropriate for the work you have completed?	0.172	0.228	0.935	0.190
QB3 – does your reward outcome reflect what you have contributed to the organisation?	0.165	0.225	0.937	0.189
QB4 – is your reward outcome justified given your performance?	0.172	0.223	0.934	0.196
<i>Interpersonal justice</i>				
QC1 – have you been treated with politeness, respect and dignity when you discuss your concerns at work?	0.341	0.389	0.336	0.762
QC2 – has the authority figure refrained from improper remarks or comments?	0.341	0.389	0.336	0.761
<i>Informational justice</i>				
QD1 – has the authority figure been open, frank and honest in communication with you about your work concerns?	0.278	0.725	0.239	0.414
QD2 – has the authority figure explained the inclusion policies and their process thoroughly?	0.329	0.874	0.258	0.169
QD3 – were the authority figure’s explanations regarding the inclusion policy decision process reasonable?	0.307	0.869	0.246	0.163
QD4 – has the authority figure communicated details of inclusion policies in a timely manner?	0.326	0.873	0.258	0.173
QD5 – has the authority figure seemed to tailor (his/her) communications to individuals’ specific needs at work?	0.362	0.712	0.315	0.250

**Notes:** Extraction method: principal component analysis; Rotation method: varimax with Kaiser normalisation. Rotation converged in five iterations; KMO measure of sampling adequacy = 0.901; Bartlett’s test of sphericity = 4,819.551 (df = 153, sig. = 0.000)

**Table II.**  
Rotated component matrix

showed that the line dropped and became flatter after the fourth factor point. KMO = 0.901 (< 1) and Bartlett’s test of sphericity = 4,819.551 ( $p < 0.01$ ) met the criterion for factor analysis. Therefore, the four-factor solution for the current study was chosen.

Factor scales were subsequently used for multiple regression analysis which measures the relationships between key constructs, as hypothesised in the literature review section.

#### 4. Results

Table I displays means, standard deviations (SD) and the correlation matrix between key variables in the study. It is shown that all variables were highly correlated with most coefficient values larger than 0.4. Hair *et al.* (2010) recommended that if coefficient values of majority variables exceeded 0.4, factor analysis was warranted. Examining Table I, only ten correlation coefficient values were less than 0.4; thus, it was safe to conduct factor analysis.

To determine the factors, mean values extracted from the rotated component matrix were compared. Higher mean values among items suggest that these items are closely related and likely to form an underlying construct. Table II shows that seven items measuring procedural justice had high means values  $> 0.60$ , ranging from 0.622 to 0.919. Therefore, this component extracted as Factor 1 (F1) was named as “procedural justice”.

Similarly, five items measuring informational justice were highly correlated with mean values all above 0.70, ranging from 0.725 to 0.874. Thus, this second factor (F2) was directly named “informational justice”. Four items measuring distributive justice were also highly correlated, with mean values ranging from 0.890 to 0.937, and two items for interpersonal justice had mean values above 0.70. Factors 3 and 4 (F3 and F4) were, thus, called “distributive justice” and “interpersonal justice”, respectively.

Such a neat naming of each construct according to the commonly known four dimensions of organisational justice was surprising, on one hand, but, on the other hand, the factor analysis results also strongly confirmed the validity of enduring construct measures of organisational justice, as discussed by Colquitt (2001).

In Table III, it was shown that all four dimensions of organisational justice were significantly and positively related to improving organisational employee well-being. This means that higher levels of exercising procedural justice, interpersonal justice and distributive justice in the tourism industry result in higher levels of employee well-being. In particular, “Informational justice” contributed most to improving employee

Model 1		Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.			
Dependent variable: well-being (WB)		<i>B</i>	SE	$\beta$					
1	(Constant)	9.225	7.572		1.218	0.226			
	F1: procedural justice	16.036	1.552	0.486	10.332	0.000			
	F2: informational justice	23.542	1.588	0.714	14.822	0.000			
	F3: distributive justice	3.979	1.527	0.121	2.606	0.010			
	F4: interpersonal justice	6.409	1.544	0.194	4.151	0.000			
	Years of service (YRS)	-2.529	1.688	-0.083	-1.498	0.137			
	Age (AGE)	1.246	1.494	0.045	0.834	0.406			
	Gender (GEN)	2.52	3.31	0.036	0.761	0.448			
	Ethnicity (ETH)	5.658	3.56	0.079	1.589	0.115			
<i>Model summary</i>									
	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	Adjusted <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	SE of the estimate	Change statistics <i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>F</i>	df1	df2	Sig. <i>F</i> change
Regression analysis results	0.873	0.761	0.744	15.518	0.761	44.691	8	112	0.000

**Table III.**  
Regression analysis results

well-being in the tourism industry ( $\beta = 0.714, p < 0.001$ ). This was followed by “procedural justice” ( $\beta = 0.486, p < 0.001$ ). “Interpersonal justice” ( $\beta = 0.194, p < 0.001$ ) was also found to have a slightly stronger influence on employee well-being than “distributive justice” ( $\beta = 0.121, p < 0.01$ ). Therefore, *H1*, *H2*, *H3* and *H4* were supported. The results suggest that in a service industry such as tourism, employees perhaps require more information to perform their jobs well, and more interactions would help employees feel better which, subsequently, would enhance their well-being.

## 5. Discussion and conclusions

### 5.1 Theoretical and practical contributions

The current study examined the relationship between organisational justice and employee well-being through a lens of inclusion to see which dimensions of organisational justice contributed most to enhancing employee well-being in the context of the Australian tourism industry. The results supported the established view that perceived organisational justice was positively associated with employee well-being, including employees in tourism organisations, which is consistent with Lawson *et al.* (2009). While the literature on organisational justice is well-established, to our knowledge, not many studies have tested the relationship between four dimensions of organisational justice with perceived employee well-being in the tourism sector. Our results have, therefore, contributed theoretically to the justice and well-being literature by confirming that four dimensions of organisational justice were associated with employee well-being in the tourism industry; however, each dimension impacts well-being to a different degree.

More specifically, the findings of this study revealed that procedural and interpersonal justice had stronger effects on employee well-being, while a weaker effect was shown by distributive justice on employee well-being. These results were in line with the findings by Judge and Colquitt (2004), who found that procedural justice and interpersonal justice were the key drivers affecting levels of employee perceptions of workplace stress. We enhanced their finding by demonstrating that informational justice had the strongest influence on tourism employee well-being, followed by procedural justice, interpersonal justice and distributive justice, respectively.

Our study findings showed that none of the four control variables was significantly related to employee well-being in the tourism industry. In Table I, we found that ethnicity was only correlated to the item QD1 “Has the authority figure been open, frank, and honest in communication with you about your work concern?” This suggested that people with ethnic backgrounds feel more positive with bosses who had open, honest and frank communication styles. The above findings were somewhat different from prior research that indicated a close relationship between age and well-being (Holman, 2002, p. 46), and between ethnicity and well-being (Mor Barak and Levin, 2002).

Our study advances the current literature by moving beyond a common result that procedural justice is the most critical dimension influencing employee well-being. In fact, in the tourism organisations, informational justice plays an important role in enhancing employee well-being. The above results could be explained by the significant and fast changes in the tourism industry; subsequently, work demands have become very high for tourism workers (Deery and Jago, 2009, p. 97), leading to the importance of addressing the need for informational justice more so than for procedural justice. Kim (2009) highlights that, frequently, procedural and informational justice are emphasised more strongly than distributive and interpersonal justice, especially within

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a service sector such as tourism. However, procedural justice also has an impact on employee well-being in other types of organisations such as security firms (de Boer *et al.*, 2002), the public sector (Elovainio *et al.*, 2005) and health care (Elovainio *et al.*, 2001). Further, strong team culture and knowledge-sharing in the service sector (e.g. tourism and hospitality) can enhance service innovation performance (Meng-Lei *et al.*, 2009), which is pivotal for many organisations to gain competitive advantages.

The key contribution of this study is that we identify the importance of enhancing informational justice for service workers. With the nature of service industries being characterised by frequent employer-customer interactions, “fair treatment of service workers can lead to [immediate] fair treatment of customers” (Bowen *et al.*, 1999, p. 7). Information pertaining to work procedures and outcomes for individual employees needs to be carefully and constructively communicated to workers in a timely manner so that they are less likely to retaliate by damaging customer relations and reputations. In particular, excellent service offered by workers to customers should be rewarded and supported by organisations. The reward scheme for such service should be clearly communicated and explained to employees (informational justice) to motivate them and recognise their excellent customer service.

The findings of the current study also have several practical implications. First, as the results indicate that informational justice contributes most to improved employee well-being in the tourism industry, it is necessary for tourism workers, and service workers more broadly, to share information between managers and employees in an open, honest and timely manner to enable them to perform their job more effectively and efficiently. Therefore, open and transparent communication channels, both online and off-line, should be in place to promote informational justice in the service sector with the aim of enhancing employee well-being and productivity.

Second, in order to enhance procedural justice, organisations and managers need to involve every member of the organisation in the formal decision-making process. This is to avoid employee perceptions of exclusion by having their “voice” heard in the formal procedures in organisations. Mor Barak and Levin (2002) indicate that exclusion from organisational information networks and from important decision-making processes is one of the most significant problems facing what is becoming an increasingly diverse workforce. An employee sense of inclusion in the workplace may play a central role in explaining the link between their perceived organisational justice and their overall well-being and job satisfaction. Thus, a consultative process is the most effective way to involve all employees, particularly minority groups.

Third, interpersonal justice should be promoted in order to enhance employee well-being and collaborations between work groups, and between employees and managers. Shore *et al.* (2011, p. 1265) argue that “when a unique individual is an accepted member of the group and the group values the particular unique characteristic” group performance, in turn, improves. Shore *et al.* (2011) continue to show that there is a reportedly high level of career optimism when a minority member (uniqueness) in an organisation has developed networks, been treated as an insider and felt a sense of belonging and value in the work group. The findings of the current study also support this line of argument: that it is important to encourage managers to treat their followers respectfully. To achieve this end, we suggest the introduction of organisational policies to encourage the treatment of every employee with politeness, respect and dignity. An open door policy could also be developed to facilitate greater interpersonal justice between employees and managers.

Lastly, service organisations could provide social support programmes that are designed to enhance employee autonomy, clarity and control in relation to their tasks

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and roles (Albrecht, 2012; Rodwell *et al.*, 2011). It is also important to facilitate employee-employer accountability in relation to key decision-making processes (Rodwell *et al.*, 2011). For example, managers should make sure that reporting relationships are clearly defined within each department and that there is a clear alignment of how different roles within the reporting structures support the strategic goals and missions of the departments and the organisation.

### 5.2 Limitations and implications for future research

Despite a number of contributions made by the current study, limitations remain. First, the sample size is relatively small. There was also an over representation of women in the sample, which might affect the generalisation of the results to other contexts. Gender imbalance in the service sector (i.e. health and education) poses challenges to data collection. Purposeful sample selection with a balance of male and female representation in the data could help address this issue in future studies on similar topics. Second, although we purposely linked organisational justice with the inclusion policy, the construct of inclusion was not measured. Future studies should integrate and measure the moderating effect of inclusion on organisational justice. Third, we used a single item of perceived employee well-being as a dependent variable, which may not be sufficient. However, other researchers confirm that single item measures correlate highly with multiple-item measures (Nagy, 2002; Wanous *et al.*, 1997). Both subjective and objective employee well-being indicators should be considered in future studies to see the different effects on inclusion and organisational justice. Lastly, although we used several control variables to explore underlying factors that mediate the results, these items (i.e. age and ethnicity) were shown to have no effects on well-being and/or organisational justice. These results might be due to the sampling bias and online survey method used. Future research should re-test these variables to confirm their effects on organisational justice and employee well-being using different methods of data collection and/or data analysis.

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