

The London School of Economics and Political Science

*Healing or Harmful?: A Multi-Method Investigation of
Talk as a Victim-Centred Response to Organisational
Injustice*

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Declaration

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Abstract

Organisational justice is dedicated to the study of perceptions of fairness within the workplace. Hundreds of studies converge on the notion that *justice matters*, such that profound negative implications arise when individuals perceive unfairness. Previous research has sought to manage and repair violations of fairness through three distinct means: managerial excuses and justifications, training interventions for managers, and remedies distributed by the organisation. There is an ironic shortcoming with this research: it ignores the victim who is at the centre of an injustice. Herein lies the starting point of the present thesis. Putting the victim back into the forefront of justice research, this thesis examines the role of a victim of workplace injustice in their own recovery process. It asks: can victims recover from the negative effects of a fairness violation, and more specifically, can *talk*, that is, conversation with others, aid such a recovery process?

Recovery is defined as the emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey an individual goes through in order to work towards a resolution to their experience: it is a victim's ongoing efforts to manage an injustice. Three empirical studies sought to examine if, when and how talk can assist victims with recovery, drawing on research within the justice literature as well as clinical and social psychology. Study 1, a mixed-methods design, provided support for the presence of talk in the context of workplace injustice, and led to the creation of a new measure of talk to reflect this. Study 2, a twice repeated cross-sectional survey, uncovered antecedents and consequences of talk; anger and thwarted justice needs were found to trigger talk, with an interaction between emotion and cognition talk driving victim-centred outcomes of rumination, self-affirmation and active solutions. Study 3, a ten-day daily diary investigation, found support for the notion that talk leads to positive recovery outcomes for victims of injustice. Contributions of this thesis, as well as implications and avenues for future research are discussed.

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Table of Contents

Declaration	2
Abstract	3
Acknowledgements	4
List of Figures	10
List of Tables.....	12
 Chapter 1: Introduction.....	 15
 Chapter 2: Literature Review: Organisational Justice and Talk	 24
2.1 Chapter overview	25
2.2 Organisational justice: An overview and definition.....	25
2.2.2 What is organisational <i>in</i> justice and why does it matter?	31
2.2.3 ‘Managing’ and ‘mitigating’ the responses of victims of injustice.....	34
2.2.4 Limitations with ‘managing’ and ‘mitigating’ the responses of victims of injustice	40
2.2.5 Victim recovery from injustice: The introduction of <i>talk</i>	44
2.3 Talk: An overview.....	46
2.3.1 Talk in organisational science research.....	49
2.3.2 Summary and critique of talk in organisational science research	52
2.3.3 Talk in clinical and social psychology literatures	55
2.3.4 What are the benefits of talk (in clinical and social psychology research)?	63
2.3.5 Why is talk (in clinical and social psychology research) effective?	64
2.3.6 Summary of talk in clinical and social psychological research	67
2.3.7 How does talk in clinical and social psychology relate to workplace injustice? ..	68
2.4 Significance of thesis: Research aims	70
2.5 Conclusion	72
 Chapter 3: Research Design & Methodology	 73
3.1 Chapter overview	74
3.2 Overview of research design.....	74

3.3 Rationale for data collection methods chosen.....	77
3.3.1 Study 1: Qualitative interviews and surveys.....	77
3.3.2 Study 2: Repeated cross-sectional survey.....	79
3.3.3 Study 3: Daily diary study.....	80
3.4 Sample, research settings and data collection procedures.....	81
3.4.1 Study 1: Qualitative interviews and surveys.....	81
3.4.2 Study 2: Repeated cross-sectional survey.....	86
3.4.3 Study 3: Daily diary study.....	90
3.5 Analytical methods.....	93
3.5.1 Study 1: Qualitative interviews and survey.....	93
3.5.2 Study 2: Repeated cross-sectional survey.....	98
3.5.3 Study 3: Daily diary study.....	100
3.6 Ethical considerations.....	101
3.7 Chapter summary.....	101
 Chapter 4: Study 1: Development of a new measure of talk in the context of workplace injustice.....	 103
4.1 Chapter Overview.....	104
4.2 Introduction.....	104
4.2.1 Theoretical rationale for a new measure of talk.....	105
4.3 Phase 1: Does talk follow a person's experience of unfairness at work?.....	112
4.3.1 Participants.....	112
4.3.2 Procedure & Measures.....	112
4.3.3 Results.....	114
4.3.4 Conclusion of Phase 1.....	115
4.4 Phase 2: What do victims talk about following workplace injustice?.....	116
4.4.1 Participants.....	116
4.4.2 Procedure & Measures.....	117
4.4.3 Analysis: Content analysis procedure and results.....	118
4.4.4 Conclusion of Phase 2.....	128
4.5 Phase 3: Generation of items for talk measure.....	128
4.5.1 Participants.....	128
4.5.2 Procedure & Measures.....	129
4.5.3 Analysis.....	130

4.5.4 Conclusion of Phase 3	133
4.6 Phase 4: Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) at two time points	133
4.6.1 Participants	134
4.6.2 Measures	134
4.6.3 Analysis	135
4.6.4 Results	136
4.6.5 Conclusion of phase 4	140
4.7 Chapter Summary	140

Chapter 5: Study 2: Antecedents of talking about workplace injustice	141
5.1 Chapter Overview	142
5.2 Introduction	142
5.2.1 Workplace injustice and anger	144
5.2.2 Workplace injustice and justice needs	147
5.2.3 Workplace injustice, anger and talk	154
5.2.4 Relational need, anger and talk	155
5.2.5 Meaning need, anger and talk	157
5.2.6 The moderating impact of self-efficacy	159
5.3 Methods	161
5.3.1 Participants	161
5.3.2 Procedure	162
5.3.3 Measures	162
5.3.4 Analysis	166
5.3.5 Results	168
5.4 Discussion	176
5.4.1 Limitations	186
5.4.2 Suggestions for future research	187
5.4.2 Conclusion	189

Chapter 6: Study 2: Consequences of talking about workplace injustice	191
6.1 Chapter Overview	192
6.2 Introduction	192
6.2.1 The interaction between emotion and cognition talk	194
6.2.2 The importance of recovery in the choice of consequences	196

6.2.2 Talk and retaliation	199
6.2.3 Talk and rumination	202
6.2.4 Talk and self-affirmation.....	205
6.2.5 Talk and active solutions.....	208
6.2.6 Talk and psychological well-being (PWB)	210
6.3 Methods.....	212
6.3.1 Participants & Procedure.....	212
6.3.2 Measures	212
6.3.3 Data Analysis	216
6.3.4 Results	216
6.4 Discussion	230
6.4.1 Limitations	242
6.4.2 Suggestions for future research	244
6.5 Conclusion	247
Chapter 7: Daily diary study of talk in the context of workplace injustice: an exploratory investigation	248
7.1 Chapter Overview	249
7.2 Introduction	249
7.3 Antecedents of talk.....	253
7.4 Talk and its daily consequences.....	255
7.4.1 Positive outcomes following talk	257
7.4.2 Negative outcomes following talk	259
7.5 Methods.....	261
7.5.1 Participants.....	261
7.5.2 Procedure.....	263
7.5.3 Measures	263
7.5.3 Data Analysis	269
7.5.4 Results	269
7.6 Discussion	277
7.6.1 Limitations	282
7.6.2 Future research	283
7.7 Conclusion	286

Chapter 8: Discussion	287
8.1 Chapter Overview	288
8.2 Introduction	288
8.3 Summary of findings of each empirical study	289
8.4 Overall significance and implications of findings	292
8.5 Practical implications	303
8.6 Limitations	306
8.7 Future research	312
8.8 Conclusion	323
References	325
Appendix 1: Interview Topic Guide (study 1)	356
Appendix 2: Example interview transcription (study 1)	359
Appendix 3: Promotional material used in study 2: poster displayed in bus depots and an A5 paper attached to drivers' payslips	362
Appendix 4: Recruitment of diary participants and example of a daily reminder (study 3)	365
Appendix 5: Scales alluding to voice (study 1: chapter 4)	368
Appendix 6: Coding process between coder 1 and coder 2 (study 1, chapter 4)	374
Appendix 7: Packet of information provided to coders: instructions, codebook with examples and recording sheet (study 1, chapter 4)	386
Appendix 8: Supplementary results from the second time point survey (for chapter 5 results)	391
Appendix 9: Supplementary results from the second time point survey (for chapter 6 results)	395

List of Figures

Figure 1.1. The role of unfairness “interventions” in organisational justice research	20
Figure 2.1. A conceptual overview of the theoretical model guiding this thesis, positioning the thesis in the context of the organisational justice literature	26
Figure 3.1. A timeline of the data collection process for each study.	76
Figure 4.1. Comparison of coding categories between coder 1 and coder 2, during coding attempt 2.....	123
Figure 4.2. Diagrammatic overview of a two-factor hypothesised measure of talk, and one-factor alternative for CFA Analysis	137
Figure 4.3. CFA factor loadings for two-factor hypothesised measure of talk, at time 1 and time 2 data points	139
Figure 5.1. Schematic hypothesised model of the antecedents to talk in the context of workplace injustice.....	144
Figure 5.2. The multiple needs model of justice. Cropanzano et al. (2001: 176).....	148
Figure 5.3. Schematic hypothesised model of the antecedents of talk in the context of workplace injustice, with path coefficients.....	174
Figure 5.4. Alternative plausible model, with direct paths from relational and virtue justice needs to both forms of talk.	175
Figure 6.1. Schematic hypothesised model of the consequences of talk in the context of workplace injustice.....	193
Figure 6.2. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and rumination.....	222
Figure 6.3. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and self-affirmation	225
Figure 6.4. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and active solutions	227
Figure 6.5. Schematic hypothesised model of the consequences of talk in the context of workplace injustice with moderation coefficients.....	230

Figure 7.1. Conceptual model for investigation through a ten-day daily diary study...	253
Figure 7.2. Conceptual model for investigation through a ten-day daily diary study, with path coefficients. (Shaded parts provide ease of clarity of path coefficients).....	276
Appendix 3.1. Promotional material used in study 2: poster displayed in bus depots..	363
Appendix 3.2. Promotional material used in study 2: an A5 paper attached to drivers' payslips.....	364
Appendix 4.1. Promotional material used in study 3: recruitment of diary participants	366
Appendix 4.2. Promotional material used in study 3: example of daily reminder email sent to participants.....	367
Appendix 7.1. Example of Excel sheet of talk episodes and recording columns	390
Appendix 9. 1. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and rumination (second time point data)	402
Appendix 9. 2. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and active solutions (second time point data)	403

List of Tables

Table 2.1. Organisational justice types and key scholarly research.....	28
Table 2. 2. Summary of types of talk and key scholarly research	48
Table 3.1. A summary of the research aims, methodology and analytic techniques comprising this thesis' three studies	75
Table 4.1. Overview of the four phases of research comprising study 1	105
Table 4.2. Interview participants' demographic data.....	113
Table 4.3. Descriptive results of the nature and perpetrator of injustice, and ensuing talk, based on interview data.....	114
Table 4.4. Coding categories developed by coder 1 and coder 2 through three coding attempts ¹	120
Table 4.5. Inter-rater reliabilities of the two coding processes	120
Table 4.6. List of items developed to represent emotion and cognition focused talk...	130
Table 4.7. Mean ratings for each emotion and cognition focused item	131
Table 4.8. Final items used for talk scale.....	133
Table 4.9. Confirmatory factor results for emotion and cognition focused talk, using time 1 and time 2 survey data with London bus drivers	138
Table 4.10. Factor loadings for each sub-category of talk measure, emotion and cognition focused talk.	138
Table 5.1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a	169
Table 5.2. Summary of model fit indices.....	170
Table 5.3. Hypothesised direct effects (regression weights) ^a	171
Table 5.4. Hypothesised indirect effects (regression weights) ^a	172
Table 5.5. Hypothesised interaction effects ^a	173
Table 6.1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a	218

Table 6.2. Moderation analyses: Retaliation (hypotheses 1a, b, c).....	220
Table 6.3. Moderation analyses: Rumination (hypotheses 2a, b, c)	221
Table 6.4. Moderation analyses: Self-affirmation (hypotheses 3a, b, c)	224
Table 6.5. Moderation analyses: Active solutions (hypothesis 4a, b, c).....	226
Table 6.6. Moderation analyses: Psychological well-being (hypothesis 5a, b, c)	229
Table 7.1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities.....	271
Table 7.2. Summary of confirmatory factor analysis on this thesis' talk measure	272
Table 7.3. HLM Parameter Estimates for within-person model: antecedents of talk...	273
Table 7.4. HLM Parameter Estimates for within-person model: positive outcomes of talk	274
Table 7.5. HLM Parameter Estimates for within-person model: negative outcomes of talk.....	275
Appendix 6. Table 1. Coding process between coder 1 and 2: coding attempt 1 (10% data).....	375
Appendix 6. Table 2. Coding process between coder 1 and 2: coding attempt 2 (10% data).....	381
Appendix 6. Table 3. Coding process between coder 1 and 2: Final coding categories agreed upon (10% data)	384
Appendix 7. Table 1. Types of talk with examples from the 180 talk episodes collected	389
Appendix 8. Table 1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a	392
Appendix 8. Table 2. Summary of model fit indices	393
Appendix 8. Table 3. Hypothesised direct effects (regression weights) ^a	393
Appendix 8. Table 4. Hypothesised indirect effects ^a	393
Appendix 8. Table 5. Hypothesised Interaction effects ^a	394

Appendix 9. Table 1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a	396
Appendix 9. Table 2. Moderation analyses: Retaliation. Dependent variable: Retaliation	397
Appendix 9. Table 3. Moderation analyses: Rumination. Dependent variable: Rumination.....	398
Appendix 9. Table 4. Moderation analyses: Self-affirmation. Dependent variable: Self- Affirmation.....	399
Appendix 9. Table 5. Moderation analyses: Active solutions. Dependent variable: Active solutions.....	400
Appendix 9. Table 6. Moderation analyses: Psychological well-being. Dependent variable: Psychological well-being	401

Chapter 1:

Introduction

“Justice theorists must start asking *victims* of injustice for input into the “puzzles” we ought to pursue... we may generate more effortful research agendas if we ask ourselves, not as theorists and not as researchers, but as *victims* of injustice: what caused us to feel whatever injustice we experience?; how might it have been prevented?; how might it be resolved?; which (if any) of the justice theories directly speak to this?; and if only a few do, what changes could we make to obtain more guidance in dealing with, preventing, and managing injustice?”

Shapiro (2001: 240-241)

“The time has come for organizational justice researchers to develop and test interventions that are focused on helping employees and organizations recover from fairness violations”

Barclay, Skarlicki and Latham (2009: 201)

“Everybody talks about organizational justice but nobody does anything about it.”

Greenberg (2009: 181)

Organisational justice is a mature field of enquiry within the social sciences dedicated to the study of perceptions of fairness in the workplace. Hundreds of studies spanning over four decades converge on the notion that *justice matters*. It matters to such an extent that profound implications arise when individuals perceive unfairness at work. Employees have been documented as responding to perceptions of injustice by engaging in theft (Greenberg, 1990), enacting revenge (Bies, Tripp & Kramer, 1997; Bradfield & Aquino, 1999), retaliation (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997) or sabotage (Ambrose, Seabright & Schminke, 2002), legal claiming (Goldman, 2001) and reporting increased turnover intentions (Aquino, Griffeth, Allen & Hom, 1997). The impact is notwithstanding effects on individual victims themselves, including heightened negative emotions (Bies

& Tripp, 2002), psychological distress (Tepper, 2001) and sickness absence (Elovainio, Kivimaki & Vahtera, 2002).

Given the negative consequences of such acts, as well as potential cost implications to an organisation and its employees, one can argue that it makes sense for justice scholars to include in their lines of enquiry a focus on how an injustice is experienced by those on the receiving end. Such an agenda might ask what it is that victims of unfairness do, feel and think following their brush with injustice, why, and whether they ever move on (i.e. recover) from such experiences? Ironically however, with an amassing body of literature dedicated to understanding how many types of justice there are, how they are distinguished from one another and how justice judgements are formed, the organisational justice field has largely failed to account for those who experience and suffer workplace injustice. As outlined in the quotes at the start of this chapter, scholars have been making calls for well over a decade now urging for a shift in focus towards the *victims* of workplace injustice. The result has been, unfortunately, a neglect of the victim who is at the heart of an unjust encounter, as well as his/her unjust experience.

Herein lies the starting point of this thesis. Heeding calls from Shapiro (2001) and Barclay et al. (2009), this thesis examines workplace injustice from the perspective of the victim. It seeks to understand the aftermath of injustice through the eyes of those who experience it. In particular, this thesis explores the process of recovery and it attempts to answer such questions as, how does the experience of one who has suffered workplace injustice unfold? How does a victim manage his/her recovery process, and

what are the outcomes of such a process? In addressing Barclay et al.'s. (2009) suggestion for a test of 'interventions' that can aid recovery, this thesis examines *talk*; that is, conversation with others through spoken words. I will explore if, when, and how, talk can assist victims with their recovery process following their experience of organisational injustice.

There are a few terms in the preceding paragraph that will be explained in order to clarify the focus of this thesis. First, injustice and unfairness are used interchangeably throughout this thesis, with both referring to an individual's subjective perceptions in the workplace. This phenomenon will be defined at length in the next chapter.

Second, the Oxford Online Dictionary defines a victim as a "person who has come to feel helpless and passive in the face of misfortune or ill-treatment", and further as one who may possess "a victim mentality". The word victim pertains both to one who has been aggrieved as it does to one who 'plays the victim' in order to justify perceived abuse. In fact, it is often difficult to tease apart the two in research. For the purpose of the present thesis, the word victim is used in the former sense; that is, I take the perspective of one who has experienced injustice at the hands of their organisation. This focus is in keeping with similar studies within organisational sciences (i.e. Aquino, Grover, Bradfield & Allen, 1999; Bies & Tripp, 2002; Barclay et al., 2009; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009). Additionally, I focus on injustice violations that occur between an employee (the *victim*) and his/her organisation, with the term organisation encompassing

its actors, including supervisors, managers and colleagues who are held responsible for perceived injustice by the victim.

Third, recovery is understood as “a return to a normal state of health, mind or strength” (Oxford Online Dictionary). This is the general spirit in which the term is defined in the present thesis. However, more specifically, following Barclay and Saldanha’s (in press) lead, recovery pertains to the process through which an individual manages his/her experience of a violation and the aftermath of that experience. Recovery necessitates an individual working towards a resolution which may take time; recovery entails ‘spill over’ effects from an experience. My focus on recovery includes the cognitive and emotional processes that an individual experiences post-injustice, with such a process including significant others who may play a part in recovery; for example, using talk as a mechanism, I consider the fact that conversation is held with others including colleagues, trade unions, partners, siblings, friends etc.

Finally, one can ask: why talk as a choice of a recovery intervention? Barclay and Saldanha (in press) outline a framework to facilitate our understanding of the role of recovery in the justice sphere. This is displayed in figure 1.1. Drawing on occupational health psychology, they refer to primary, secondary and tertiary interventions. Primary interventions refer to a focus on preventing an issue (for example, preventing violations in the workplace). Secondary interventions take for granted the notion that violations will occur, and are aimed at minimising the impact of the harm. Tertiary interventions seek to mitigate the harm that has been caused by a violation. As will be discussed more

extensively in the next chapter, the organisational justice literature has produced an impressive array of research that addresses these first two types of interventions; there is a literature based on how to prevent unfairness (for example, better training for managers), as well as a handful of recent studies that delineate suitable methods to remedy injustice (for example, providing compensation for victims). My focus in this thesis can be classified as a tertiary intervention – a focus on the victim and how s/he manages their recovery process. This is one avenue of research which is largely absent within the justice literature.

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Prevent violations at work</i> • Better training • i.e. Skarlicki & Latham (1996), Greenberg (2006) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minimise impact of harm</i> • Explanations and remedies • i.e. Reb, Goldman, Kay & Cropanzano (2006) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Minimise harm caused</i> • TALK (present thesis) • i.e. Barclay & Skarlicki (2009)

Figure 1.1. The role of unfairness “interventions” in organisational justice research

Additionally, the choice of talk as a recovery mechanism emanates from clinical, health and social psychology literatures wherein this phenomenon has been demonstrated as having a beneficial impact on individuals who have experienced a negative life event, such as the loss of a loved one. There are no ‘tools’ with regards to recovery within the justice literature to draw on for use within a victim-centred study; for example, there is an absence of frameworks, theories or constructs that may aid a focus on victim-level recovery. Therefore, ‘thinking outside the justice box’ (Barclay et al., 2009) I draw on clinical and social psychological literatures to test the relevance of a talk intervention

within an organisational space. By doing so, I concur with calls from scholars for a ‘boundaryless psychology’ (i.e. Latham, 2003) which promotes the multi-disciplinary nature of psychology and which encourages researchers to build on theory and research outside their immediate speciality. I integrate research on talk to advance our knowledge in workplace justice by specifically examining how talk can facilitate recovery from the experience of injustice.

The overall aim of this thesis is to focus on the experience of injustice from the victim’s perspective. It seeks to examine the aftermath of workplace unfairness, and to explore whether talk can function as a recovery mechanism for victims, and if so, how such a recovery process unfolds. In fulfilling this aim, the thesis is structured as follows:

Chapter 2 presents a conceptual overview of the theoretical model, integrating organisational justice and talk, which guides this thesis. A background to the core literatures of organisational justice and talk are introduced, as this chapter provides definitions and discusses key research which sets the backdrop to the present thesis.

Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodology utilised in the studies that comprise this thesis. The rationale for each study conducted as well as its chosen methodology, including the selection of participants, measures and analytic procedures, is provided.

Chapter 4, 5, 6 and 7 are the empirical chapters of this thesis. **Chapter 4** comprises a mixed-method approach (interviews and surveys) aimed at investigating the phenomenon of talk in the context of workplace injustice. This chapter also presents the development of a new measure of talk that will be used in the subsequent empirical chapters.

Chapter 5 is the first of two survey-led research chapters. This chapter explores the antecedents of talk. Data is presented from a sample of London bus drivers. A discussion concludes with key theoretical outcomes emanating from this study, as well as limitations and improvements for future research.

Chapter 6 is the second of the two survey-led research chapters. This chapter explores the consequences of talk. Data is presented, once again, from a sample of London bus drivers. A discussion presents key theoretical insights, as well as limitations and improvements for future research.

Chapter 7 is the final empirical chapter. This chapter presents analyses from an on-line diary (experienced sampling) study exploring a victim's daily experiences of injustice and the subsequent impact of this on talk and victim-centred proximal outcomes. Data is presented from a convenience sample of professional working personnel. A discussion of key findings is presented, followed by limitations and improvements for future research.

Chapter 8 synthesises the overall findings of this thesis. This chapter also discusses the theoretical, practical and methodological implications of the thesis, with limitations of and directions for future research presented.

Chapter 2:

Literature Review: Organisational Justice and Talk

2.1 Chapter overview

This chapter introduces the two main theoretical lenses for the present thesis: organisational justice and talk. The first section (2.2) begins by presenting an overview of the justice literature, and discussing its shortcomings in paying scant attention to the aftermath of an injustice from the perspective of the victim. The theoretical springboard for the present thesis will then be presented by discussing the merits of integrating a talk intervention into a justice context, in section 2.3. Talk is defined and an argument is made for its utility as a recovery mechanism in the context workplace injustice. Figure 2.1 captures the theoretical model guiding this thesis.

2.2 Organisational justice: An overview and definition

“Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought.”

-John Rawls, 1971

Justice is a phenomenon which has attracted intellectual curiosity over millennia. One of the earliest accounts of justice is attributable to Socrates, who in Plato’s *Republic*, engages in lengthy discussion over a simple question: is it better to be just than unjust? Other influential figures in history have similarly sought to deliberate on this construct, from Hume (1739/1978) in his *Treatise on Human Nature*, Mills (1861/2007) in his philosophical defence of utilitarianism in ethics, and more recent writings on political philosophy by the late John Rawls (1971/2001). What binds these accounts of justice together is their conceptualisation of this phenomenon as a normative ideal: that is, justice as it *should* be (Colquitt, Greenberg & Zapata-Phelan, 2005).

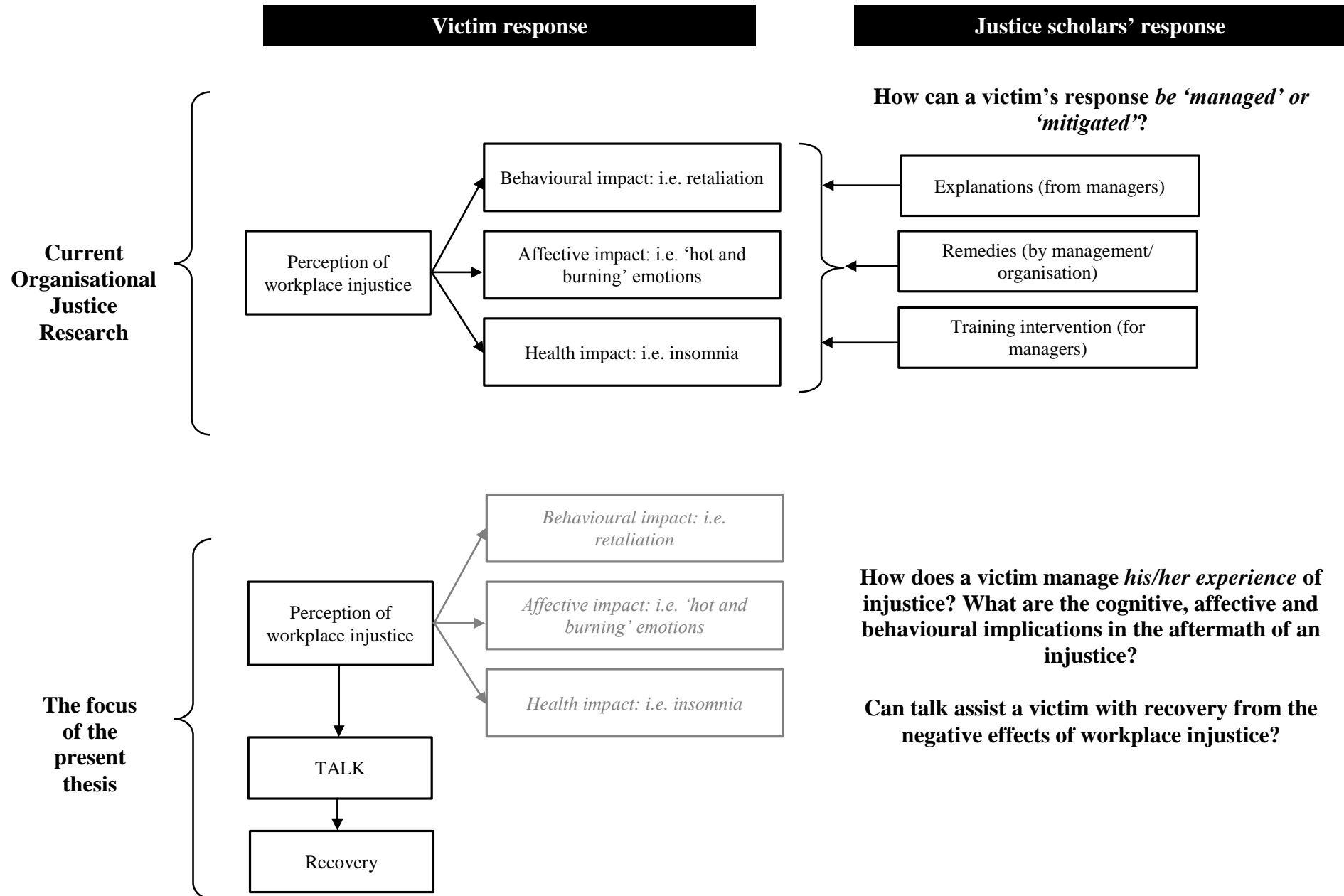


Figure 2.1. A conceptual overview of the theoretical model guiding this thesis, positioning the thesis in the context of the organisational justice literature

The study of organisational justice, a term coined by Greenberg (1987), is the study of individuals' perceptions of fairness in the workplace. By focusing on subjective and phenomenological concerns about fairness, organisational justice is conceived of in terms of how it is perceived by individuals, as opposed to a normative ideal.

The field has amassed an array of evidence over decades confirming that justice matters to individuals at work. In response to workplace events, an individual asks 'was that fair?'; their response to this question has profound implications for them as well as their organisation (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001; Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter & Ng, 2001). Hundreds of studies demonstrate that perceptions of fairness explain unique variance in attitudes and behaviours pertaining to: organisational commitment, citizenship behaviour towards one's organisation, trust in management and task performance (Colquitt, 2013).

A four-dimensional construct of justice explains justice perceptions as pertaining to the fairness of (i) outcomes (ii) procedures (iii) interpersonal treatment and (iv) information about procedures or outcomes (Colquitt, 2001). These correspond to distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational justice respectively. A summary of justice types, their definitions and key studies can be found in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1. Organisational justice types and key scholarly research

Justice type	Description	Empirical evidence
Distributive Adams (1965) Deutsch (1975) Leventhal (1976)	An employee's perception of the fairness of their outcomes. Judgement made in reference to the following norms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Equity</i> (allocation of outcomes equivalent to one's input i.e. pay, reward) ▪ <i>Equality</i> (allocation of outcomes regarding principles of equality) ▪ <i>Need</i> (allocation of outcomes according to needs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Greenberg (1990) ▪ Mowday & Colwell (2003) ▪ Cowherd & Levine (1992)
Procedural Thibaut & Walker (1975) Leventhal (1980)	An employee's perception of the fairness of procedures used to determine outcomes, along the following criteria: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Voice</i> (opportunity to express views) ▪ <i>Consistency</i> (procedures that are consistent across time) ▪ <i>Bias suppression</i> (suppressing bias in decision making) ▪ <i>Accuracy</i> (using valid facts in decision making) ▪ <i>Correctability</i> (allowing employees to correct/appeal decisions) ▪ <i>Representativeness</i> (account for the concerns of all relevant parties) ▪ <i>Ethicality</i> (conform to ethical and moral standards) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Folger (1977) ▪ Ball, Trevino & Sims (1994) ▪ Landy, Barnes and Murphy (1978) ▪ Dipboye & de Pontbraind (1981) ▪ Fry & Cheney (1981) ▪ Greenberg (1987) ▪ Konovsky & Cropanzano (1993)
Interpersonal Bies & Moag (1986)	An employee's perception of interpersonal treatment received from authority figures, regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Respect</i> (dignified treatment during interactions) ▪ <i>Propriety</i> (refraining from improper statements during interactions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Bies (1985, 1986) ▪ Bies & Moag (1986) ▪ Bies & Shapiro (1987) ▪ Tyler and Bies (1990) ▪ Greenberg (1994)
Informational Bies & Moag (1986)	An employees' perception of the fairness of explanations used to convey information by authority figures, judged according to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Justification</i> (providing an adequate explanation) ▪ <i>Truthfulness</i> (being honest and open in discussions about decisions) 	
Overall Ambrose & Schminke (2009)	An employee's global evaluation of the fairness of an entity or an event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ambrose & Arnaud (2005) ▪ Kim & Leung (2007) ▪ Holtz & Harold (2009) ▪ Jones & Martens (2009)

Distributive justice

Distributive justice is defined as an individual's assessment of the fairness of their *outcomes*. In his equity theory, Adams (1965) postulated that individuals calculate the ratio of their contributions (i.e., education, experience) with their outcomes (i.e., pay, rewards), comparing this ratio with the corresponding ratios of a comparison other, such as a co-worker. If these ratios match, an individual feels a sense of equity. However, if an individual's input/output ratios fall below a comparison others, they are likely to experience anger; if an individual's outcome/input ratio exceeds that of a comparison other, this can result in feelings of guilt. In addition to equity, other standards also determine outcome fairness: *equality* focuses on group solidarity/harmony, and *need* is the desire to promote personal welfare (Deutsch, 1975; Leventhal, 1976).

Procedural justice

Procedural justice is defined as an individual's assessment of the fairness of the decision making process used to determine an outcome. Research in a legal setting by Thibaut and Walker (1975) found that disputants viewed a procedure as fair *only if* they perceived themselves to have control over the presentation of their arguments, and had time to present their case. This effect is referred to as the 'fair process effect' pertaining to procedures that seek participants' opinions versus those that do not (Folger, 1977). Leventhal (1980) extended this research by postulating that key to process fairness was adherence to six principles: *consistency* (across persons and times), *bias suppression* (i.e. of personal self-interest), *accuracy* (of valid information), *correctability* (of inaccurate decisions), *representativeness* (of all the parties affected) and *ethicality* (conforming to moral and ethical standards).

Interactional justice (interpersonal and informational)

Interactional justice refers to the relationship between an authority figure and those subject to his/her decision, specifically, an individual's assessment of the fairness of the treatment they receive when procedures are implemented (Bies & Moag, 1986). It is argued that four rules underlie the proper enactment of interpersonal justice: *truthfulness* (openness and honesty), *justification* (adequate explanations), *respect* (sincerity and dignity) and *propriety* (the avoidance of improper questions and statements) (Bies, 1985, 1987; Bies & Moag, 1986; Bies & Shapiro, 1987). Empirical research provides evidence for the importance of interactional justice (e.g. Bies, 1985; Tyler and Bies, 1990), specifically in the context of smoking bans (Greenberg, 1994) and downsizing (Brockner, DeWitt, Grover & Reed, 1990).

In a final development of the four-factor model, Greenberg (1993) argued for the splitting of interactional justice into two separate types. Respect and propriety fit the criteria of *interpersonal* justice, referring to the fairness of interpersonal treatment received from an authority figure. Justification and truthfulness comprise *informational* justice which is defined as an assessment of the adequacy of explanations received from authority figures about decisions and outcomes. The validity of such a split has been supported by the four-factor model of justice (Colquitt, 2001).

Overall justice

In a more recent development, it is argued that when individuals assess what is fair or not, they react to a global, general and overall sense of fairness – they do not think in terms of specific justice types. Overall justice is defined as a “...global evaluation

of fairness...” towards an organisation, entity or event by Ambrose and Schminke (2009: 493), who reported that distributive, procedural and interactional justice were all predictors of overall justice judgements.

Summary of organisational justice: An overview and definition

Research has seen the evolution of a field of enquiry that currently construes justice along four dimensions of outcomes, procedures, interpersonal treatment and information adequacy. An employees’ positive answer to the question ‘*was that fair?*’ has been evidenced as leading to beneficial outcomes for organisations and its management, such as commitment, trust and increased performance. A key question permeating the justice literature over the last two decades, however, has sought to understand implications of when an employee answers ‘no’ to the question ‘*was that fair?*’. This field of enquiry is referred to as organisational *in*justice, and it is to this we turn to provide a backdrop to the aims of the present thesis.

2.2.2 What is organisational injustice and why does it matter?

“What are the consequences of outcomes being perceived as meeting or not meeting the (distributive) norms of justice? Does a man treated unfairly simply express dissatisfaction?...Are there not other consequences of unfair exchanges?”.

-John Stacey Adams,

1965

Justice researchers have long been interested in the outcomes of fairness. But a shift in research over the last two decades has turned attention away from exploring the positive outcomes of just treatment (such as increased employee satisfaction, commitment and performance), to an exploration of the consequences of injustice.

Referred to as the *darker side* of justice theorising (Ambrose, 2002), and in heeding Adams' calls, justice scholars concur on the notion that injustice is a ubiquitous reality of organisational life (Bies & Tripp, 2002).

As represented in figure 2.1, workplace injustice matters since profound implications at a behavioural, affective and health level arise when individuals perceive workplace unfairness. Each of these shall be briefly reviewed, before outlining justice scholars' response to the management of these implications.

Behavioural implications of injustice

These implications confirm the idiom '*an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth*' as they demonstrate a victim's capacity for 'getting even' as a means of redressing the balance of injustice (Aquino, Tripp & Bies, 2006). Behavioural outcomes have been evidenced in the form of employee theft as a direct response to underpayment (Greenberg, 1990), as well as retaliatory behaviour (Folger & Skarlicki, 1999; Skarlicki & Folger, 1997) which was found to be evident when employees perceived low procedural and low interactional justice. Similarly, sabotage (the disruption of an organisation's operations), has been demonstrated as a response to an additive effect of perceptions of low distributive, procedural and interactional justice (Ambrose et al., 2002). One of the darker sides to perceived wrong-doing is revenge, defined as an act intended to damage and cause injury to another party held responsible for harm (Bies et al., 1997; Aquino, Bies & Tripp, 2001; Jones, 2009). Scholars have found that victims will enact revenge when they perceive that an injustice obstructs one's goals, violates norms and promises or contributes to status or power derogation (Bies et al., 1997; Bies & Tripp, 2005).

Affective implications of injustice

Bies and Tripp (2002: 204) assert that "...to understand justice in organizations, one must understand the events that arouse the sense of injustice – the emotions of injustice". Research on the *affective* implications of injustice postulate negative emotions as outcomes of injustice. In one of the earliest studies explicitly linking justice with emotions, Weiss, Suckow and Cropanzano (1999) showed that while happiness and pride were driven solely by outcome favorability, anger levels were highest when participants perceived their outcomes to be unfavourable *and* procedures biased against them. Barclay, Skarlicki and Pugh (2005) similarly found justice interaction effects in predicting the negative emotions of anger and guilt. They found that perceptions of low procedural or interactional injustice (treatment during layoffs) combined to predict high levels of negative emotions, regardless of how favourable outcomes were perceived to be. Similarly, Bies (1987) notes that injustice leads to moral outrage, which serves as a precursor to revenge. Bies and Tripp (1996, 2002, 2005) not only found that participants in their study described emotional outcomes of injustice as 'bitter', 'hot' and 'volatile', but also that the more angry the victim, the stronger their motivation for revenge.

Health implications of injustice

Injustice has been noted as affecting an individual's psychological, physical and mental health. Tepper (2001) showed that employees' injustice perceptions were related to their psychological health, which he measured in the form of self-reported psychological distress; these results were evident even after controlling for individuals' trait susceptibility to experiencing such distress. The research of Elovainio, and colleagues conceptualises injustice as a psychosocial predictor of

health (i.e. the interrelation of social factors and individuals' thought and behaviour) (Elovainio, Kivimaki & Helkama, 2001; Elovainio, Kivimaki & Vahtera, 2002). They argue that low procedural and interactional justice is associated with increased risks of minor psychological morbidity, sickness absence and poor health status (see also, Kivimaki, Elovainio, Vahtera & Ferrie, 2003). They also found an association between insomnia and unfairness (Elovainio, Kivimaki, Vahtera, Keltikangas-Jarvinen & Virtanen, 2003), a result corroborated by Greenberg (2006) in a sample of nurses. A recent meta-analysis by Robins, Ford and Tetrick (2012) confirms that injustice is linked to poorer health in employees. Specifically, perceptions of unfairness were found to be strongly associated with poorer physical and mental health, as manifested in such indicators as depression, anxiety, psychological distress, higher blood pressure and impaired immune functioning.

Summary of organisational injustice and why it matters

If the presence of injustice is a ubiquitous reality of organisational life such that it inflicts profound implications on victims at its receiving end, the question then becomes, what does the literature have to say about how to mitigate or manage such behavioural, affective and health related implications? I shall now review justice research that has sought to address the victim experience by attempting to 'manage' such effects.

2.2.3 'Managing' and 'mitigating' the responses of victims of injustice

Justice scholars were quick to recognise that the managerial implications emanating from such victim reactions aimed at 'getting even' were not desirable for organisations or their management (Bies, 1987). In light of this, somewhat scant and

disparate channels of research have sought to uncover how victim reactions to perceived injustice can be managed, and by definition, mitigated. There are three major strands of work attesting such aims: explanations, remedies and training interventions. In line with figure 1.1 from chapter 1, explanations and remedies fall into a category of secondary interventions aimed at minimising the impact of injustice, while training can be considered a primary intervention with its aim of preventing violations.

Explanations

The bulk of this research has converged on uncovering the mitigating effects of explanations, defined as “...revealing the reason for, or cause of, an event that is not immediately obvious...” (Shaw, Wild & Colquitt, 2003: 445). Colquitt and Chertkoff (2002) emphasise that authority figures in organisations can utilise explanations for a variety of reasons including legitimising their actions, managing conflict, impression management and reframing negative consequences. Two types of explanations have been explored: excuses and justifications. *Excuses* are explanations in which the harm-doer admits their actions are unfavourable but denies full responsibility. *Justifications* occur when a harm-doer accepts full responsibility but denies their actions as inappropriate. The crux of research within this realm has sought to uncover how victims’ attributions of blame can be altered and their negative responses mitigated, in order to prevent the occurrence of ‘negative’ behaviours, such as revenge, and ‘negative’ attitudes, such as decreased organisational citizenship.

Bies and Shapiro (1988) demonstrated the effects of explanations in a laboratory setting and a field survey. They predicted and found evidence for their hypothesis that in a context of unfairness (an unfavourable decision) a justification claiming mitigating circumstances (events in the external environment) would enhance ratings of procedural fairness. In additional research, Bies, Shapiro and Cummings (1988) examined the causal accounts managers gave to mitigate their responsibility for the failure of an event. They found that the claim for mitigating circumstances was not as important as the evidence in support of it – this included adequacy of the explanation as well as perceived sincerity of the reasons supporting the claim. It was these two elements that were inversely linked to an employees' tendency to perceive injustice, complain or disapprove of their boss. Shapiro (1991) later cited research asserting that the adequacy of an explanation was linked to an assessment of the account provider's honesty: if the account provider was seen as honest, then the account was deemed as adequate. In a meta-analysis of 54 samples, Shaw et al. (2003) similarly found that explanation provision and adequacy had beneficial effects on distributive and procedural justice outcomes and retaliation: converting their adequacy retaliation result into a binomial effect size, they argue that employees were 43% less likely to retaliate after a decision if an adequate explanation was provided.

Remedies

A second strand of research focuses on organisational remedies. Defined as an action intended to atone for a perceived injustice, remedies are carried out by an organisation or its agent with the aim of restoring justice perceptions in the mind of a victim, and eliminating their desire for revenge (Reb et al., 2006). Research

primarily by Reb, Goldman, Kray and Cropanzano (2006) draws on the multiple needs model of justice (Cropanzano, Byrne, Bobocel & Rupp, 2001) which posits four justice needs: control (concern with predicting and controlling outcomes), belonging (concern with forming close bonds with others), self-regard (concern with maintaining a positive view of the self) and meaning (concern with the world as a meaningful place). In remedying violations of these needs, the scholars assert three main types of organisational remedies: apologies, monetary compensation and punishment of the transgressor.

Violations of the belonging and self-esteem needs are said to be atoned by a public apology, a socio-emotional remedy. An apology is described as an act of interpersonal affiliation. It is appropriate since it can repair one's standing in a group (Lind & Tyler, 1988). Unlike explanations which involve an avoidance of the attribution of injustice, an apology does not deny responsibility but rather attempts to atone for the needs that have been violated. Indeed, research emphasises the effectiveness of apologies over explanations given that apologies increase empathy towards the perpetrator (McCullough, Worthington & Rachal, 1997).

A violation of the control need is argued as being atoned for by monetary compensation, an instrumental remedy. Research evidences that individuals are concerned with procedural fairness since it provides them with control over outcomes (Thibaut & Walker, 1975), with *injustice* rendering such control as uncertain. Monetary compensation is argued as being appropriate given it provides victims with a sense of control. In a field and lab study, Reb et al. (2006) found that

procedural injustice was indeed better atoned by an instrumental remedy of monetary compensation.

A violation of one's need for meaning is argued as being best atoned for by punitive remedies, such as inflicting appropriate levels of harm on the perpetrator. A need for meaning is driven by a concern for social order and fairness. Research demonstrates that moral outrage follows from a transgression of this need, with individuals reacting by attempting to punish the perpetrator (Folger, Cropanzano & Goldman, 2005). According to Folger and Cropanzano (1998), it is interactional injustice, involving a violation of one's dignity and esteem by another, that is likely to impact moralistic responses. Punishment of a perpetrator can restore moral meaning by affirming normative values of an organisation. Indeed, Reb et al. (2006) found support for interactional justice fitting the domain of meaning needs, and in turn, punitive remedies (such as disciplinary action against an offender) better at atoning a violation of meaning needs.

Training interventions

A final strand of research considers the usefulness of training interventions for supervisors, managers and leaders. These studies take as their starting point the centrality of an authority figure (a decision maker) in being able to manage the justice perceptions of workers, and prevent employee grievances or arbitration. It is argued that decision makers can be trained to be seen as fair by their employees, especially when having to implement seemingly unfavourable and unjust decisions (Cole & Latham, 1997).

In an early study, Skarlicki and Latham (1996) found in a quasi-experiment that training leaders in skills of organisational justice increased citizenship behaviours on part of their employees. Training techniques included lectures, case studies and role plays over a three-week period. Participants were taught about Leventhal's (1980) procedural justice principles (consistency, bias suppression, accuracy, correctability, representativeness and ethicality), the importance of giving employees a voice in decision making (Folger, 1977) and the interactional justice principles of respect, propriety, truthfulness and justification (Bies & Moag, 1986). These results were supported in a subsequent study by Skarlicki and Latham (1997) which additionally demonstrated that leader training increased employees' perceptions of their leaders' fairness.

Cole and Latham (1997) extended these early studies and demonstrated that training managers in procedural justice principles increased their effectiveness in taking disciplinary action against employees. Role-play exercises designed around real organisational incidents were coupled with disciplinary and subject matter experts (union officials, attorneys) rating managers' disciplinary fairness behaviour. Results were supportive: employee disciplinary meetings conducted by managers trained in procedural justice were rated as significantly fairer than meetings conducted by managers who did not undergo such training.

Summary of managing and mitigating the responses of victims of injustice

Current justice literature addressing the negative implications arising from workplace injustice has posited three types of responses for use by organisations and their management: explanations, remedies and training interventions. Whilst

contributing by providing advice for organisations and managers alike as to how to repair justice violations and manage conflict, it is the contention of this thesis that there are shortcomings with these literatures. In sum, and rather ironically, they ignore the victim who is at the centre of an injustice.

2.2.4 Limitations with ‘managing’ and ‘mitigating’ the responses of victims of injustice

There are three critiques that can be levelled at the extant justice literatures treatment of the victim in the context of workplace injustice. First, it adopts primarily a managerial-focused perspective. Second, it personifies a trend towards cognition. Third, it takes an event based approach with one-off solutions. I shall discuss each in turn, asking questions that begin to outline the theoretical focus of the present thesis.

A manager-centred focus

A manager-centred perspective emphasises a focus on viewing and addressing issues of injustice through the ‘eyes’ and interests of managers, leaders and ultimately, the organisation (Bies & Tripp, 2002). This perspective theorises what a manager and an organisation can do to oversee and handle the unfairness that they might have been involved in creating: explanations can be viewed as managerial controlled methods for ‘fixing’ what has been broken, remedies for atoning mistakes made and training interventions equipping those in charge with the power to lessen any intentions employees may have to raise grievances. The scales are swung in favour of managers (Bies & Tripp, 2002); it is through their perspective that we have some understanding of the notion that victims react to violations of fairness. What is

troubling about this perspective is that the presence of unfairness appears to be linked directly to the personality of employees – it is employees who are vengeful. Indeed, Bies and Tripp (2002: 214) argue that a managerial-centred perspective construes victim reactions to injustice as part of the personality of malcontent employees who, if they are professional, will “...squelch, swallow, suppress, eliminate or otherwise control themselves...” What is striking is that in tandem with such a perspective, a fleet of justice studies sought to uncover the intricacies of employee personalities that made them more susceptible to perceive unfairness (Brennan & Skarlicki, 2004; Mount, Ilies & Johnson, 2006; Cohen-Charash & Muller, 2007): for example, Skarlicki, Folger and Tesluk (1999) posit that individuals high in negative affectivity (those prone to experience greater distress and dissatisfaction) are more likely to perceive unfairness and subsequently retaliate.

One can argue that such justice research has sought to design solutions to *control* an individual’s discontent. The problem with this is that in its attempt to control, the manager centred perspective relegates a victim to the position of a passive recipient with no input into his/her own injustice experience: in other words, it does not account for the victim’s experience of an injustice.

Trend towards cognition

Bies and Tripp (2002: 204) critique the extant justice literature for its predominant focus on the “...cognitive high ground...” Colquitt (2013) reiterates this notion by arguing that a movement that has shaped justice research over the decades is a trend towards cognition. Justice and injustice have been viewed primarily through the lens

of “mental deliberation” (ibid: 19). This is evident in research that has sought to answer questions such as: what is justice, and, how are justice judgements formed?

In relating this to the present thesis, the trend towards cognition has resulted in a somewhat calculative flavour to the justice literature (Colquitt, 2013). Rational explanations are posited as the antidote to appeasing employees made unhappy through unfairness; remedies are reasoned and coherent atonements for fixing injustices that impinge upon an employees’ psychological needs, and training is a cogent response to preventing, if not dissuading, employees to refrain from any organisationally targeted vengeance post-injustice. We are aware that injustice can spur retaliatory reactions in those who are aggrieved, but what the literature on ‘managing’ and ‘mitigating’ injustice does not address is the emotional implications on victims in the aftermath of their injustice experience: how do they feel and why might this be important? One could argue that there exists disengagement between what justice researchers have researched with regards to ‘managing’ victim responses, and what the very real victim experience post-injustice might possibly be. This is even more surprising in light of the steady trajectory of research that has begun exploring the affective implications of injustice (i.e. Barclay et al, 2005).

Event-based approach and one-off solution

The different perspectives to ‘managing’ and ‘mitigating’ victim responses to injustice have largely adopted an event-based approach with one-off solutions (Barclay & Saldhana, in press). In other words, perceptions of unfairness – such as receiving an unfair evaluation or being spoken to rudely – when reacted upon in ways that drive retaliatory behaviour are managed by explanations, remedies and

training interventions which are reactions to *specific acts* of injustice. What these perspectives are essentially doing is addressing the *event* of an injustice but not its aftermath. An event-based approach fails to acknowledge that there may exist an aftermath of injustice from the perspective of the victim. The experience of injustice from the victim's perspective may not be 'one-off': akin to switching a light on and off, their experience may not be 'switched on' by unfairness and 'switched off' by a 'mitigating' intervention. An event-based perspective begs the question of whether victim responses to injustice can be better construed as a process, perhaps unfolding over time. Discrete responses to a victim's experience of injustice may atone in that moment, but may not address the aftermath; indeed, how might the victim be feeling right after their experience and even the following day? These questions are important if we are to appreciate the full scale and impact of an unjust event.

Summary of limitations with 'managing' and 'mitigating' the responses of victims of injustice

Current scholarly responses to addressing the profound implications arising from injustice have been critiqued for rather ironically relegating the victim to the role of a passive recipient in the context of his/her own injustice experience. We can ask to what extent a victim of injustice would find the foci of this research a fruitful insight into their very real experience; will the findings of current research help victims more effectively manage their experience (Shapiro, 2001)? In line with the bottom half of figure 2.1, it is the contention of this thesis that the victim of an injustice be 're'-positioned: rather than a passive observer, the victim's experience and a focus on his/her recovery should be central to research.

2.2.5 Victim recovery from injustice: The introduction of *talk*

The present thesis aims to offer an alternative perspective on understanding the victim in the context of workplace injustice. It aims to re-position the victim squarely back into the foci of *injustice* research. It seeks to achieve this in three ways.

First, I will account for victims' emotional and cognitive needs. Justice theorising highlights the interplay of both emotions and cognitions; we know that injustice is an intense 'hot and burning' experience (Bies & Tripp, 2002) that impacts one's sense of identity, control and meaning. I ask, to what extent are cognitions and emotions central in a victim's experience post-injustice?

Second, I follow recent calls from justice scholars to shift our theoretical perspective. Weiss and Rupp (2011: 83) argue for a person-centred work psychology that focuses on the "...lived through experience of working....a work psychology that is person-centric and squarely focused on the worker". Rather than observing this lived through experience through the eyes and interests of managers and organisations, a person-centric agenda pertains to attaining subjective knowledge of the person experiencing an injustice; it is an account that is fully appreciative of what an individual is experiencing in the 'moment'. In a similar vein, Barclay and Skarlicki (2008) call for justice scholars to appreciate the perspective of the aggrieved employee and how they emotionally, cognitively and behaviourally navigate a workplace violation. In sum, applied to this thesis, a person-centred perspective is one that explores justice/injustice from the victim's viewpoint as opposed to from the standpoint of the management or an organisation.

Third, I draw on Barclay and Saldhana's (in press: 14) notion of *recovery* as "...the process through which individuals manage the implications arising from the initial violation as well as the aftermath of an injustice." Unlike explanations, remedies or training interventions, a focus on recovery is not event-based; this is because injustice can leave an impact on its victims which spans beyond the event that has occurred. Recovery necessitates an individual working towards a resolution. I make the case that an injustice will change an individual's thought and emotional pattern, as well as perhaps their relationship with their organisation; in other words, an individual does not revert back to their 'pre-injustice-self'. Recovery encompasses a victim's emotional and thought processes through ongoing efforts to cope, in order to return to a state of equilibrium as deemed fit by them: it includes the victim questioning their esteem needs (*am I valued? am I good enough to be here?*), their sense of meaning (*is this workplace a virtuous one?*) as well as experiencing a host of emotions (from anger to sadness and perhaps through to renewed optimism).

In exploring recovery, I evaluate a victim's engagement in both *positive* and *negative* outcomes. It is often difficult to tease apart judgements pertaining to whether victim actions following talk might be 'good' or 'bad', as we can ask: for whom? For example, retaliatory responses can be argued as being *good* for a victim in that they can assist with releasing pent-up frustration. They can be equally *bad* for an individual in both a moralistic sense, such that one may argue it is 'better to take the high ground rather than play tit-for-tat', and the emotional and cognitive resources that they consume in their exertion; there may also be a potentially negative impact for a victim from an organisation's perspective. I explore both good and bad responses as outcomes of engaging in talk and define these rather simply as those

that may facilitate recovery by implying working towards a solution to one's predicament, versus those that may lead to stifling one's ability to move on because they consume a victim's emotional, cognitive and behavioural resources.

Recovery is as much an intra-individual process, as it is an inter-individual one. My exploration of recovery includes investigating a victim's cognitive and emotional journey post-injustice by drawing on the phenomenon of *talk*. I posit talk as a victim-centred mechanism which may assist an individual with recovering from the impact of unfairness. The concept of talk has not hitherto been explored in the context of victims of workplace unfairness: this thesis aims to do so by bridging together literatures on talk and organisational justice. Talk is a field of enquiry within clinical, health and social psychology, and has been described as leading to improved psychological, emotional and behavioural benefits (Scheff, 2001; Rimé, 2009). I will explore if, when, and how, talk can assist victims with recovery from the effects of organisational injustice, and the degree to which talk may influence individual and organisational level relevant outcomes. The literature on talk will now be reviewed.

2.3 Talk: An overview

The Oxford Online Dictionary (2011) defines talk as: "Communication by spoken words" and to "Speak in order to give information or express ideas or feelings". Though a simple, everyday natural occurrence, the study of talk has historically occupied a central place in philosophical and psychological literatures. In an early account of its benefits in *Poetics*, Aristotle argued for the healing properties of expression, referring to this process as one that 'purges' and 'cleanses'. In modern

times, perhaps the figure most synonymous with talk is Sigmund Freud, whose theory of abreaction (Breuer & Freud, 1895) made popular the ‘talking cure’ which assumes an integral position in clinical psychology theory even today. Talk has also featured in the organisational sciences, albeit in very unconnected literatures.

Talk is a concept with as many definitions and applications as the literatures to which it belongs. It is also a phenomenon which has attracted a great deal of controversy since early conceptualisations of its benefits in the research of Freud. Despite its multifarious research contexts, this thesis draws from studies and research primarily conducted within clinical and social psychology. This is due to its rich and abundant insight into talk as a recovery mechanism. Before turning to this literature and providing a rationale for its usage, talk as featured in the organisational sciences literature will be reviewed first.

In the following sections, I will define talk as it is referenced within the organisational sciences and critique this literature. Then I will justify why I draw on talk research within clinical and social psychology. An insight into the benefits of talk and reasons for its effectiveness are outlined. I then integrate clinical and social psychology research into an organisational injustice context. A full overview of each type of talk considered in this chapter can be found in table 2.2.

Table 2. 2. Summary of types of talk and key scholarly research

	Type of Talk	Description	Empirical evidence
Organisational sciences	Workplace Gossip	Informal, evaluative talk. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Negative gossip</i>: an act of political deviance intended to harm. ▪ <i>Positive gossip</i>: spreading favourable news about another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kurland & Pelled (2000) ▪ Robinson & Bennett (1995) ▪ Michelson & Mouly (2002)
	Conflict management	Relations between organisation and its workers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Talk is formal conversation encouraged by a mediator. ▪ Explanations and social accounts key 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Sitkin & Bies (1993) ▪ DeDreu, Weingart & Kwon (2000) ▪ Shapiro (1991) ▪ Shaw, Wild & Colquitt (2003)
	Voice	Efforts to change an objectionable state of affairs by employees. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Employee appeals to higher authority. ▪ Central to justice studies where voice procedures, rather than mute ones, are perceived as fairer; <i>fair-process effect</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Hirschman (1970) ▪ Rusbult, Zembrodt & Gunn (1982) ▪ Folger (1977) ▪ Greenberg & Folger (1983) ▪ Thibaut & Walker (1975)
	Social support	A coping resource. Workplace social support draws from broader social support literature. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Three forms: <i>instrumental</i> (paying bills), <i>informational</i> (providing useful information) and <i>emotional</i> (empathy). ▪ Workplace social support construed as communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ House, Kahn, McLeod & Williams (1985) ▪ Thoits (1995) ▪ Beehr, King & King (1990) ▪ Fenlason & Beehr (1994) ▪ Beehr, Jex, Stacy & Murray (2000)
Clinical psychology	Clinical perspective: early years	Talking about one's negative experience brought about relief. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Made famous by Freud's patient 'Anna O'. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Breuer & Freud (1895) ▪ Bushman (2002) ▪ Hornerger (1959) ▪ Berkowitz (1989)
	Clinical perspective: current thinking	Emotional discharge coupled with cognitive processing is vital for recovery. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emotional discharge: catharsis ▪ Cognitive processing: understanding, positive reflection, reinterpretation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Breuer & Freud (1895) ▪ Scheff & Bushell (1984) ▪ Scheff (2001) ▪ Green & Murray (1975) ▪ Greenberg (2002)
Social psychology	Social psychology: talk as social sharing	A socially shared language. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emotional sharing: talking about emotions ▪ Cognitive sharing: talkers reorganise motives, modify schemas, reframe. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rimé (2009) ▪ Rimé (2007) ▪ Pennebaker, Zech & Rimé (2001)

2.3.1 Talk in organisational science research

The construct of talk is largely absent from organisational justice research, and only exists in a piecemeal fashion in literature under the umbrella of organisational sciences. Four distinct conceptualisations of talk in four distinct streams of research are notable: gossip, conflict management, voice and social support.

Workplace Gossip

Often termed grapevine activity or rumour, gossip is defined as “...informal and evaluative talk in an organization, usually among no more than a few individuals, about another member of that organization who is not present...” (Kurland & Pelled, 2000: 429). A distinction is made between positive and negative gossip. Negative gossip has traditionally been connoted in negative terms, such as “idle chatter, chitchat or the evil tongue” (ibid: 429). Arising largely from religious writings, this form of gossip is considered improper and overly subjective, since its purpose is to *smear* or *harm* the name of another through unethical behaviour, such as spreading information about romances between organisational members (Michelson & Mouly, 2002). In their typology of deviant workplace behaviours, Robinson and Bennett (1995: 566) highlight gossip as an act of political deviance. The deliberate relaying of incorrect information is aimed at damaging the professional reputation of others in order to reinforce one’s own standing.

Conversely, positive gossip is defined as consisting of favourable news about others. Kurland and Pelled (2000) argue that positive gossip leads to reward power since the gossiper may be perceived as one who shares positive news about others, contributing to the strengthening of the gossipers’ reputation and/or career. Positive

gossip reinforces social bonding between participants and can be considered a release of tension and anxiety (Michelson & Mouly, 2002).

Conflict management

Conflict typically occurs between two parties, such as either an organisation and its workers or members of teams. Conflict arises when one party perceives that another's behaviours or values are incompatible with theirs, or that there is a scarcity of resources (Sitkin & Bies, 1993).

One theme central to conflict management research is that talk is effective in repairing relationships between the conflicting parties (Sitkin & Bies, 1993; DeDreu, Weingart & Kwon, 2000). This field of study essentially refers to talk as a *formal* (i.e. non-opportunistic) conversation that is encouraged by a mediator, whose role it is to get disputing parties to talk with the aim of relationship reparation. Five conflict management styles are drawn on in the literature, and given various differing names: forcing (dominating), withdrawing (avoiding), smoothing (accommodating), compromising and problem-solving (Blake & Mouton, 1981). Von Glinow, Shapiro and Brett (2004) argue that conflict management styles such as integrative bargaining or interest discussion are favoured as part of mediation over avoidance and withdrawal. Montoya-Weiss, Massey and Song (2001) argue that communication as a tool of conflict management is vital to the effective functioning of virtual teams.

Voice

The seminal work of Hirschman (1970) made popular in organisational sciences the idea that employees will seek ways to reduce their discontent. Research on voice pertains to the theory of exit, voice, loyalty and neglect (EVLN) (i.e. Rusbult, Zembrodt & Gunn, 1982). Whereas *exit* is one's voluntary separation from a job, *loyalty* pertains to sticking with a problem, and *neglect* to lax and disregardful behaviour. *Voice*, on the other hand, pertains to "...any efforts at all to change rather than to escape from an objectionable state of affairs..." (ibid: 30). It involves appeals to higher authorities (i.e. management) and can involve other such protests, including collective political dispute. The key intention with voice is to actively change a current and undesirable state of affairs, through both expressing complaints and making suggestions for improvement (LePine & Van Dyne, 1998).

Voice is also evident in a number of justice studies which argue that voice procedures, rather than mute ones, are perceived as fairer by participants (Folger, 1977; Greenberg & Folger, 1983). It is argued that voice influences perceptions of fairness since it provides employees with an opportunity to be heard (Tyler, 1987) and tells them that their views are considered in decision making (Shapiro, 1991). Systems introduced for employees to contribute their voice include complaints procedures, suggestion boxes and grievance procedures.

Social support

At its broadest level, social support is considered a coping resource, "...a social "fund" from which people may draw when handling stressors..." (Thoits, 1995: 53). This social fund pertains to the quantity and quality of one's relationships with

spouses, friends, co-workers and supervisors who provide support. Early research by House and Wells (1978) found that social support directly reduced work stress and indirectly improved health. Further research evidences the buffering effect of social support on stress and health (Cohen & Wills, 1985; Thoits, 1995).

In an organisational context Beehr and colleagues (Beehr, King & King, 1990; Fenlason & Beehr, 1994) focus on occupational stress and social support, construed as communication at work. They argue that what people talk about at work impacts the relationship between stressors (characteristics of the work that lead to strain) and strains (poor mental or physical health). Their research has consistently found that positive communication (talking about the ‘good things’ that comprise work) has a positive impact on reducing employee strain (Beehr et al, 1990; Beehr, Jex, Stacy, Murray & Marshall, 2000).

2.3.2 Summary and critique of talk in organisational science research

Though providing an insight into the multifaceted nature of talk, there are three major drawbacks with the aforecited literature in the organisational sciences. First, although the *function* of talk is highlighted within each distinct discipline (for example, negative gossip aims to smear the name of another, whilst voice pertains to appealing to higher authorities in order to instigate change), none of the constructs actually define the *content* of talk per se. This leaves unanswered the questions of exactly what the content of talk is, and how talk effects outcomes of relevance? These questions are important since they become building blocks from which to cement theoretical insights.

Second, it is clear that talk is a multifarious concept. The functions served by talk in each respective literature are not the same, but rather are borne out of a specific research niche. For example, conversations are aimed at repairing relationships in the conflict management literature, whereas within social support they buffer the relationship between stressors and strains. Context is important since it shapes the nature and function of talk. One can therefore argue that since none of the above cited conceptualisations of talk have been developed within an injustice context, and since none have defined the content of talk per se, their applicability to the present thesis is limited.

Finally, and most importantly, reinforcing this second point is the fact that in none of the literatures within the organisational sciences does talk feature as a recovery mechanism. We know very little about what impact talk has on the recipient engaging in its use; does it help or hinder? How does it impact the talker's emotions, cognitions or sense of self? Do they feel better after talking? In line with some of the criticisms levelled at the justice literatures' portrayal of the victim (section 2.2.4), the role of talk in the organisational sciences can also be argued as taking a very manager-centred perspective. Gossip is seen as an act of 'political deviance' from the perspective of the organisation; conflict management is about relationship reparation at differing layers of organisational hierarchy; voice pertains both to ways to appeal to management in order to get them to act more favourably, or to procedures that managers can deploy in order to promote a sense of fairness. Talk can be argued as being a construal of how to 'fix' things from the perspective of management in response to a one-off event. This sits in contradiction with the present thesis' notion of both a focus on the victim of an injustice as well as how talk

may aid a recovery process which goes beyond a one-off event per se, and comprises a focus on a victim's emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey.

A special mention needs to be made about the social support literature which can be argued as relating the closest to the present thesis' topic. However, the above critiques apply to this literature too. This literature and specifically the work on communication by Beehr et al. (1990), was not developed in a (in)justice context and in no way analyses how a victim may draw on such support as a mechanism of recovery. There are also flaws evident in their measure of communication (Beehr et al., 1990) which limits the usefulness of this literature for the present research purposes. Such flaws include poor item construction as well as no indication as to how categories featuring in the measure were developed. These points are elaborated on further in the next chapter.

In light of these reasons, the organisational justice and wider organisational sciences literatures are limited in what they can offer this thesis' victim-centred study. Therefore, 'thinking outside the justice box' (Barclay et al., 2009) I draw on literature within clinical and social psychology to test the relevance of a talk mechanism within an organisational justice sphere. This is not the first such study within organisational sciences to do so. For over a decade now scholars have called for a 'boundaryless psychology' (Latham, 2003; Latham & Heslin, 2003) which encourages researchers to look beyond research within their own immediate speciality in order to build theory and advance knowledge. My research follows a path taken by Barclay and Skarlicki (2009) who also turned to clinical psychology literatures in order to examine the utility of written expression as a form of recovery;

they utilised interventions within the clinical space and applied them to an organisational justice context. It is to this task that we now turn.

2.3.3 Talk in clinical and social psychology literatures

The construct of talk has featured abundantly in clinical psychology, and more recently, has occupied space in a small stream of research within social psychology. Both of these sets of literatures will now be reviewed respectively with an insight into how they have construed the phenomenon of talk.

The clinical psychology perspective: The early years

Psychiatrist: “You know what I do when I’m angry? I hit a pillow. Try that.”

Client promptly pulls out his gun, points it at the couch, and fires several bullets into the pillow.

“Feel better?” asks the psychiatrist.

“Yeah, I do,” says the client.

Excerpt from the film AnalyzeThis (1999) in which a psychiatrist (played by Billy Crystal) is talking to his gangster client/patient (played by Robert De Niro). Bushman (2002: 724)

The notion that talking about one’s negative experience may bring about relief was made famous by Breuer and Freud (1895) in *Studies in Hysteria*. The text famously discusses the case of ‘Anna O’, a patient who was diagnosed as displaying hysteria following the death of her father: her symptoms included weakness, loss of appetite, hallucinations, amnesia, mood swings and partial aphasia (difficulty in reading, writing or speaking). Breuer and Freud’s theory of abreaction (which came to be known in modern times as *catharsis*) asserted that if patients of hysteria were permitted to freely recount emotionally distressing memories, their symptoms

diminished. Their simple idea was encapsulated in the *hydraulic model* of anger which uses an analogy of fluid running through a system. Frustration leads to anger, and anger in turn builds up pressure inside an individual. If this pressure is not released (in other words, if anger is not relieved, either verbally or physically), it will lead individuals to experience psychological symptoms and act aggressively (American Psychological Association, 2007).

Whilst a surge of research sought to delineate the merits of catharsis, studies have not stood up well to the idea that the release of frustration (just ‘getting things off your chest’) is a good way to reduce anger or aggression. In one of the earliest experimental studies on this topic, Hornberger (1959) had his participants receive insulting feedback from a confederate. The participants were then asked to pound nails into a wall for ten minutes, an act that captured a cathartic technique. Whilst, according to the hydraulic model, those who had released their frustration by pounding nails should have aggressed less thereafter, results showed the opposite to be true. Participants who hammered nails were more hostile towards a confederate. Hornberger’s results were replicated in similar experimental research by Berkowitz (1989) who also demonstrated that exposure to frustrating events increased the likelihood of aggressive reactions (see also, Berkowitz & LePage, 1967; Berkowitz & Rawlings, 1963).

One explanation put forward for these effects comes from cognitive neoassociation theory (Berkowitz, 1993). This theory emphasises that negative events produce negative affect, which in turn stimulates both thought and actions. Aggressive thoughts are connected in an associative network. The activation of aggressive

thoughts triggers negative emotions and an impetus for aggressive actions. Therefore, venting should increase rather than decrease anger, since aggressive activity primes aggressive thoughts and feelings. Indeed, this is exactly what the majority of research has uncovered.

It is argued, therefore, that ‘just getting things off your chest’ actually exacerbates tension; anger leads to greater anger experience and arousal (Green & Murray, 1975; Geen & Quanty, 1977; DeStefano, 1981, cited in Murray 1985; Tavis, 1984, 1989; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999; Rachman, 2001; Bushman, 2002). A general lack of support for the catharsis hypothesis or hydraulic model led to Bandura (1973) calling for a moratorium on catharsis theory.

The clinical psychology perspective: Current thinking

At this point we can question the relevance of a talking cure: does it really cure? Importantly, however, a number of studies have sought to defend the talking cure by clarifying what it entails, and when it is and is not effective. This trajectory of research argues that talk is constituent of both emotional and cognitive elements, and it is this combination that provides benefits to an individual who has been through a negative experience.

Scheff and Bushell (1984) provide one of the earliest defences of Breuer and Freud’s (1895) work. They argue that the notion of the talking cure has been misrepresented, pointing out that Breuer and Freud *never* actually provided a definition of catharsis. They assert that expression is vital for mental and physical health, and this is at the heart of much research by clinicians on recovery from negative events. This

perspective is not at all surprising when in fact Freud (1893/1962: 31, italics added) alluded to a cognitive component of recovery in his writings: “The memory of an injury to feelings is corrected by an *objective evaluation of the facts*, consideration of one’s actual worth, and the like.”

In his clinical therapeutic research, Scheff (2001) argues for the coupling of verbal recall with cognitive awareness, which includes such attempts as ‘distancing’ in which an individual becomes an ‘observer’ to their situation rather than a participant within it. Such distancing encourages the client to interpret their experience from an alternative perspective, thereby broadening their understanding and perhaps paving the way towards a solution. Cognition is important since it leads to a new awareness. Scheff’s assertions echo earlier sentiments of clinician Greenson (1967) who speaks of the dual role of an ‘experiencing ego’ (emotional release) and an ‘observing ego’ (cognitive dissociation from the experience). In an early experimental study on the phenomenon of recovery, Green and Murray (1975) argued that both ventilation of anger and cognitive reinterpretation were useful in reducing anger and aggression.

In further studies, clinicians demonstrate the utility of ‘letting it out’ techniques coupled with cognitive assessments (Kosmicki & Glickauf-Hughes, 1997; Bohart, 1980, Kottler, 1996). Psychotherapeutic research (Greenberg, 2002; Greenberg, Warwar & Malcolm, 2008) draws on gestalt ideas and deploys an ‘empty chair’ technique, which involves a client addressing the empty chair as if another person (significant to them) or a feeling was positioned in it. The client then role-plays, guided by a therapist, focusing on exploring feelings at the heart of an issue. This

technique is evidenced as facilitating emotional release and the search for meaning, as well as providing benefits in the form of a reduction in symptomatology and interpersonal distress, a sense of resolution, and the facilitation of forgiveness.

Corroborating this research, in an early experiment, Murray (1985) affirmed that a combination of ventilation and cognitive reinterpretation was more effective in reducing anger. In another experiment, Murray, Lamnin and Carver (1989) had subjects talk about a ‘traumatic or disturbing event, current or in the past’, to a student (with training in therapy who listened and helped with reframing) for thirty minutes over a two-day period. Results showed that expression of emotion dominated the first session, followed by substantial cognitive and self-esteem changes; but by the end of the second session, in which subjects expressed both emotion and cognitive change, there was an increase in elation (positive mood) with negative moods at a minimal; these subjects also reported that the talking intervention has changed their feelings about the event. The scholars argue that these results are consistent with clinical studies in therapeutic research – namely, they point to the effective combination of emotional expression and cognitive processing.

Kennedy-Moore and Watson (1999: 60) posit that “The paradox of distress is that expression of negative feelings is both a sign of distress and a possible means of coping with that distress.” They postulate that emotional release (a release of feelings) and cognitive processing (self-understanding, enhancing positive reflection) together can lead to a resolution of distress, increased psychological well-being and

enhanced acceptance of feelings (such as *'These feelings are unpleasant, but not unbearable'*).

The social psychology perspective

In addition to clinical studies, research within social psychology on everyday life events provides identical results. It is argued that humans possess a tendency to voluntarily share information about important (positive or negative) life events (Jourard, 1971). This idea is rooted in the social psychological work of Rimé (2009; Pennebaker et al., 2001; Rimé, Finkenauer, Luminet, Zech & Philippot, 1998; Luminet, Bouts, Delie, Manstead & Rimé, 2000; Luminet, Zech, Rimé & Wagner, 2000) whose research on verbal disclosure evidences that people share everyday emotional experiences with others: people possess an eagerness to talk following such events as sitting exams, giving birth or losing a loved one. Rimé et al. (1998) postulate that traumatic experiences (such as cancer diagnosis, loss of a loved one) and everyday life occurrences (i.e. child birth, sitting an exam) are not two distinct phenomena – both elicit social sharing such that people talk about their experience.

Talk is conceptualised as the social sharing of emotion which entails “...a description, in a socially shared language, of an emotional episode to some addressee by the person who experienced it...” (Rimé, 2007: 308), and which occurs in “...the course of conversation in which individuals openly communicate about the emotional circumstances and their feelings and reactions...” (Rimé, Finkenauer & Luminet, 1998: 3).

In early studies, Rimé, Mesquita, Philippot and Boca (1991) instructed respondents to recall an emotional episode corresponding to a specific basic emotion (i.e. joy, fear, anger) and then answer questions about that experience, including: Did they talk about the encounter? With whom and when? How often? Results indicated that experiences were shared (i.e. individuals talked) in 88-96% of all cases, irrespective of age or gender. The propensity to share was not dependent on education, with comparable results for university as well as elementary school level (Rimé, 2007); it was also not a factor of culture, with the importance of talk asserted in diverse cultures as Asia, North America and Europe (Singh-Manoux & Finkenauer, 2001). The type and valence of emotion did not impact upon the amount of talk engaged in. Additionally, talk was evidenced as occurring soon after an encounter, with individuals engaging in repeated incidents of talk with several others. Targets (recipients/‘listeners’) are intimate others – parents, friends or romantic partners, and the outcomes of talk are beneficial, including a sense of relief for victims and temporary alleviation of anxiety, helplessness and loneliness. Contrary to stereotypes, women were not found to be more prone than men to share their experiences (Rimé et al., 1998).

These results were supported in daily diary studies with participants who had been in work accidents, were undertaking academic exams or had just given birth: emotion eliciting encounters instigated talk (Rimé, Philippot, Finkenauer, Legast, Moorkens & Tornqvist, 1994, cited in Rimé et al., 1998). Experimental studies (i.e. Luminet et al., 1996) corroborate these results. When shown a high-intensity emotional video clip, participants talked about their experience more than those in a control condition

(low intensity emotion): nearly 40% of words spoken by participants referred to the clip they had viewed compared to 5% spoken by those in the control condition.

Rimé (2009) argues that engaging in talk provides immediate benefits of a socio-affective kind, such as the provision of comfort, love, support and care from the listener. In line with criticism levelled at catharsis theory, it is argued that such benefits are only temporary, however, since emotional discharge alone cannot provide recovery. For this to happen, cognitive processing is necessary, such that talk between an individual and the listener needs to reflect reframing and reappraisal of an incident as well as involving the recreation of meaning. These assertions are supported in an experimental study by Lepore, Fernandez-Berrocal, Ragan and Ramos (2004) who exposed students to a real-life video clip about violent gangs. Participants were then assigned to one of the following conditions in which they talked with another: cognitive reframing, empathetic validation, talking alone or no talking (control). Participants in the cognitive reframing condition evidenced lower emotional distress during re-exposure to the video clip and less intrusive thoughts: in all, they showed the greatest adjustments to stress (see also Nils & Rimé, 2008).

In the work of Rimé, one's sharing of emotion bears a resemblance to catharsis, in that when individuals talk about their negative emotional experiences with others, the content of talk reflects emotions such as anger, fear, shame and sadness. His work does not include a measurement of talk per se, and doing so constitutes a key part of the present thesis.

Having outlined the concept of talk in clinical and social psychological literatures, I shall now turn to delineate the benefits of talk and explain why talk is effective as a cure. The relevance of talk to an injustice context will then be reviewed.

2.3.4 What are the benefits of talk (in clinical and social psychology research)?

Three classes of outcomes evidence the benefits of talk as a recovery mechanism: health and subjective well-being, and benefits of the socio-affective and cognitive kind.

Health and subjective well-being

In a correlation study, Pennebaker and O’Heeron (1984) demonstrated that if individuals who had recently lost a spouse talked about their upsetting experience, they were in better health (measured in the form of less visits to their health care provider and lessened use of non-prescription medicine) and experienced less ruminative thoughts (i.e. repetitive thoughts about their problem). The research of Segal, Bogaard and Chatman (in press) corroborates these findings, with lower ratings of hopelessness, depression and unwanted intrusive thoughts amongst those in their sample who had engaged in talk. Talking has also been related to benefits of the immune function (Lepore & Smyth, 2002; Pennebaker & Graybeal, 2001). The converse is also true, that is, not talking following an emotional experience can lead to a higher number of illnesses as well as lower satisfaction with one’s current life Finkenauer and Rimé (1998).

Affective

Laypersons reinforce the view that talking about an emotional experience is relieving (Rimé, 2007). Perhaps the most reported finding by Rimé and his colleagues (Rimé, 2009; Rimé, 2007; Rimé et al., 1998) are benefits of a socio-affective kind including: relieving oneself of the burden of the problem, receiving comfort from another, arousing empathy in others and being heard.

Cognitive

Satisfaction of a cognitive kind includes benefits such as getting advice and solutions from others. In an experiment where stress was induced via a film clip, Nile & Rimé (2008) found that participants who shared their experience with a friend who was encouraged to 'positively reframe' the experience, were not only less emotionally distressed, but their world views challenged by the movie clip were less dampened. It is argued that a negative experience can prompt cognitive benefits leading to decreased rumination, transformed mental representation, distancing from the negative experience, abandonment of frustrated goals and the recreation of meaning (Rimé, 2009).

2.3.5 Why is talk (in clinical and social psychology research) effective?

With greater interest focused on debating the effectiveness of talk as a 'cure', less attention has focused on the underlying processes that explain why talk is effective. Nevertheless, three different explanations are postulated in the disclosure literature: emotional release, emotional inhibition, and cognitive processing.

Emotional release

Otherwise known as the catharsis hypothesis, there is little support for the idea that the effectiveness of disclosure operates through a discharge of negative emotions. Talking about emotions *alone* is not warranted as sufficient for recovery from a negative experience. In fact, as research highlights (Geen & Quanty, 1977; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999), emotional expression does not bring about relief but rather, exacerbates tension. These results hold true for both verbal and written expression (Pennebaker & Beall, 1986; Smyth, 1998; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009).

An exception to these findings is the research on talk as social sharing wherein it is argued that there are socio-affective benefits to be gained from sharing emotions, such as reaping comfort, care and recognition (Pennebaker, et al., Rimé, 2001; Rimé et al, 1998; Luminet et al, 2000). Such benefits are only temporary, however, given that expressing *only* emotions about an encounter are not sufficient for recovery (Rimé, 2009).

Emotional inhibition

The experience of a negative event elicits a sense of ambiguity in individuals as they seek to make sense of, and understand, their situation. Ambiguity leads to a search for clarity (Schachter, 1964, Pennebaker, 1997). The irony here is that whilst there is an urge to seek resolution to the negative event experienced, doing so triggers negative emotions attached to that event which are unpleasant for an individual. Individuals cope with such a situation by inhibiting (consciously withholding) thoughts and feelings about the event – in other words, not talking.

The downside to inhibition is that it prompts physiological work (Pennebaker, 1997) which leads to obsessive thinking about the event in the form of rumination and intrusive thought (Martin & Tesser, 1989). Inhibition places stress on the mind and body which is linked to a host of dysfunctional outcomes including coronary heart disease and cancer onset (Gross, 1989) as well as minor ailments (Pennebaker, 1990). Indeed, tangential studies support these conclusions, showing that people who conceal their gay status or traumatic past experiences are more likely to experience health problems compared to those who are less inhibited (Pennebaker, 1997).

Disinhibition is asserted as being the key to recovery. This involves actively thinking or talking about an experience and confronting negative emotions (Pennebaker, 1989, Rimé et al., 1998; Rimé, 2009). This helps with reducing the negative effects brought on by inhibition (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005), encouraging individuals to avoid dwelling on their situation, hence preventing the resurfacing of negative emotions and improving immune functioning (Pennebaker, Kiecolt-Glaser & Glaser, 1988; Petrie, Booth, Pennebaker, Davison & Thomas, 1995).

Cognitive Processing

In light of criticisms levelled against the emotional release and emotional inhibition explanations, an alternative mechanism in the form of cognitive processing has been asserted as a more valid explanation. The essence of cognitive processing is that by articulating one's negative (often traumatic) experience, individuals are able to provide a sense of coherence to their thoughts, structuring and organising them which in turn provides new insights, a cognitive assimilation of one's experience

(Smyth, True & Souto, 2001; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986), leading to improved health (Sloan & Marx, 2004).

One stream of literature argues that cognitive processing is beneficial because it allows individuals to create a *story* about their experience. Pennebaker (1997) refers to this as the creation of a narrative which he has uncovered in his pioneering writing interventions wherein participants write about an emotionally laden experience for twenty to thirty minutes over approximately four-days. Results show that whereas initially writing is occupied by emotional judgements, over the course of days there is evidence of cognitive thought wherein people become more detached from the situation and better able to consider events without the impeding effects of emotion. Similarly, Rimé (1983) argues that emotions emanating from a negative experience are in need of cognitive articulation; by telling others about an experience, individuals are able to ‘unfold’ their emotions, label their experience and organise it into a process of logical thinking. In short, by turning a negative experience into a story, individuals enhance the way in which they understand their situation, reflecting increased cognitive processing (Baikie & Wilhelm, 2005).

2.3.6 Summary of talk in clinical and social psychological research

Talk has occupied a central position in clinical psychology for over a century. From an embryonic understanding of the notion of a ‘talking cure’, the fields of clinical and social psychology today espouse the merits of talk as a recovery mechanism in the context of negative life episodes. It is this theoretical focus that will guide the present thesis. Before turning to outline the significance of the present research, we

shall now turn to one final question: how does talk relate to the concept of workplace injustice?

2.3.7 How does talk in clinical and social psychology relate to workplace injustice?

The applicability of the phenomenon of talk to a workplace injustice context is relevant on a number of levels. In an important note, a critique levelled at the organisational sciences literatures was that their notions of talk were not constructed within an organisational injustice context. The same critique can be pointed towards the clinical and social psychology literatures. However, there is an abundance of rich and lucid research which can be readily transferred and tested within a justice context which makes the clinical and social psychology literatures highly appealing. These reasons will now be outlined.

First, organisational justice and talk, as articulated in clinical and social psychology literatures, are rooted in emotions and cognitions. Both of these concepts are highly relevant to any study of a victim's aftermath post-injustice since they address the needs of a victim: the focus of these literatures is more person-centric and less manager-centric (Weiss & Rupp, 2011). Clinical and social psychology literatures on talk focus on the precursors of talk as being traumatic life experiences, as well as everyday experiences (such as exams, births). What characterises such experiences is the centrality of feeling and thinking which are at its core. Traumatic experiences have been defined by their very nature as emotional experiences, which in turn trigger the expression of distressing emotions (Rimé, 2009; Singh-Manoux & Finkenauer, 2001). It is argued that this emotional distress can be alleviated through

talk with another, because talk itself affords the ventilation of feelings as well as prompting cognitive (re)interpretation of the event. This context is comparable with workplace injustice. Injustices are emotional experiences (Weiss et al., 1999; Barclay et al., 2005), which have been documented by scholars as bitter, hot and volatile (Bies & Tripp, 2002). Injustices are also cognitive experiences, triggering individuals to make sense out of their unfair workplace experience. For example, fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998, 2001) describes the prevalence of cognitive work to determine why an injustice has occurred, and additionally, who may be to blame and whether an alternative course of action could have been taken.

Second, there are parallels between a negative traumatic experience and an unjust experience in terms of their adverse impact on individuals. This notion provides an insight into the very real impact of an injustice by interpreting it as an on-going and unfolding experience. Breuer and Freud (1895) noted the presence of hysteria, with more recent research citing reactions such as negative emotions, physical and psychological deterioration, in the form of lower satisfaction with one's life (Finkenauer & Rimé, 1998), hopelessness, depression and intrusive thoughts (Segal et al., 2001) as well as lowered immune functionality (Lepore & Smyth, 2002; Pennebaker & Graybeal, 2001). In the same way, workplace unfairness is posited as a psychosocial predictor of health (Elovainio et al., 2002), linked with insomnia (Greenberg, 2006), minor psychological morbidity and sickness absence (Kivimaki et al., 2003; Elovainio et al., 2001) as well as the risk of psychiatric disorders (Kivimaki et al., 2003).

Third, talk has been postulated in both clinical and social psychology research as a recovery mechanism, able to assist with mitigating (traumatic) life experiences. For example, diary study research (Rimé et al., 1998) evidences the unfolding nature and impact of talk. This notion fits with this thesis' aim of researching not a solution to control what a victim might think or feel, but a mechanism through which the aftermath of their unjust experience can be understood. Indeed, if we link together the idea that talk can function as a recovery mechanism overcoming adverse effects of negative experiences, then there is scope to research the benefits afforded by a talk intervention. In both clinical and social psychology literatures the impact of talk as recovery has been documented as positively impacting an individual by way of providing comfort and empathy (Rimé, 2009), improving their physical health (Lepore & Smyth, 2002) as well as psychological well-being (Smyth, 1998). A consistent message articulated by scholars to explain the rationale behind these results is that talk is effective when its emotional component is accompanied with cognitive processing (i.e. Pennebaker, 1997; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999; Greenberg, 2002). Once again, these outcomes are victim-centred, and they speak to justice scholars' recent calls for more research into the perspective of people experiencing injustice (Shapiro, 2001; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2008), particularly their affective experiences (Bies & Tripp, 2002; Colquitt, 2013). And indeed, one of the questions for this thesis to answer is, to what degree do these outcomes transfer over to an injustice context?

2.4 Significance of thesis: Research aims

It is the aim of this thesis to contribute to a more effortful research agenda within the organisational justice literature. By adopting a focus that construes workplace

injustice through the experience of those at its receiving end, it seeks to redress the balance of justice research which, as Bies & Tripp (2002) argue, is currently swung in favour of a manager-centred perspective. Exploring recovery efforts through the cognitive, emotional and behavioural experience of a victim allows this thesis to contribute to a nascent literature which seeks to prioritise the victim in an unjust encounter (Weiss & Rupp, 2011; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009; Barclay & Saldhana, in press).

Going beyond this, however, this thesis brings a novel perspective to the study of the victims of workplace injustice. It integrates the phenomenon of talk into the justice paradigm, merging two literatures in order to explore the effectiveness of a talk mechanism in assisting victims with recovery from the adverse effects of injustice. To my knowledge, this is the first study to apply the construct of talk to the context of workplace injustice.

Finally, an important role for academic research is to offer practical advice to organisations and managers in relation to studies of phenomenon relevant to their world. "...How can we offer more guidance in dealing with, preventing, and managing injustice...?" asks Shapiro (2001: 241). In addition to managerial and organisational interventions offered by justice research to date, it is hoped that this thesis' consideration of the victim experience post-injustice may shed greater light on, and lead to a greater understanding of, how episodes of unfairness unfold from the perspective of a victim.

Three major research questions guide this thesis:

Question 1: Does talk follow a victim's experience of workplace injustice? If so, what is the content of such talk?

Question 2: Does talk operate as a recovery mechanism? Specifically:

- What drives talk in the context of workplace injustice? In other words, what are its antecedents?
- Does talk operate as a victim-centred recovery mechanism as evidenced in clinical and social psychological literatures, assisting victims with overcoming the negative effects of workplace injustice? In other words, what are the consequences of talk?

Question 3: What is the cognitive, emotional and behavioural journey comprising a victim's experience following workplace injustice?

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter has sought to present the two main theoretical lenses for the present thesis: organisational justice and talk. With the existing justice literature critiqued for its lack of focus on the victim of an injustice, an alternative perspective that aims to put the victim at the centre of his/her own recovery process has been asserted. The phenomenon of talk, as advocated in clinical and social psychology fields of enquiry, embodies the mechanism of recovery which will be evaluated through the remainder of this thesis. In moving towards an empirical focus, the next chapter will describe the methodological focus of this thesis.

Chapter 3:

Research Design & Methodology

3.1 Chapter overview

This chapter introduces the research design and methodologies utilised as part of this thesis. The rationale behind each design chosen is presented, including the choice of method, participants, as well as analytical technique. Whilst this chapter provides an overview and rationale for the research conducted, greater detail can be found in each study's respective empirical chapter.

3.2 Overview of research design

This thesis combines three separate studies, conducted over the course of three years, each utilising a different methodology, different criteria for the selection of participants and different analytical procedures. The different methodologies deployed reflect the nature of the various research questions being asked as this thesis evolved. An overview of the three studies, their aims as well as the research methodology and analytical techniques used, are presented in table 3.1. Figure 3.1 displays a timeline for each study's data collection procedure.

This thesis deployed what is referred to as a multi-method approach to data collection (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998) as well as a mixed-method design (Taylor & Trumbull, 2000), given its use of qualitative and quantitative approaches. The use of different methodologies to study the same phenomenon is referred to as triangulation (Jick, 1979; Flick, 1992; Gaskell & Bauer, 2000). Specifically, this thesis deployed between-method triangulation (Denzin, 1989) since it comprised the use of more than two research methods (interviews, surveys, daily diaries). The benefits reaped from such an approach include, above all, enriching researchers' knowledge about a particular phenomenon (Flick, 1992; Gaskell & Bauer, 2000).

Table 3.1. A summary of the research aims, methodology and analytic techniques comprising this thesis' three studies

Study	Purpose	Methodology	Sample	Analytical technique(s)	Chapter
Study 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of the phenomenon of talk in the context of workplace injustice Design of a new measure of talk in the context of workplace injustice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Qualitative interviews On-line survey (working professionals) On-line survey (working Master's students) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working professionals (interview) ($N=24$) Working professionals (survey) ($N=30$) Students ($N=106$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Content analysis Content validation Confirmatory factor analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 4
Study 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application of new talk measure in a real work context Investigation of the antecedents of talk in the context of workplace injustice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated on-line cross-sectional survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London bus drivers ($N=166$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Structured equation modeling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of the consequences of talk in the context of workplace injustice 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Repeated on-line cross-sectional survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> London bus drivers ($N=166$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderated regression analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 6
Study 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of a victim's daily experience of workplace injustice, and its association with talk and proximal outcomes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-line ten-day daily diary study 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working professionals ($N=31$) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hierarchical linear modelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chapter 7

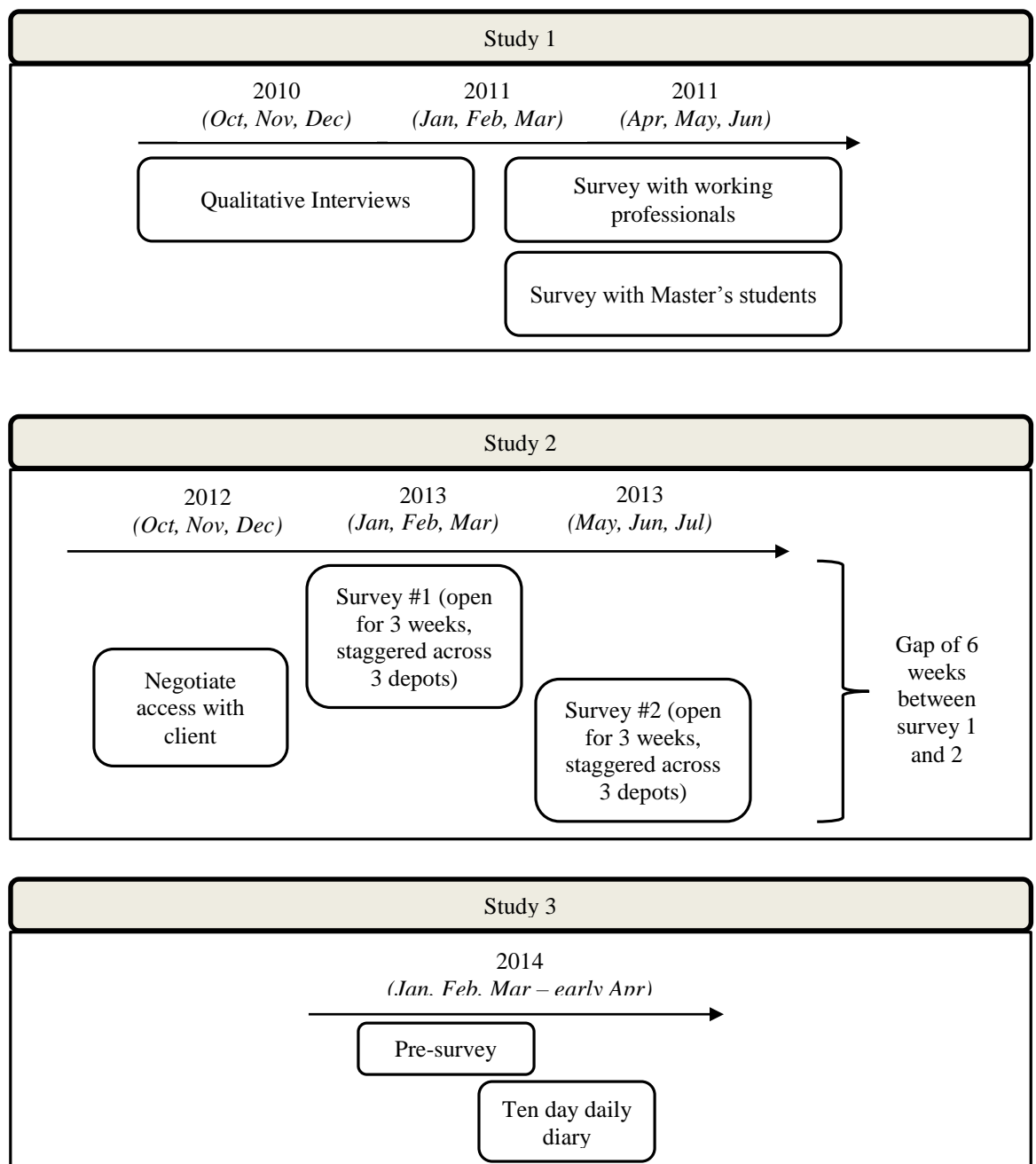


Figure 3.1. A timeline of the data collection process for each study

3.3 Rationale for data collection methods chosen

3.3.1 Study 1: Qualitative interviews and surveys

The overall purpose of study 1 was to gather data to confirm the presence of the phenomenon of talk in the context of workplace injustice, and on this basis, to develop a new measure of talk. Key questions which this study asked were:

- Does talk follow a person's experience of unfairness at work?
- And if so, what is such talk? What is it comprised of? What is its function?

I used two data-collection procedures to answer these questions: interviews and two on-line surveys.

Qualitative interviews

Qualitative interviewing does not feature prominently within organisational behaviour research. However, given recent calls for more inductive, qualitative data with regards to the study of victims of injustice (Barclay & Saldhana, in press), I decided to conduct semi-structured interviews to attain a deeper understanding of the role of talk in a victim's recovery process. Interviews assisted me with answering the first question: does talk follow a person's experience of unfairness at work? They subsequently provided critical incidents of the content of talk. The value of qualitative research is its exploratory power in providing detailed, non-rivalled insights into a phenomenon of interest (Gaskell, 2000; Flick, 2008), compared to other methodologies, such as surveys or laboratory experiments, which confine responses to very narrow snapshots of reality.

I wanted to get at the heart of people's experiences of unfairness and talk at work. Given that I spoke to *real* working personnel, I ensured that the findings generated, were generalisable and externally valid.

Surveys

Once I had confirmation about the relevance of the phenomenon of talk in the context of workplace injustice, I utilised an on-line survey methodology to gather further critical incidents of the content, nature and function of talk with the purpose of assisting with the construction of a new measure of talk. I conducted two on-line surveys, both cross-sectional and utilising convenience sampling: the first with a pool of Master's level students with prior working experience from the London School of Economics (LSE), and the second, with a snowball sample of working professionals.

Both surveys allowed for ease of data collection and were therefore less taxing from a time resource perspective in comparison to the interviews conducted. The reason for conducting two sets of surveys was threefold. First, I wanted to ensure that I could gather as many critical incidents of talk as possible in order to arrive at a suitable *N* sample size from which to build a new measure. Second, I wanted to ensure that this new measure generalised to a wide range of working personnel; the student sample provided insight into 'younger' working professionals, with the working professionals sample providing insight into a more experienced workforce. Finally, both of these factors would contribute to enhanced validity and generalisability of the new measure.

3.3.2 Study 2: Repeated cross-sectional survey

The overall purpose of study 2 was to validate the newly developed measure of talk, and, to test hypotheses about the antecedents and consequences of talk as a recovery mechanism in the context of workplace injustice. Study 2 was a repeated cross-sectional survey, with the same participants, with 6 weeks separating the measurement points. Key questions this study asked were:

- What drives talk in the context of workplace injustice? In other words, what are its *antecedents*?
- Does talk operate as a victim-centred recovery mechanism as evidenced in clinical and social psychological literatures, assisting victims with overcoming the negative effects of workplace injustice? In other words, what are the *consequences* of talk?

A survey was deemed the most appropriate methodology to explore such research aims. Unlike interviews, surveys allowed for ease of data collection with regards to time resources. They also allowed for an assessment of the psychometric properties of the newly developed measure of talk. Though I had conducted a confirmatory factor analysis in study 1, I was keen to use this measure in a real workplace setting in order to draw conclusions about its robustness regarding validity and generalisability. The access I obtained to repeat this cross-sectional survey at two separate time points permitted me to attain replication of my findings from the first time point to the second. This was useful, in particular, in providing impetus to the findings since the overall design of the survey was cross-sectional.

3.3.3 Study 3: Daily diary study

The overall purpose of study 3 was to explore the impact of recovery in the context of daily experiences of workplace unfairness and their impact on talk. Study 3 sought to extend and replicate study 2, and was an exploratory ten-day daily diary study. Key questions this study asked were:

- What are the antecedents and consequences of talk in the context of a victim's daily experiences of injustice?
- What is the daily cognitive, emotional and behavioural journey comprising a victim's experience following workplace injustice?

Also referred to as experienced sampling methodology, daily diary studies seek to capture people's behaviours, thoughts and feelings as they occur in real-time; that is, repeated measurements of the same participant are made as they conduct their daily lives (Fisher & To, 2012). More specifically, an interval contingent sampling methodology was deployed; as opposed to signal contingent, which notifies participants to record data with a notification (such as a beeping pager), or event contingent, which requires participants to record events as they occur, interval contingent sampling asks participants to self-report on a phenomenon of interest at pre-determined intervals. For this study, such intervals were at the end of participants' day for ten working days (excluding weekends).

The decision to utilise a diary study rested on two key decisions. First, the bulk of research on responses to injustice have adopted a between-subjects design, which analyses responses to injustice in a cross-sectional, one-point in time fashion (Barclay & Saldhana, in press). It is argued that an exploration of recovery should conceive of this phenomenon as *dynamic*, which therefore requires within-person analysis: a daily diary study permits this since it is the study of within-person variation at a daily level. Second, a daily diary study circumvents limitations associated with requiring participants to recall injustice episodes over previous weeks: the problem with this is that such accounts are open to memory error, such as the recall of inaccurate details (Schwarz, Kahneman, Xu, Belli, Stafford & Alwin, 2009). Tangential research in coping demonstrates that strategies which people indicate they use retrospectively in surveys bears little resemblance to the strategies they actually adopt when reporting in real time (Schwarz, Neale, Marco, Shiffman & Stone, 1999). The use of a diary methodology allowed me to overcome such issues given that participants were responding in ‘real time’.

3.4 Sample, research settings and data collection procedures

3.4.1 Study 1: Qualitative interviews and surveys

Qualitative interviews

A snowball sample was chosen to recruit interview participants. Snowball sampling is a convenient sampling procedure which relies on gathering participants through the identification of an initial pool of subjects who provide names of further interested parties (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Liao, 2004). I deployed three avenues of data

collection; first, I contacted ex-colleagues whom I had worked with and asked them to recommend people from their own networks who would like to take part in a PhD study; second, I put an advert out promoting my research on a professional social networking site; third, I gained access to a global telecoms company through an ex-Director, who allowed me to send an email advertisement to her ex-employees. A total of 24 ($N=24$) interviews were conducted.

In arriving at this N , I followed Gaskell's (2000: 43) advice that "...compared to quantitative techniques, interviews are much more flexible concerning sample size..." and his principles outlined in the notion of the meaning saturation criterion. This refers to the notion that a researcher conducts interviews until saturation is reached, and saturation implies that a more detailed understanding of the phenomenon of interest would not be achieved by conducting further interviews. When I got to the twenty-fourth interview I realised that no new insights were being presented by my participants, and that I had a confident and solid handle on the issue of talk as a recovery intervention in the context of workplace injustice.

Gaskell (2000) also argues for an upper limit to the number of interviews that are necessary to conduct and possible to analyse of between 15 and 25. With approximately 10-15 pages of transcripts per interview, I had 300 plus pages in the corpus of data. This is the absolute maximum with which a researcher may perform a sound job of analysing data, going beyond a superficial reading of illustrative quotes (ibid).

The convenience nature of the sample did not pose any problems, since this technique allowed me accumulate a list of participants who had experienced unfairness at work, and were happy and willing to talk about their experiences. In heeding Gaskell & Bauer's (2000) advice for ensuring rigour in qualitative data, I controlled for the following factors:

Transparency and procedural clarity

Equivalent to internal and external validity, the primary function of this criterion is to enable researchers to reconstruct how a study was conducted in order to check it or imitate it. I used a coherently and comprehensively designed interview guide for each interview: it was informed by the research questions and can be found in appendix 1.

Corpus construction

Equivalent to representative sampling, I ensured that my corpus of data was both representative of the phenomenon I sought to study (i.e. working professionals with experiences of unfairness), and that I continued to conduct interviews until I reached saturation where further data did not provide novel observations.

Thick description

A rich and full description of the data was provided by ensuring that each interview was transcribed verbatim. An example interview transcription can be found in appendix 2.

Communicative validation

In ensuring that the episodes of unfairness my interviewees spoke about were as accurate a reflection as possible, I followed this criterion of discussing results with the interviewees, who were asked if I had captured their accounts sufficiently. I also caught up with interviewees approximately ten months after the first interviews, updated them regarding my research and made available any documentation they wanted to see.

Each interview lasted approximately one-hour and with permission from the interviewee, was tape-recorded. This acted as my aide-memoire in recalling the conversation and transcribing it verbatim (Gaskell & Bauer, 2000). Where possible I conducted interviews away from each individual's workplace; this was to allow them to feel comfortable talking about a potentially sensitive workplace issue. On three occasions the interviewee came to the LSE premises, where I booked a meeting room to ensure privacy.

I gathered ample evidence of the role of talk in the context of workplace injustice from the interviews; this gave me confidence to pursue my thesis idea further. I was able to gather 44 critical incidents of talk (i.e. what it is that individuals talk about post-injustice) from the interviews.

Surveys

I utilised a survey methodology with two samples: Master's students, and a convenience sample of working professionals. These samples provided further critical incidents of

the content, nature and function of talk to input into the construction of a new measure of talk. Both surveys were conducted on-line, and took between 10-18 minutes to complete.

The Master's student survey was conducted with students selected via a Behavioural Lab (Lab) database. The Lab is operated by the LSE's Department of Management and comprises a database of undergraduate and postgraduate students who have agreed to take part in experimental and survey-based research. I filtered out students with working experience, and they were all sent an on-line link to the survey via the database. A raffled Amazon gift voucher worth £50 was offered for taking part.

The sample of working professionals was attained using my personal list of contacts, based within global organisations. I wrote an email which I circulated amongst my contacts, and received responses directly from interested parties. They were all sent a link to the survey in an email, which also explained the nature of the study and issues pertaining to confidentiality. This sample was not remunerated for taking part.

I gathered 106 critical incidents of talk (i.e. what it is that individuals talk about post-injustice) from the Master's student survey, and 30 from the working professionals' survey.

3.4.2 Study 2: Repeated cross-sectional survey

Study 2 was conducted with a sample of London bus drivers, which I obtained via my own consultancy contacts. A total of 166 drivers took part at both time points, separated by 6 weeks. The access I obtained to repeat this cross-sectional survey at two separate time points permitted me to attain validation of my findings from the first time point to the second.

Bus drivers were chosen as an appropriate sample for two reasons. First, although the research questions comprising this thesis did not necessitate a specific type of organisation, I was keen to recruit participants who potentially would experience issues of unfairness on a regular basis since this would allow an investigation of the merits of talk as a recovery intervention in a rich context. I first visited the Managing Director of the bus company in the autumn of 2012. A preliminary engagement survey that the company had undertaken eighteen months earlier highlighted issues of unfairness. These included tense union and management relationships (which centred on demands for increased wages), as well as complaints about the elementary conditions of some bus depots (i.e. there was paint peeling off ceilings, broken toilets). My own observations and conversations with supervisors and drivers illuminated problematic relationships across depots. Supervisors were in charge of upwards of 20-30 drivers each, and spent their days navigating duty cards, arranging holiday cover and carrying out disciplinary meetings (for offences such as drivers speeding or being late to work); a role they felt was akin to ‘nannying adults’. Drivers felt ‘nannied’ by their supervisors and believed their remuneration packages and the poor conditions in which they worked were unfair.

Second, a similar sample of bus drivers has been deployed in a plethora of management studies globally, and particularly so in studies that research the broad topic of well-being at work (Scott & Barnes, 2011; Machin & Hoare, 2008; Netterstrom & Hansen, 2000; Evans & Johansson, 1998; Aust, Peter & Siegreest, 1997; Evans & Carrere, 1991). Though my focus is not well-being per se, these studies provide tangential support to my own interest in victim-centred outcomes which focus on recovery from injustice.

I met with the Managing Director a number of times to attain a detailed understanding of the nuances of the organisation. In promoting the research, I held an initial presentation for all General Managers who managed the depots. The purpose and aims of the research were outlined as was the content of each survey, how much time I would spend at each depot and what assistance I required from each depot's management. We agreed upon a paper-and-pencil approach to conduct the research where each driver would receive a paper based survey. This was largely due to the fact that many drivers did not have and/or did not want to share their email details. I gained permission to conduct a survey at two time points separated by six-weeks. I spent approximately ten months with this organisation, with the time spent as follows:

- Meeting key personnel at each depot (deputy managers, trade union leaders, local scheduling officers) whom I had earmarked as champions and who would encourage drivers to take part in the research. These contacts handed out and collected surveys for me when I was not on-site;

- Arranging for the dissemination of publicity material. The study was promoted in two different ways (see appendix 3): via posters that were printed to A3 size and displayed in each depot's canteen, 'clocking-in' area, on TV screens, as well as on the company intranet; and via an A5 sized flyer that was attached to each driver's paper-based pay-slip approximately 4 weeks before the study;
- Arranging for the drop-off of surveys in secure collection boxes;
- Determining the list of drivers to take part in the study, identified using company personnel records. Each driver was allocated a unique identifying 6-8 digit code, which was randomly generated using Excel. These codes were used in order to match employee data across the two time points of data collection. Examples of codes include: 2-HPOU-323 and 3-XMQU-7. The first digit corresponded to a number assigned to the depot, and the letters and final digit to a particular employee. This unique code was pasted at the bottom of the last page of each survey. In line with the code of research ethics, each driver was informed about this code both in the publicity material as well as on the front cover of each survey;
- I spent at least three days at each depot meeting and talking to drivers in order to immerse myself in their realities of unfairness. This was helpful in assisting me with structuring the surveys, meeting drivers who spread the word about my research, learning more about the organisation and preparing a final report of findings for the Managing Director.

Participants were remunerated for taking part. Employees who participated at Time 1 were entered in a draw to win cash prizes of £50, £100 or £150. Employees who

participated at Time 2 received a canteen voucher for a free coffee/tea and a biscuit valuing at approximately £1.50 per employee.

Supervisor data

In addition to employee data, I also gathered survey data from supervisors. This was gathered at a third time point, and distributed to the supervisors of all 166 employees. Supervisor data was gathered in order to counteract biases inherent in relying on single-source data from employees. The supervisors were identified by each depot's general manager. Thirteen supervisors took part and provided complete data on all 166 employees. Supervisors were asked to respond on the following scales for each employee: job performance and organisational citizenship behaviour. They also provided neuroticism ratings. However, this data did not bear any results of significance. Though the Cronbach reliabilities for each of these scales was acceptable ($>.70$), this data did not produce any significant results in either of the two studies (chapters 5 and 6).

Such results can be explained with a closer analysis of the structure of the bus company. Each bus driver did not have a specific, dedicated supervisor who monitored performance, provided feedback and assisted with development. Rather, each bus driver operated more as a self-employed individual, with supervisors in garages providing their supervisory duties for all drivers in the garage. The minimum number of drivers per garage was approximately 500. On a rotational shift pattern, supervisors would take it in turn to allocate shifts, schedule holidays and hold disciplinary meetings. It is not

guaranteed that supervisors would speak to each driver on a daily basis, but rather, this would happen on a 'needs only' basis, such as when a shift pattern required reallocation or indeed a driver was pulled up for poor performance. For the purpose of the present study, on average each supervisor was asked to rate 12 drivers each. It is plausible that because each supervisor was not allocated a specific number of drivers to manage solely as part of their job role, and were asked instead to comment on drivers they may or may not see on a daily basis, they were not overly familiar with the performance and citizenship behavior of the drivers they were asked to comment on. This in turn would not have produced a reliable set of results.

3.4.3 Study 3: Daily diary study

Participants for the daily diary study comprised working professionals across the UK, and encompassed a convenience sample recruited via three means: a regional based financial services team from a large European bank; an administrative team in a university; and various professional contacts through my own network. A total of 31 participants took part in an on-line daily diary study.

The main criterion underlying my choice of participants was to ensure that those who took part had real working experience, thus providing greater validity to the results. Additionally, regarding both the banking and university samples, I was aware of many internal changes which made for rich data collection contexts. In the banking sample, changes in external banking regulations pertaining to the types of products a bank can sell put added pressure on the sales targets of its employees, whose performance was

being monitored regularly. Within the university environment, procedural changes owing to new reporting lines and methods of working were creating confusion for the job roles of the administrative staff. This sample also had a pay and performance review coming up in light of procedural changes.

Given that I utilised my personal contacts to attain the sample, this study can be categorised as a convenience sample. A convenience sample is common with diary studies (i.e. Briner & Parkinson, 1993; Conway & Briner, 2002) and it is argued that because a diary study permits control at the individual level of analyses, the convenience nature of the sample does not pose a serious problem (Conway & Briner, 2002). A sample size of 31 can be considered to be of average size (ibid). It should be noted, however, that for analyses, the number of cases amounts to ‘person-days’ rather than ‘persons’: I obtained data pertaining to 308 daily observations.

The advantages of diary studies over other forms of data collection, such as surveys and laboratory experiments, is that they carry greater ecological validity, are less prone to participant memory recall bias and allow for inferences about the temporal sequence of events (Gunthert & Wenze, 2012). In order to ensure that I could capitalise on these advantages, I focused on the following features during the design:

Ethical considerations

In addition to ascertaining informed consent, I balanced requirements for data in the form of frequency sampling with limiting participant intrusion (Connor & Lehman,

2012). I ensured my study included enough assessments of the phenomenon of interest without intruding on participants' time. I had initially planned to request diary entries twice a day to allow for even greater opportunities to capture talk in the moment when it occurred. However, a pilot study with a small snowball sample revealed this approach to be too intrusive on participants' time, with some entries not being completed at all. I therefore opted for once a day diary completion.

Time period

Two-weeks (ten days) is reported as being the modal range of diary studies (Gunthert & Wenze, 2012), with the ultimate decision resting on the construct of interest. I decided to follow this range to give this study the greatest chance of capturing rich data without comprising participant completion rates.

Length of assessments

It has been advised that in order to ascertain optimal response rates, which are free from attrition, missing data or random (bored) responding, daily assessments should be kept to under 10 minutes per day (ibid). I followed this principle, and verified daily assessment time through a pilot study.

Measurement issues

There is a paucity of 'short' research measures designed specifically for diary studies which require short, repeated participation. Heeding expert advice (Mehl & Connor, 2012), I ensured that the scales I used were as short as possible. This is keeping in line

with previous published diary studies (Sonnentag, Binnewies & Mojza, 2008; Rodell & Judge, 2009). Where necessary I abbreviated longer scales by opting to use the highest factor loading items (concurrently ensuring the items I chose were broadly representative of that entire scale).

Importance of reminders

Daily reminders have been found to increase the likelihood of participation in diary studies (Gunthert & Wenze, 2012). Although I asked participants if they would like a daily reminder via a text message, I did not get a positive response. I therefore relied on two other activities to ensure participation rates: I gave a full overview of the study and its time commitment requirements in an email at the recruitment stage; and, I sent a daily email to participants' preferred email account with a link to the daily diary. See appendix 4 for diary study promotional material.

I offered a £10 amazon voucher for full completion of the diary.

3.5 Analytical methods

3.5.1 Study 1: Qualitative interviews and survey

Analysis of study 1 progressed in four separate phases, which utilised a different analytical technique, each befitting the nature of the data gathered. The phases were:

1. Confirming the presence of talk following an individual's experience of workplace injustice.

2. Eliciting critical incidents of talk episodes (from interview and survey data) with which to explore the type and function of talk.
3. Drawing on categories of talk emanating from phase 1 to develop a pool of items to represent talk. This was a content validation exercise.
4. Testing the construct validity of the newly developed measure via confirming its factor structure through a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Phase 1 drew on general and descriptive percentage analyses to interpret data from the interviews. Reporting such statistics is in line with previous work within management sciences which has commented on similar sets of descriptive findings (Conway & Briner, 2002).

Phase 2 deployed a critical incident technique (CIT; Flanagan, 1954) in order to gather episodes of talk. A CIT is ideal for purposes of building theory and in defining a new conceptual domain. An incident is any observable human activity that permits inferences about a phenomenon under question. Through interviews and surveys I had gathered a corpus of data on what victims talked about in conversations following their experiences of workplace unfairness. CIT was ideal since it permitted systematic elicitation of raw data in order to begin building a picture of talk in the context of workplace injustice from people who had experienced unfairness. Flanagan argues that CIT “...does not consist of a single rigid set of rules governing...data collection...” (1954: 9). However, in following his suggestions I was clear in repeating the same

interview/survey questions to elicit the required critical incident: “Think back to a time in your workplace to recall one incident where you felt that another person treated YOU unfairly. The person who treated you unfairly could be your boss, a co-worker, a junior, someone from your team or someone from another department. Reflect back on this incident to describe what happened” and “What did you talk about?”. These questions are in line with researchers who have similarly drawn on CIT to elicit responses in regards to phenomenon in organisational behaviour (i.e. Tripp, Bies & Aquino, 2002).

Content analysis (CA) was deployed to analyse the data in phase 1. I drew on procedures outlined by Krippendorff (1989, 2004) and Bauer (2000). Content analysis has been described as the only method of analysis of text developed in the social sciences (Bauer, 2000). CA is both a qualitative and quantitative system of data analysis: though analysis proceeds along a qualitative judgement route where the complexity of data is initially classified, the procedure then requires coding of data (counting and categorising text units) between trained coders into categories to allow for making valid inferences from data to theory and context. It is noted that coding is an iterative and collective process (Bauer, 2000), with the task of drawing inferences about how units of analysis are related to phenomenon of interest being not only the most important, but also the most time-consuming in content analysis (Krippendorff, 1989). This approach is optimal for revealing patterns in qualitative data (Duriiau, Reger & Pfarrer, 2007), and is in line with justice studies that utilise qualitative methodology in order to develop phenomena that are then quantitatively applied in research: for example, Tripp et al. (2002) developed a taxonomy of revenge episodes.

I utilised CA for two reasons. First, it allowed for a qualitative, iterative and ‘bottom-up’ process of data analysis in light of a lack current available knowledge regarding talk. Along with another coder, I followed a procedure whereby each talk episode was analysed to determine what the function of talk was (what is the talker doing through their talk?). Coding was conducted using NVivo (version 9), a computer assisted qualitative analysis tool which was ideal since it allowed for consistency in rating processes, as well as consistent clarity in outputs compared to manual coding which would have been time-consuming (Basil, 2003; Bazeley, 2007). Collectively, coders compared theory and data until we felt we had adequately captured categories to represent talk. We oscillated between what the data gathered was telling us, and research generally on talk emanating from clinical and social psychology literatures (Murray et al., 1989; Rimé, 2009). These literatures guided our thinking, but we were careful not to let them dictate our findings.

Second, CA provides a systematic and quantitative way of analysing data where coders provide an objective interpretation of a corpus of data. This was achieved by creating a codebook, which included clear descriptions and examples of talk categories, and training a set of coders to classify data into these preferred categories. In constructing the codebook, I followed Krippendorff’s (2004) criteria of ensuring it was both *coherent* (communicating the aesthetic value of my research clearly) and *transparent* (an open booklet serving as a guideline for coders). This process was administered using Excel. I evaluated the reliability of the coding process using an inter-rater macro developed by Krippendorff (2004). This evaluates whether a coding instrument, used by a set of

coders rating the same phenomena, "...yields the same data within a tolerable margin of error..." (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007: 16). Krippendorff's alpha has been endorsed as the standard reliability measure in analysis which involves coding, such as critical incident and content analysis (Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007). This is because it generalises across scales of measurement, can be used with any number of observers and is a good measure of reliability. This is particularly so over other methods such as percentage agreement, to calculate inter-rater reliability, since it controls for effects of chance and error in the coding process.

Phase 3 involved constructing scale items to represent the categories of talk delineated in phase 2. This was a content validity procedure. I deployed a measure creation and validation procedure as recommended by Hinkin and Tracey (1999), who advocate an analysis of variance approach (ANOVA) to content validation. I used this technique since the scholars argue it eliminates subjective decision making requirements that are central to other content validity approaches (such as using a q-correlation matrix which is then subjected to a principal components analysis). It also requires a smaller sample size for testing validation (i.e. as low as 30) compared to over 150-200 for a factor analysis. Further the scholars argue that the only sample requirements for this type of content validation is sufficient mental ability to evaluate a match between items and definitions, so a student sample, which is easily attainable, is sufficient.

Phase 4 aimed at testing the construct validity of the newly developed measure of talk, via confirming its factor structure through the standard practice of using a confirmatory

factor analysis (CFA). CFA is integral to verifying the factor structure of a newly developed measure, since it permits a researcher to test whether measures of a construct are consistent with the theoretical reasoning underpinning that construct. It allowed me to evaluate the measure's dimensionality (internal structure) and draw conclusions about its reliability and validity. It also allowed me to test the validity of this two-factor measure against viable and theoretically plausible alternatives.

3.5.2 Study 2: Repeated cross-sectional survey

Study 2 was analysed using different analytical procedures, dictated by the different research models that were investigated: the first research model sought to uncover the antecedents of talk, and the second, the consequences of talk.

I tested the hypothesised model of the antecedents of talk using structured equation modelling (SEM) through Amos (Arbuckle, 2012) version 21.0. The purpose of SEM is to test the adequacy of a theoretical model in order to explain the relationships among observed and unobserved (latent) variables (Kline, 2005). In other words, SEM comprehensively tests hypotheses based on predictions about how sets of variables define constructs and how these constructs are related to one another (Hoyle, 1995).

SEM is an appropriate analysis technique for this study, especially over associated statistical techniques such as hierarchical regression, for a number of reasons. Whilst in hierarchical regression each relationship between variables has to be tested individually, SEM allows the evaluation of an entire model, thus enabling assessment of the extent to

which the model is consistent with the data. This avoids problems with multiple testing which can lead to spurious conclusions about the validity of a hypothesised model (Byrne, 1994, 2013; Kline, 2011). It is argued that statistical analyses in social sciences should be more concerned with estimating the sizes of effects than with the outcome of any kind of test; in this respect, SEM gives better estimates of effect sizes than traditional techniques (Byrne, 1994; Kline, 2011).

The hypothesised model was tested using Anderson and Gerbing's (1988) comprehensive two-step analytical strategy. First, the measurement model - which is a conventional confirmatory factor model, with latent variables representing common factors - was confirmed using CFA. Second, SEM was performed on the structural model - which is a composite of a measurement model and a path (causal) model, representing the set of causal relations between latent variables - to estimate the fit of the hypothesised model to the data. To gauge the model fit, the following fit indices were used in line with best practice (Byrne, 2001; Kline, 2005; Boomsma, 2000; Hu & Bentler, 1999): model chi-square (χ^2), comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990); incremental fit index (IFI; Bollen, 1989); root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990); and standardised root mean square residual (SRMR).

I tested the hypothesised model of the consequences of talk using moderated regression analysis. To assist in interpretation of the interactions, simple slopes were plotted according to procedures outlined by Aiken and West (1991). All analyses were run through SPSS version 21.

Analyses for both the antecedents and consequences of talk (chapters 5 and 6 respectively) were conducted with both time points of data gathered. Whilst results from the first time point are presented in chapters 5 and 6, the second ‘repeated’ time point of data was used as a replication of the results attained at the first time point, and are presented in appendices 7 and 8. I recognise that a major limitation with both time points of data is that they are cross-sectional survey designs and therefore are affected by problems of bias inherent in same-time (data collected at one point in time) and same-source (data gathered from one type of employee only) (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee & Podsakoff, 2003). However, the approach of running a repeated survey, and replicating and validating results across two time points of data was to provide greater confidence in the results obtained.

3.5.3 Study 3: Daily diary study

The diary study was analysed using hierarchical linear modelling (HLM; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002), version 7.01. HLM was chosen since it permits the investigation of relationships across different levels of analysis (Hofmann, Griffin & Gavin, 2000). Given the multi-level nature of my data (I had both within and between subjects data) HLM was ideal since it accounts for both within and between group variables.

It is argued that the basic concept behind HLM is similar to that of ordinary least squares (OLS) (Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). OLS estimates unknown parameters in a typical linear regression model (an outcome variable is predicted as a function of one or more variables, including an intercept). HLM is superior to OLS approaches because it

produces appropriate error terms that control dependency due to the nesting effects of data. In other words, HLM produces more accurate error terms (Mundfrom & Schultz, 2002; Raudenbush, 2009) providing greater confidence in findings.

HLM is a process which models data at two different levels. Level 1 captures within individual variance, with level 2 capturing between individual variance. In order to investigate whether level 2 variables moderated the relationship between level 1 variables, I ran interactions within HLM. To assist in interpretation of the interactions, simple slopes were plotted according to procedures outlined by Aiken and West (1991).

3.6 Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines as stipulated by the British Psychological Society (2009) and LSE were followed: participants gave informed consent before participating and their responses were guaranteed for confidentiality, with all demographic details ascertained being used to shed light on the aggregate details of the overall sample. My contact details were provided with each study.

3.7 Chapter summary

This chapter has outlined the multi-method approach to data collection deployed in this thesis, outlining the overall rationale for the methods, sample and data analyses chosen for the three studies conducted. Further details about each study's method can be found in the following respective empirical chapters. Indeed, in addressing the research aims introduced in chapter 2, we turn now to a presentation of the empirical data gathered as

part of the three studies comprising this thesis. The following chapters are thus structured as follows: Chapter 4 presents the development of a new measure of talk (study 1), Chapter 5 explores the antecedents of talk in the context of workplace injustice, with Chapter 6 discussing the consequences of talk in the context of workplace injustice (study 2). Chapter 7 rounds off the empirical chapters, presenting the daily-diary study (study 3).

Chapter 4:

Study 1: Development of a new measure of talk in the context of workplace injustice

4.1 Chapter Overview

Having outlined the methodology employed in this thesis, this chapter turns to presenting findings from the first of the three studies conducted. This chapter describes study 1, and focuses on uncovering the relevance of talk in the context of workplace injustice, as well as the development of a new measure of talk that will be used in subsequent empirical chapters.

4.2 Introduction

As discussed in chapter 2, I am drawing on research conducted within clinical and social psychology wherein talk is construed as a recovery mechanism assisting one with overcoming a negative life encounter (Scheff & Bushell, 1984; Murray et al., 1989; Rimé, 2007). Drawing parallels between these literatures and the impact of a workplace injustice encounter, my aim in this thesis is to explore the relevance of a ‘talking cure’ in the context of workplace injustice. As the start of this thesis’ empirical journey, this first empirical study is thus guided by two research questions:

- **Research Question 1:** *Does talk follow a person’s experience of unfairness at work?*
- **Research Question 2:** *If so, what is such talk? What is its function?*

This chapter is divided into **four** phases, summarised in table 4.1. Phase 1 addresses research question 1 and comprises an investigation of whether the phenomenon of talk exists in the context of workplace unfairness. Phase 2, 3 and 4 address research

question 2. In light of results from phase 1, these subsequent phases describe procedures involved in the investigation of the content of talk (phase 2), the development of scale items representing this content (phase 3) and the psychometric evaluation of a new measure of talk (phase 4).

Table 4.1. Overview of the four phases of research comprising study 1

Research question	Phase and aim of investigation	Data collection method
Research question 1: Does talk follow a person's experience of unfairness at work?	Phase 1 Exploring the presence of talk following an individual's experience of workplace injustice.	Qualitative interviews
Research question 2: If so, what is such talk? What is its function?	Phase 2 Analysing critical incidents of talk and conducting content analysis to devise categories of talk.	Qualitative interviews and surveys
	Phase 3 Writing and validating items to represent two categories of talk.	Survey
	Phase 4 CFA analyses.	Survey

4.2.1 Theoretical rationale for a new measure of talk

Before turning to phase 1 of the research, I shall outline why I departed from deploying existing measures which allude to talk. These measures are found in the following literatures: voice, social support and coping. First I will describe the measure used in each literature and then conclude with a critique. Each measure described can be found in appendix 5.

Voice literature

There is no standard and accepted measure of voice in the context of the *EVLN* (exit, voice, loyalty and neglect) literature¹. Scant measures exist, however. For example, two separate measures have been written by Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers and Mainous (1988: 624) to explore the impact of exchange variables (i.e. job satisfaction) on *EVLN*. Items in one of the measures include: “I would go to my immediate supervisor to discuss the problem”, “I would try to solve the problem by suggesting changes in the way the work was supervised in the office”. In another measure, items include “When I think of an idea that will benefit my company I make a determined effort to implement it”, “When things are seriously wrong and the company won’t act, I am willing to blow the whistle”.

With regards to procedural justice and its notion of the ‘voice effect’ (procedures that seek participants’ opinions versus those that do not) (Folger, 1977), a great majority of research simply conceptualises voice as the presence or absence of input into a decision. For example, in one study by Bies and Shapiro (1988), voice was construed as either *mute* (participants did not have an opportunity to ask questions) or *voice* (participants had an opportunity to ask questions). Similarly, Lind, Kanfer and Earley (1990) present two conditions: *voice* (subject was asked opinion) and *no-voice* (subject not asked opinion).

¹ A personal discussion at the LSE with Prof. Amy Wrzesniewski corroborated this point (February, 2014).

There exist two general voice behaviour measures. LePine and Van Dyne (1998; see also 2001) explore voice behaviour in work groups in a 6-item measure. Items, referring to a co-worker, include: "...develops and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect this work group", "...speaks up and encourages others in this group to get involved in issues that affect the group". Burris (2011) developed a 6-item employee 'speaking up' scale, with items including: "I challenge my district manager to deal with problems around here" and "I keep well-informed about issues where my opinion might be useful."

Social support literature

Beehr et al. (1990) conceive of social support as communication between supervisors and employees, arguing that what people talk about at work may impact the relationship between stressors (characteristics of work) and strains (poor mental or physical health). In a nursing context they have created a 12-item scale that measures the content of communication as positive job-related, negative job-related and non-work related. Items in their survey include: "We discuss things that are happening in our personal lives", "We talk about the bad things about our work". This measure has been applied in different research contexts, such as door-to-door bookdealers (Beehr et al., 2000) and hospital supply workers (Beehr, Farmer, Glazer, Gudanowski & Nair, 2003).

Coping literature

The coping literature explores different coping styles that people use to handle stress. There exist two measures: Ways of Coping Questionnaire (WCQ) (Lazarus & Folkman, 1988) and the COPE inventory (Carver, Scheier & Weintraub, 1989; Carver, 1997).

The WCQ is a 50-item questionnaire. There is no category pertaining to talk, rather talk is subsumed under *seeking social support*. Three items pertain to talk: “Talked to someone to find out more about the situation”, “Talked to someone who could do something about the problem” and “Talked to someone about how I was feeling”. The COPE is a 60-item questionnaire. Again there is no category of talk, but a number of items allude to talk, including “I talk to someone to find out more about the situation”, “I talk to someone about how I feel” and “I talk to someone who could do something concrete about the problem”.

Critique of voice, social support and coping literatures

There are four major criticisms with regards to utilising any one of these talk measures. These pertain to the following and will be discussed in turn: a) the content of scale items, b) the lack of focus on an emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey of an employee, c) the context each measure has been developed in, and, d) psychometric limitations.

First, with regards to content, one issue with a number of the measures is that they construe talk as communication between a supervisor and his/her subordinate. This is

true for the *voice* measures, with the LePine and Van Dyne's measure also including co-workers, as well as the *social support* measure. The manager is construed as either the cause of the problem or the one with whom communication is initiated. For example, the Rusbult et al. (1988) measure includes the item "I would go to my immediate supervisor to discuss the problem"; Beehr et al's. (1990) social support measure has an item "We [subordinate and employee] talk about the bad things about work". The limitation with this is that it has narrowed the construal of talk to a dialogue between a few members within one's organisation and the scale items are biased in this regard. Talk, as conceptualised in the present thesis, draws from literatures in which communication about one's adverse situation can be initiated with any significant other, including (and perhaps more importantly) those in one's personal life. Restricting a talk measure to communication between an employee and his/her supervisor limits what we can learn and understand as researchers about the full impact of talk as a recovery mechanism in the context of workplace injustice.

Second, and related to the above point, is that the focus of this thesis is on the subjective experience of a victim of injustice; what is his/her cognitive, emotional and behavioural experience of recovery in the context of workplace unfairness? Given their predominant focus on communication between employee and supervisor/co-worker, it can be argued that the aforecited measures are not fully indicative of a victim's experience. Indeed, none of the measures are written from the perspective of an aggrieved employee, yet this is the exact focus of interest for the present thesis in order to explore a victim's recovery process.

Third, the issue of context is important for researchers involved in the design of new measures. It is argued that a primary goal of scale development is to create a valid measure of the construct under study (Clark & Watson, 1995). The actual construct of study in the present thesis is *workplace injustice*. Thus, to fully understand the nature of talk in a workplace injustice context, it must be studied through an injustice lens: in this way no apriori assumptions are made about the nature, content and function of talk (i.e. what is spoken about, why and to whom?). The importance of context in scale development is central to a plethora of organisational behaviour research. For example, in researching high-quality relationships at work, Colbert, Bono and Purnova (working paper) depart from mentoring and social support literatures to create a new scale that views such relationships through a work-environment lens. In the same vein, none of the measures aforementioned were developed nor largely applied in a workplace injustice context. For example, both the WQS and COPE measures from the coping literature evolved in a clinical context with patients suffering from a terminal illness, bereavement, anorexia and/or mental health issues. The social support measure was also developed in a medical setting. The lens through which a concept is studied influences the nature (type of talk) and the function served by talk, and therefore, to enhance validity of the construct I am studying it was deemed paramount that a measure was developed in a workplace injustice context.

The only exceptions to this notion of context are the voice measures developed to measure procedural injustice (Folger, 1977; Bies & Shapiro, 1988; Lind et al., 1990). The limitation with these measures, however, is that their conceptualisation of talk is

perhaps too simplistic – it is the presence or absence of voice. Though this conceptualisation is in keeping with procedural justice rules, it does not provide an in-depth and broad insight into the function, nature and type of talk that may exist in an injustice context.

And finally, there are problems with the psychometric construction of the social support scale. Beehr et al. (2000) provide little insight into how they arrived at their categories, which appear to be determined apriori, leaving one asking, are these categories a precise and exhaustive representation of conversations at work? Their measure also includes double-barrelled items, including “We share personal information about our backgrounds and our families”, as well as items which are ambiguous in their meaning, leaving a respondent confused about what exactly the question is referring to. Such items include “We talk about off-the-job interests we have in common”, “We talk about the bad things about our work”, “We talk about the good things about our work”: what exactly constitutes off the job interests, good things and bad things? Would good and bad things mean the same to each person? These issues limit its usefulness in the present study.

Having provided a justification for the development of a new measure of talk, I will now turn to presenting phase 1 of the research, which addressed research question 1.

4.3 Phase 1: Does talk follow a person's experience of unfairness at work?

In order to investigate research question 1, data was collected from qualitative semi-structured interviews.

4.3.1 Participants

The sample comprised 24 working professionals based in the UK, and predominately in London. The sample included 12 females (50%), with an average age of 36 years ($SD=10.18$). Their levels of education varied from school leaver (4; 16%), bachelors (10; 42%), and postgraduate (10; 42%). They had been with their employing organisations for, on average, 10.18 years ($SD= 10.47$). The breakdown of ethnicity was as follows: White European (20; 83%), Asian Chinese (1; 4%) and Asian Indian (3; 13%). Further details about this sample can be found in table 4.2.

4.3.2 Procedure & Measures

24 semi-structured interviews were conducted: 14 were face-to-face at the interviewees' organisation, an outside meeting place or the LSE; 10 were conducted over the phone. Each interview lasted approximately 1-hour, with the shortest lasting 45-minutes and the longest 1-hour 35-minutes. In total, I had 24 hours and 45 minutes worth of interview data. Each interview followed the same interview guide (appendix 1). I completed three pilot interviews and in light of these made changes to my questioning style and interview flow. A funnel-based technique was used: the interview began with eliciting participants' broad understanding of unfairness, before questioning their own experiences.

Table 4.2. Interview participants' demographic data

Int #	Age: yrs	Gender	Education	Occupation	Sector	Tenure: yrs	Location of Interview	Duration (hr/min)
1	27	F	Post-graduate	Financial Analyst	Financial Services	2	LSE	1.15
2	50	F	Post-graduate	Director	Telecomms	20	LSE	1.30
3	27	F	Post-graduate	Financial Analyst	Financial Services	2	LSE	1
4	30	M	Bachelors	Accountant	Financial Services	8	External meeting point	1
5	30	M	Bachelors	Civil Servant	Civil Service	1	LSE	1
6	37	F	Post-graduate	Finance Manager	Financial Services	13	Participant's organisation	1.15
7	30	M	Bachelors	Finance Manager	Financial Services	2	LSE	1.10
8	29	M	Post-graduate	Accountant	Financial Services	1	External meeting point	.55
9	40	F	Bachelors	Nurse	NHS Hospital	1	LSE	1.35
10	31	F	Bachelors	Accountant	Accountancy	7	Participant's organisation	1
11	35	F	School leaver	Accountant	Accountancy	12	Participant's organisation	1
12	40	M	School leaver	Accountant	Publishing	13	Telephone	1.15
13	26	M	Bachelors	Civil Servant	Civil Service	2	LSE	1.15
14	52	F	Bachelors	Projects Manager	Telecomms	4	Telephone	1
15	28	F	Bachelors	Relationship Manager	Financial Services	3	Telephone	1.10
16	50	M	Post-graduate	Projects Manager	Telecomms	18	Telephone	1
17	50	M	Post-graduate	Projects Manager	Telecomms	27	Telephone	1.10
18	50	M	Post-graduate	Projects Manager	Telecomms	32	Telephone	1
19	51	M	School leaver	Projects Manager	Telecomms	24	Telephone	1.20
20	55	F	Post-graduate	Projects Manager	Telecomms	22	Telephone	1.15
21	27	M	School leaver	Relationship Manager	Financial Services	32	Telephone	.45
22	32	F	Post-graduate	Relationship Manager	Financial Services	1	External meeting point	1
23	30	M	Bachelors	Depot General Manager	Transportation	5	Telephone	1
24	26	F	Bachelors	Finance Manager	Financial Services	3	External meeting point	.55
Mean.	36	-	-	-	-	10.18	-	-
SD.	10.62	-	-	-	-	10.47	-	-
SUM.		-	-	-	-	-	-	24.45

*This table does not include ethnicity information. Given the data already supplied, it was decided not to reprint ethnicity in order to protect participant anonymity.

Where necessary, I used follow up questions to probe. The following are sample questions: *What does workplace unfairness mean to you?; What was the impact of this unfair workplace incident on you?; Did you talk about your unfair experience?; If so, what did you talk about?; Who did you speak to and why?*

4.3.3 Results

Findings from phase 1 are summarised in table 4.3. With regards to whether individuals who have suffered workplace injustice talk following their experience, 89% of interviewees said they spoke about their unjust experience. 100% of these individuals agreed positively, in response to the question ‘*Was talk helpful?*’. The most frequent conversations were with relatives/friends/partners outside of work (56%), followed by colleagues in work (19%) and line managers (10%). The remaining percentages saw interviewees speak with a combination of people (15%).

Table 4.3. Descriptive results of the nature and perpetrator of injustice, and ensuing talk, based on interview data

Type of injustice experienced	%	Perpetrator of injustice	%	Recipient of talk ¹	%
Distributive	21	Manager	81	Relative/friend/partner outside work	56
Procedural	28	Colleague	11	Colleague	19
Interpersonal	43	Junior	8	Manager	10
Informational	8			Combination of two of above	15

Percentage calculated based on 89% of interviewees who talked about their unjust experience.

N=24

Perceptions of the unfairness of interpersonal treatment received from authority figures (interpersonal injustice) was experienced the most frequently, by 43% of the interviewees. This was followed closely by perceptions of the unfairness of decisions used to determine outcomes (procedural injustice) at 28%. Perceptions of the unfairness of outcomes (distributive injustice) were experienced 21% of the time, and finally, perceptions of unfairness relating to information not being received in a timely and open manner (informational injustice), 8% of the time. At 81%, participants indicated that their line manager (supervisor) was the most frequent perpetrator of acts of injustice. This was followed by colleagues (11%), and junior personnel (8%).

4.3.4 Conclusion of Phase 1

An exploratory investigation utilising qualitative interview data confirmed the presence of talk following a workplace victim's experience of injustice. Though these details are of a general, descriptive nature, they are fundamental to furthering our understanding of how those at the receiving end of workplace injustice operate in the aftermath of unfairness. Indeed, reporting such statistics is in line with previous work within management sciences which has commented on similar sets of descriptive findings (Conway & Briner, 2002). This study compliments existing research in clinical and social psychology which confirms the presence of talk following one's encounter with negative life experiences (Murray et al., 1989; Rimé et al., 1998; Greenberg, 2002; Rimé, 2007), but goes one step further in being perhaps the first study to confirm that people *do talk* about their unfair experiences at work. Having concluded with a positive

answer to research question 1, the next phase of research sought to uncover what the nature of such talk is – in other words, what do individuals talk about?

4.4 Phase 2: What do victims talk about following workplace injustice?

In order to investigate research question 2, this phase sought to uncover what exactly victims of workplace injustice talk about following their encounter with unfairness. Data was collected from the semi-structured interviews, as described above. In order to gather further episodes of the content of talk, with the purpose of inputting these into the construction of a new measure of talk, I also conducted two on-line surveys.

4.4.1 Participants

The interview sample utilised for this phase of research was the same as in phase 1 described above ($N=24$). The first survey sample comprised Master's students, who were recruited via the LSE's Behavioural Lab database operated by the Department of Management. Of 308 students who responded to the email link sent out via the LSE database, 106 (35%) provided complete data in the form of talk episodes. 62% of the sample was male, with an average age of 28 years ($SD= 7.89$). The average tenure of this sample was 2.18 years ($SD=1$). The ethnic breakdown of this sample was as follows: White European (35%), Far East Asian or British East Asian (28%), South Asian or British South Asian (30%) and Black or Black British (7%).

The second survey sample comprised working professionals. In response to an email link sent out to a snowball sample who expressed an interest in taking part, 30 people

responded with complete data. This sample was 52% male, with a mean age of 32 years ($SD=14.32$). The average tenure of this sample in their current job was 3.7 years ($SD=3.22$). The ethnic breakdown of this sample was as follows: White European (58%), Far East Asian or British East Asian (15%) and South Asian or British South Asian (27%).

4.4.2 Procedure & Measures

The procedure utilised to gather interview data was the same as used in phase 1 described above. The surveys were conducted on-line. Individuals were asked to narrate an experience of unfairness and what/who they talked about in relation to it. The following measures/questions were used in both surveys:

Demographic variables. Gender, age (year), tenure (years) with employing organisation, education level, industry and ethnicity were attained.

Workplace unfairness. Participants were asked to: ‘Think back to a time in your workplace to recall one incident where you felt that another person treated YOU unfairly. The person who treated you unfairly could be your boss, a co-worker, a junior, someone from your team or someone from another department. Reflect back on this incident to describe what happened. Please describe this incident in as much detail as you can’.

Talk. Participants were asked three open-ended questions. Following your experience of unfairness at work: ‘Did you talk?’, ‘Who did you talk to?’ and ‘Please describe in as much detail as you can, what you talked about’. And finally, they were asked ‘Was talking about the unfair workplace incident you describe helpful or unhelpful?’ (Yes/No).

4.4.3 Analysis: Content analysis procedure and results

44 talk episodes of talk were gathered from the interview data, 106 from the Master’s student survey, and 30 from the working professionals’ survey. The final *N* for this phase was therefore 180 critical incidents of talk. The unit of analyses for this study was each talk incident. Content analysis was performed on these 180 incidents of talk, following procedures outlined by Krippendorff (2004). This entailed two major coding processes through which the incidents of talk were classified into sub-categories of talk. Specifically, all coders followed a procedure whereby each talk incident was analysed to determine what the function of talk was, in other words, what is the talker doing through their talk?

Two content analysis coding processes were carried out. The first (coding process 1) was between myself and one more coder, in which we sought to create an initial list of sub-categories of talk. This was an inductive and iterative coding process, where it took us three attempts to conclude sub-categories of talk. For each attempt, we coded a different 10% of the critical incidents of talk (*N*=18). The second (coding process 2) was amongst five independent coders each of whom independently coded the complete

180 talk episodes into the sub-categories emanating from coding process 1. Appendix 6 presents the outputs for both coding process.

In order to determine reliability of ratings across each coding process, I calculated Krippendorff's alpha for inter-rater reliability (Krippendorff, 2004; α), using an SPSS macro provided by Hayes & Krippendorff (2007). A minimum value of α between .67 – .80 has been endorsed as an acceptable level of inter-rater reliability between coders (Krippendorff, 2012).

Coding Process 1: Two coders (coding 10% of the 180 talk incidents at three attempts)

In the first instance, along with another coder, we coded talk incidents to arrive at sub-categories of talk (I was coder 1). All in all, there were **three** coding attempts between us, with each attempt streamlining the sub-categories of talk determined in order to arrive at a final categorisation of talk which we both agreed upon and which stood up to tests of inter-rater reliability. For each of these three attempts, we coded a separate 10% of the 180 talk episodes. So each attempt involved coding $N=18$ talk incidents.

The coding process followed an inductive and iterative process. In order to prepare coder 2 for the task of coding, and to ensure he and I could arrive at a robust sub-categorisation of the talk incidents, I answered his questions until he was ready to begin coding. Coding was conducted using NVivo (version 9), a computer assisted analysis tool. For each of the three coding attempts, we both independently developed a list of talk sub-categories. We labelled each category devised, defined it and provided

examples of the category using talk incidents to support it. A collective comparison was then made of each coder's list. Where discrepancies arose, the respective talk categories were resolved by re-examining the data and talk categories. Results of the three coding attempts between coder 1 and coder 2 are presented in table 4.4. The inter-rater reliabilities of the three coding attempts are presented in table 4.5.

Table 4.4. Coding categories developed by coder 1 and coder 2 through three coding attempts¹

Coding attempt 1:	
Coder 1	Coder 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Negative Emotion ▪ Spreading Gossip ▪ Seeking Validation & Advice ▪ Asking Others if Right/Wrong 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Venting Liberally ▪ Condemning Perpetrator ▪ Seeking Input from Others/Explanations ▪ Seeking Constructive Solutions ▪ Asking Questions
Coding attempt 2:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Venting ▪ Gossip ▪ Sense-making ▪ Active Solutions 	
Coding attempt 3:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Emotion focused talk ▪ Cognition focused talk 	

¹ N=18 for each coding process attempt

Table 4.5. Inter-rater reliabilities of the two coding processes

Coding Tasks	Krippendorff's Alpha (α)
Coding Process 1 (between coder 1 and coder 2, coding 10% of talk incidents each time)	
Coding attempt 1	.33
Coding attempt 2	.49
Coding attempt 3	.89
Coding Process 2 (between 5 independent coders, coding 180 talk incidents)	.80

Coding Attempt 1: As can be seen in table 4.4, in the first coding attempt, I (coder 1) had developed a list of 4 categories of talk, and coder 2 had developed a list of 5 categories of talk. These were as follows: coder 1 (*Negative Emotion, Spreading Gossip, Seeking Validation & Advice, Asking Others if Right/Wrong*); coder 2 (*Venting Liberally, Condemning Perpetrator, Seeking Input from Others/Explanations, Seeking Constructive Solutions, Asking Questions*). Below are some examples of the talk incidents both I and coder 2 used to back up our categorisation attempts (see appendix 6 for full examples).

I developed a category called *Negative Emotion*, which I defined as one's release of pent up frustration and anger in response to an injustice episode. Examples of talk episodes falling under this category include:

Example 1: "I don't know why I talked, because I wasn't really listening to what they had to say anyway (laughs). I think it was just venting, just getting it out, getting the frustration out. I think it was more getting the frustrations and anger out than it was seeking a resolution or advice. I was so angry that this could happen to me"

Example 2: "I talked to my boyfriend about it, I was outraged that people could think this about me, I said this is what they think about me, the girls, but I thought they'd think differently"

Coder 2's sub-category called *Asking Questions* was defined as talk wherein a victim asks questions in order to get some reassurance and/or clarity about their injustice experience, and included the following examples:

Example 3: "I asked for advice of what I should do to both supervisor and colleague and they suggested I face the situation head on and discuss it with the boss..".

Example 4: “So then I sort of felt that ok now it’s time to ask her what’s the problem so I approached her. I was *very* nervous and-because I hate all this stupid stuff at work where you can’t do your things you just have to waste your time on sorting out this personal whatever-so I approached her and said okay, I have noticed I am very sorry, but I have noticed that you know, have I done something wrong?”

In order to determine reliability of ratings across our coding efforts, and to ensure we could proceed with further coding, I calculated Krippendorff’s alpha for inter-rater reliability (Krippendorff, 2004; α). The α value for our coding effort 1 was poor: $\alpha=0.33$.

Coding Attempt 2: I took action by reviewing the categorisation and seeking feedback from coder 2. Coding therefore reverted back to being an iterative inductive process. By reviewing our collective disagreements, we noticed that generally our coding was demarcated along two dichotomous categories of talk – *emotions* and *cognitions* – with *Negative Emotions* (coder 1) and *Venting Liberally* (coder 2) falling into the emotions category and *Seeking Validation & Advice* (coder 1), *Asking Others if Right/Wrong*, *Seeking Input from Others* (coder 1), *Seeking Constructive Solutions* (coder 2) and *Asking Questions* (coder 2), falling into the cognitions category. This bode well generally with the literature, as afore-cited. Talk literatures point to the importance of emotional and cognitive processing (i.e. Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999; Scheff, 2001). Figure 4.1 shows how the initial coding could be separated as such.

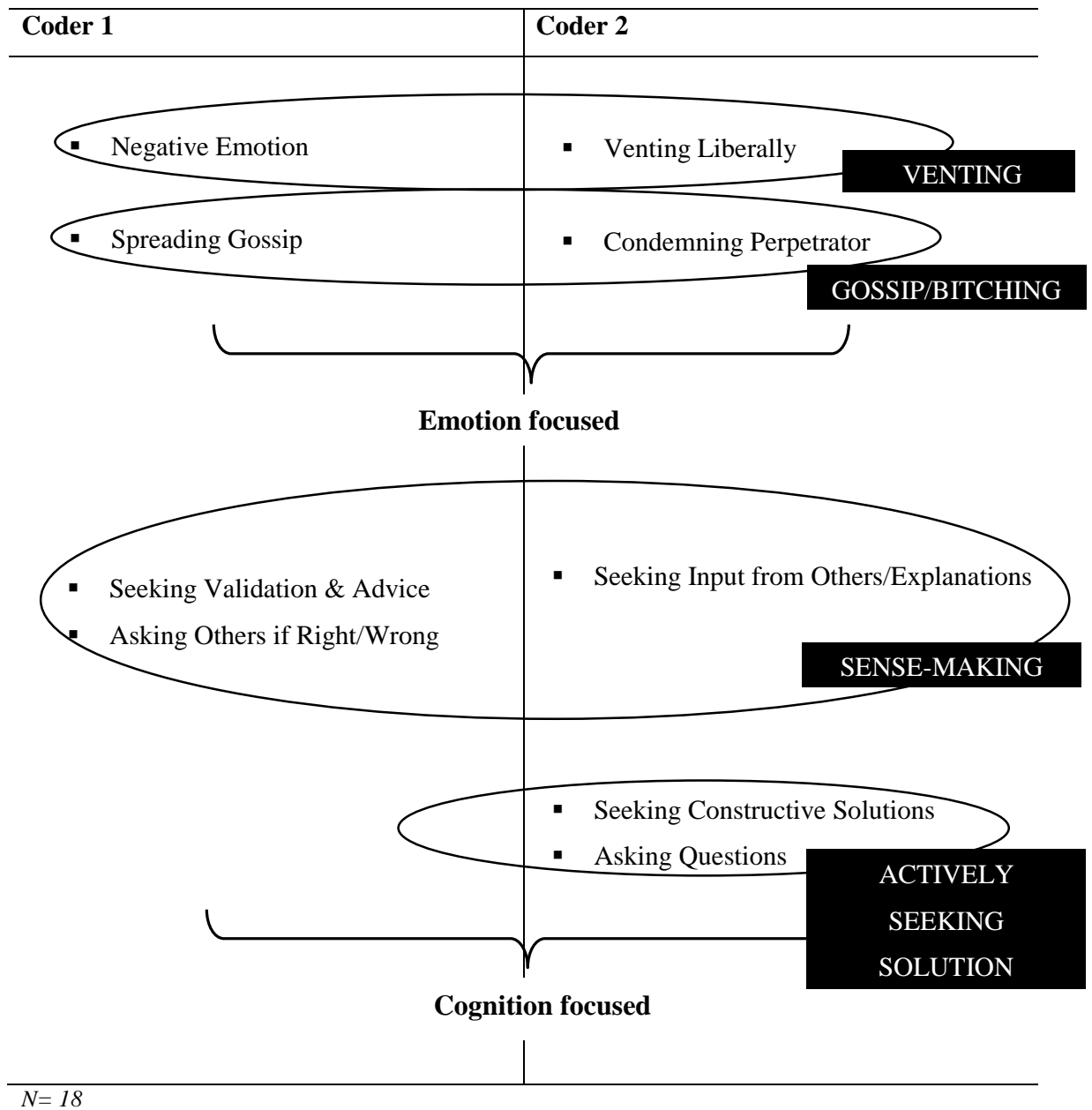


Figure 4.1. Comparison of coding categories between coder 1 and coder 2, during coding attempt 2

However, even with these two broad categories of emotions and cognitions, two sub-categories were visible. Within the emotions category, *Negative Emotions* (coder 1) and *Venting Liberally* (coder 2) both referred to the cathartic act of venting, letting out one's pent-up frustration, in an outward-focused manner. *Spreading Gossip* (coder 1) and *Condemning Perpetrator* (coder 2) both referred to the act of 'saying bad things' to others about the one who offended a victim; in other words, this seemed to support literature on negative gossip (Robinson & Bennett, 1995). Similarly, under the cognitions category, the two sub-categories visible were as follows: *Seeking Validation & Advice* (coder 1), *Asking Others if Right/Wrong* (coder 1) and *Seeking Input from Others/Explanations* (coder 2) referred to an act of sense-making, whereas the examples supporting *Seeking Constructive Solutions* (coder 2) and *Asking Questions* (coder 2) pertain to actively searching for a resolution to one's predicament.

We therefore decided to create four sub-categories of talk: ***Venting, Gossip, Sense-making and Active Solutions***. Though the first two of these categories could be argued to be sub-categories of *emotions*, and the latter two, sub-categories of *cognitions*, in the interests of research parsimony, I wanted to explore whether a four-categorisation conceptualisation of talk would emerge through another coding process.

Thus, along with coder 2 we re-coded another 10% of the talk episodes ($N=18$) into these four categories. The α value for our second coding effort was poor/average: $\alpha=0.49$.

Coding Attempt 3: I took action by reviewing the categorisation and seeking feedback from coder 2; coding reverted back to an iterative inductive process. The discrepancies in our coding were due to both of us having difficulty separating talk incidents between *Venting* and *Gossip*, and between, *Sense-making* and *Active Solutions*. For example, the following talk incident had been coded by me (coder 1) as *Venting* and by coder 2 as *Gossip*.

Example 5: “I’m not intimidated by rank. I’ve been for coffee and lunch with lots of influential people, and you talk socially about what you like, what you’re doing and I don’t have a professional veneer (pause) in one conversation with a friend, I was worked up and I said I’m working for the bastard Fawltly downstairs”

Discussion revealed that it was difficult to tease apart venting from releasing outward-focused emotion which also included ‘gossip’ infused angry references to the perpetrator. The act of venting and releasing frustration therefore also embodies an act of bad-mouthing the person held responsible. This notion has intuitive appeal; one can imagine a cathartic episode, following on from an incident of workplace unfairness, which also includes heated, unpleasant references to the perpetrator. Literatures on gossip make reference to the emotionally laden feeling that accompanies such talk (i.e. Kurland & Pelled, 2000; Robinson & Bennett, 1995). In line with earlier theorising after the initial coding attempt, it was therefore decided to merge these two categories into the first talk category: ***emotion focused talk***, defined as *talk that represents the release of strong negative emotions*.

Additionally, discussion revealed that it was difficult to tease apart *Sense-making* and *Active Solutions* as categories. For example, whereas I (coder 1) had coded the below example as *Sense-making*, coder 2 had coded it as *Active Solutions*:

Example 6: ““She was asking me what was I going to do? And that was quite good for me as I’m not normally a dweller on things, I’m like “right that’s it what am I going to do about it?”. So she was like “you know why it is, this is it, what are you going to do about it?”

What the coding process was inductively portraying was that perhaps an act of sense-making accompanies a search for ‘doing something’ about one’s predicament. Through my discussion with coder 2, what became apparent was that what connects sense-making and active solution searching is that both are the opposite of *emotion* talk – that is, they are devoid of outward-focused emotions, and rather, focused mentally and actively on acquiring knowledge, through asking questions, seeking advice and gaining different perspectives. This is the work of cognitions. In other words, both of these categories culminate in attempts at talk which seek to actively and cognitively change a situation. Cognition can be translated loosely as ‘a mental action or a process of acquiring knowledge and understanding through thought, experience and the senses (Oxford Online Dictionary, 2014). This categorisation speaks to literature on talk which argues that cognition is a form of attaining self-understanding by reframing a negative, stressful occurrence (Greenberg, 2002; Pennebaker et al., 2001). It was therefore decided to merge these two categories into a second talk category: ***cognition focused talk***, defined as *talk that involves actively working towards a solution to resolve one’s problem*.

With these two new categories, along with coder 2, we repeated the content analysis procedure of coding an additional 10% of the talk episodes ($N=18$). Krippendorff's α for inter-rater reliability was .89 (table 4.5), with which we concluded that data were similarly interpreted by both coders. This phase of research therefore moved to the second coding process.

Coding Process 2: Five coders coding all 180 talk incidents into two sub-categories of talk (emotion and cognition)

The next stage involved an additional 5 coders coding the 180 episode of talk into the two newly devised categories: emotion, cognition. A codebook was developed with a description of the content of each type of talk and an example of talk episodes belonging to that category. Each coder was trained to use the codebook and to understand the talk categories. In line with best practice (Bauer, 2000; Hayes & Krippendorff, 2007), each coder was given a briefing packet to ensure reliability of data analysis. This packet contained: clear instructions, a codebook, definitions and a recording sheet. These can be found in appendix 7. The 5 coders read all of the 180 talk episodes, assessing the extent to which they fell into each of the two types of talk categories. They were also asked to make a note of any additional types of talk they believed emanated from their data sorting. I had wanted to use NVivo for this process but since not every coder had access to this package, Excel was used for data collection. Given the large N of talk episodes, each coder was given one month to complete their coding. I kept in touch with all coders on a weekly basis to answer any queries. Collectively, they coded $N=75$ *emotional* talk episodes and $N=105$ *cognition talk* episodes. Krippendorff's α for inter-

rater reliability was .80 (table 4.5). We can conclude that data were similarly interpreted by all coders. The five coders did not come up with any additional categories.

4.4.4 Conclusion of Phase 2

Critical episodes of talk accumulated through interview and survey data have highlighted that following their experiences of workplace injustice, the talk that victims engage in reflects content pertaining to their emotions and their cognitions. Whilst the former refers to conversation that represents the release of negative emotions, the latter is defined as talk involving actively working to resolve one's problem. The next phase of research sought to delineate items to represent these categories of talk in a new measure.

4.5 Phase 3: Generation of items for talk measure

In order to continue the investigation of research question 2, this phase sought to generate scale items to utilise as part of a new measure of talk.

4.5.1 Participants

Participants comprised a sample of students recruited online via the Behavioural Lab, operated by the Department of Management, at the LSE. Of the 800 students the survey was sent to, 134 students responded with complete data (17%). 76% of the sample was female, with the average age being 26 years ($SD=8.08$). 19% of the sample had no work experience, 30% had < one year, 13% had between 1-2 years and 38% had >2 years. The ethnic breakdown of this sample was as follows: White European (40%),

Asian/Asian British (25%), Black/Black British (5%), Mixed (20%) and Other (10%). The students were a mixture of undergraduate and post-graduates (on Master's courses).

4.5.2 Procedure & Measures

For each of the two categories of talk elicited from phase 1 (emotion and cognition), I wrote ten statements per talk category using the talk episodes collected in phase 1 as a guide. Table 4.6 presents these items.

Two surveys (one for emotion focused talk, one for cognition focused talk) were designed and distributed on-line to students via the LSE Lab database, in an email which explained the nature of the research and included a link to take part in the survey. The survey was open for one-week. Participants randomly received either the emotion questions, or the cognition questions; surveys were randomly presented in a different order to control for response bias that may occur from order effects (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The definition of either one of the talk categories was presented at the top of each page of the survey, followed by a randomised list of survey items. Participants were asked to rate the extent to which items were consistent with the definition of each construct (either emotion or cognition focused talk) on a seven-point scale (1=*item does an extremely bad job of measuring (emotion or cognition) focused talk* to 7=*item does an extremely good job of measuring (emotion or cognition) focused talk*). Participation for each survey was as follows: emotion ($N=78$), cognition ($N=56$). The following demographic data was collected: age, gender, ethnicity, and number of years of work experience.

Table 4.6. List of items developed to represent emotion and cognition focused talk

#	Emotion focused talk	#	Cognition focused talk
E1	I spoke angrily about how outraged I was.	C1	I spoke to others for advice on how they would approach my situation.
E2	I let my negative feelings out.	C2	I spoke and got information and advice from other people on what to do about my experience.
E3	I let loose and let all my emotions out.	C3	I spoke to an expert who could help me.
E4	I was animated and I expressed my negative feelings.	C4	I talked to someone to get a different perspective.
E5	I was not listening to what the other person was saying, I just let all my feelings out.	C5	I talked to an expert inside the company to get professional advice.
E6	I let off steam.	C6	I talked to a professional to get expert advice on what to do.
E7	I was not calm when I spoke.	C7	I talked about a possible solution to what I experienced.
E8	I described how upset my experience made me feel.	C8	I discussed ideas about how to change my experience.
E9	I spoke about how upset I was about what happened.	C9	I talked about actions that I could take.
E10	I spoke about how sorry I felt for myself.	C10	I talked about different strategies to use to try and change the situation.

4.5.3 Analysis

I followed Hinkin and Tracey's (1999) analysis of variance approach (ANOVA) to content validation. I ran a one-way ANOVA which produced each item's mean rating on one conceptual dimension to the item's ratings on another comparative dimension. Then, a post-hoc Tukey test was calculated and used to compare means across the two talk categories. This procedure allowed me to determine whether the mean score of

each item – on emotion and cognition focused talk – is statistically and significantly higher on the proposed theoretical definition. Item means are presented in table 4.7.

Table 4.7. Mean ratings for each emotion and cognition focused item

<i>Scale</i>	Emotion focused talk	Cognition focused talk
E1	5.20*	2.69
E2	5.39*	3.38
E3	3.70	2.85
E4	4.23	3.19
E5	5.25*	2.31
E6	5.93*	2.85
E7	3.77	2.58
E8	4.80	4.23
E9	5.00*	3.54
E10	4.23	3.38
C1	3.57	5.19*
C2	3.47	5.42*
C3	3.33	5.70*
C4	3.57	5.81*
C5	3.73	5.62*
C6	3.67	5.54
C7	3.57	5.73*
C8	3.97	5.54
C9	4.00	5.89*
C10	3.97	6.00*

Note. Scale items coded as per talk category, E=emotion focused talk and C=cognition focused talk. The order of emotion and cognition items is the order in which items appeared in the survey. Bold, italicised items were rated statistically significantly higher than other items on the appropriate dimension, and were used as final survey items ($p < .05$). *=($p < .05$) on Tukey test.

As can be seen from table 4.7, under the emotional talk category, five survey items were found to be statistically and significantly above the mean. These were items 1, 2, 5, 6 and 9. Under the cognition talk category, eight survey items were found to be

statistically and significantly above the mean. These were items 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9 and 10. There is thus a statistical basis for retaining these items (and rejecting others). The level of mean ratings for each of these items compares favourably to others who have used this technique in their research (Hinkin & Tracey, 1999; Rodell, 2013). In deciding which items to keep for the final measure, a decision was taken to keep the measure as brief and as concise as possible. Given that the new measure would be used in a repeated cross-sectional survey as well as in diary research (chapters 5, 6 and 7), it was deemed vital that it should be succinct and quick in its assessment, yet at the same time capture the construct of interest robustly and reliably (Gunthert & Wenzel, 2012). I therefore decided to create a measure using four items each from emotion focused talk, and cognition focused talk.

Though, as is evident in table 4.7, more than four items were significantly and statistically evaluated above the mean for both talk categories, I chose those items with the highest mean ratings. This is in line with methodological procedures that select survey items that have the highest factor loadings, for inclusion into construct measures (e.g. Gunthert, Cohen, Butler & Beck, 2007). Thus, for the final measure, I chose the following items per sub-category: emotional talk comprised items 1, 2, 5 and 6; cognition talk comprised items 4, 7, 9 and 10. The reliability coefficients for each of these scales was as follows: emotional talk (α .87), and cognition talk (α .84). The full measure can be found in table 4.8.

Table 4.8. Final items used for talk scale

Sub-category	#	Item
Emotion-focused talk	1	I spoke angrily about how outraged I was.
	2	I let my negative feelings out.
	3	I wasn't listening to what the other person was saying, I just let all my feelings out.
	4	I let off steam.
Cognition-focused talk	5	I talked to someone to get a different perspective.
	6	I talked about a possible solution to what I experienced.
	7	I talked about actions that I could take.
	8	I talked about different strategies to use to try and change the situation.

4.5.4 Conclusion of Phase 3

Using an ANOVA validation technique, a new measure of talk was developed with 4-items each respectively representing emotion and cognition focused talk. In order to assess the psychometric properties of this new measure, the next phase sought to conduct a confirmatory factor analysis.

4.6 Phase 4: Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) at two time points

In this final phase of research, the factor structure of the talk measure was confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) at **two** separate time points, separated by 6 weeks. CFA is integral to verifying the factor structure of a newly developed scale since it permits a researcher to assess whether measures of a construct are consistent with the theoretical reasoning underpinning that construct. Participants comprising this final phase of research were London based bus drivers who provided data over two time periods. (This is the same participant pool that was used for study 2, which is presented across chapters 5 and 6).

4.6.1 Participants

At the first time point, 266 surveys were made available to drivers, of which 244 (91%) provided complete data. The average age of participants was 46 years ($SD = 10.11$), and their tenure with the company was on average 8.45 years ($SD = 7.28$). Eighty-nine percent of the participants were male. Company data indicated that the ethnicity of participants was as follows: White European (72%), Black African (7%), Black Caribbean (2%), Asian (9%), White Other (8%) and Other (2%). Participants were based across three different depots throughout London (one in the south, one in the east and one in the west).

At the second time point, of these 244 drivers, 166 (68%) provided complete data. Eighty-five percent of the participants were male. The average age of participants was 43 years ($SD = 15.66$), and their tenure with the company was on average 7.94 years ($SD = 7.33$). Ninety-two percent of the participants were male. Company data indicated that the ethnicity of participants was as follows: White European (71%), Black African (8%), Black Caribbean (2%), Asian (9%), White Other (6%) and Other (4%).

4.6.2 Measures

The measure used in this phase was the talk measure created in phase 2 (table 4.8).

4.6.3 Analysis

I ran CFA analyses using Amos (Arbuckle, 2012) version 21.0. To gauge the model fit, and in line with best practice (Byrne, 2001, 2013; Kline, 2005, 2011; Boosma, 2000; Hu & Bentler, 1999), model fit was assessed using the following indices:

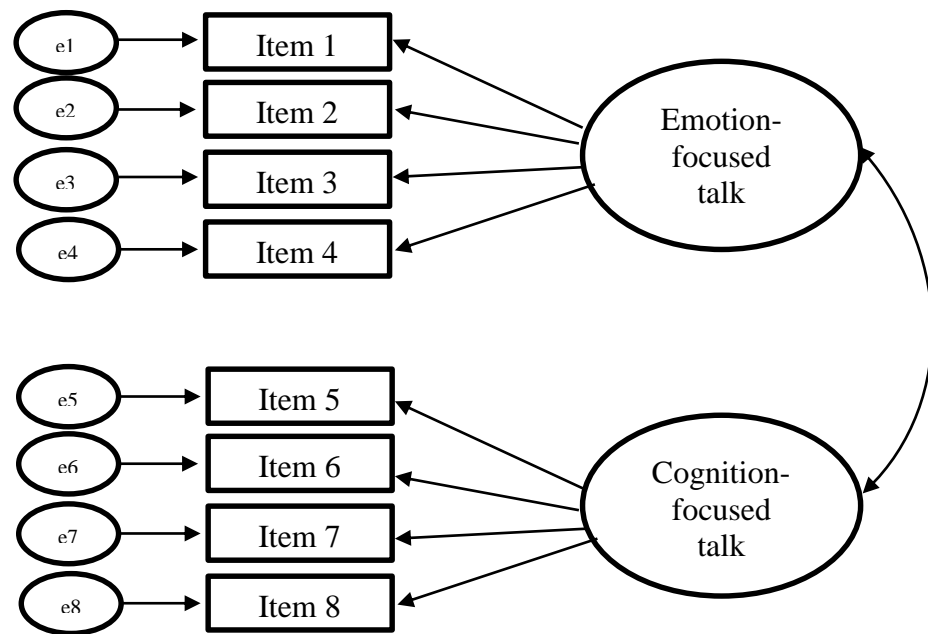
- *model chi-square (X^2)*: assesses the extent to which covariances estimated in the model match covariances in the measured variables.
- *comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler, 1990)*: assesses the relative improvement in fit of the researcher's model compared with a baseline model (the *independence* or *null* model) in which the correlations among observed variables are assumed to be zero. Values for the CFI range between 0 and 1, with values greater than .90 indicating good fit of the model (Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005).
- *incremental fit index (IFI; Bollen, 1989)*: a relative fit index which compares a chi-square for the model tested to one from a null model. Values for the IFI range from 0 to 1, with values greater than .90 considered a good fitting model.
- *root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger, 1990)*: a measure of the average standardised residual per degree of freedom, which assumes that the fit of a hypothesised model is not perfect. A value of 0 indicates best-fit, whereas a value of 1 indicates poor-fit (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). Values of less than or equal to .08 are considered favourable.

- *standardised root mean square residual (SRMR)*: a summary of the average covariance residuals (the overall difference between the observed and predicted correlations). Values of SRMR less than .10 are considered favourable (Kline, 2005).

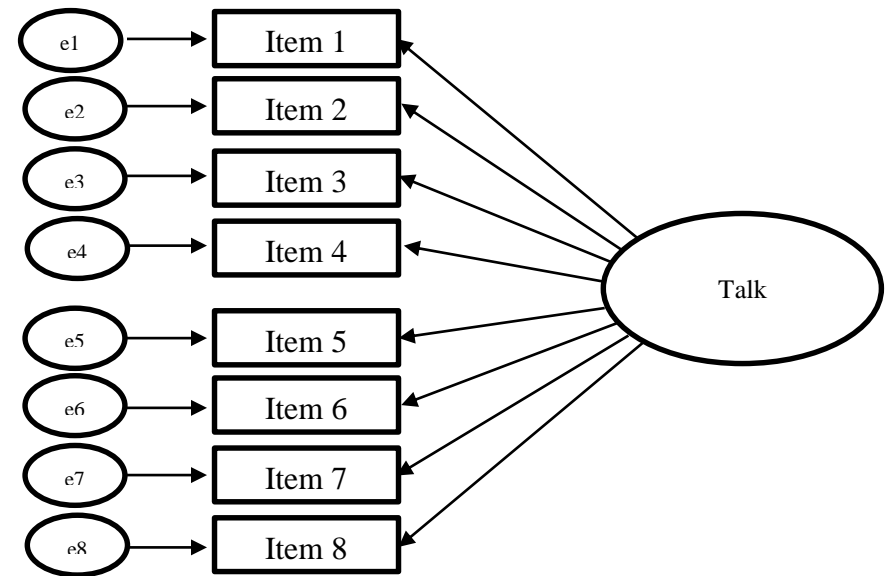
It is suggested that researchers provide a theoretical justification of not only their hypothesised factor structure model but also plausible alternatives (Hoyle & Panter, 1995; Boomsma, 2000; McDonald & Ho, 2002). In order to rule out the possibility that the eight item scale loaded on one factor of talk, as opposed to two (*emotion-focused* talk and *cognition-focused* talk), I also fit a one-factor CFA model. The two hypothesised CFA models are depicted in figure 4.2.

4.6.4 Results

As expected, the hypothesised two-factor measure of talk provided an excellent and significantly better fit to both time points of data, compared to the alternative one-factor solution. At time 1, the indices revealed an excellent fit for a two-factor measure ($\chi^2 [df = 19] = 50.98$, CFI = .96, IFI = .96, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .04), in comparison to the one-factor solution ($\chi^2 [df = 20] = 154.568$, CFI = .77, IFI = .79, RMSEA = .20, SRMR = .10). At time 2, the indices also revealed an excellent fit for a two-factor measure ($\chi^2 [df = 19] = 36.786$, CFI = .97, IFI = .97, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .05), compared to a one-factor solution ($\chi^2 [df = 20] = 128.912$, CFI = .81, IFI = .82, RMSEA = .18, SRMR = .10). Results from the CFA are presented in table 4.9.



1. Hypothesised two-factor structure measure



2. Alternative one-factor structure measure

KEY: Item=reference to each talk item as per developed measure in table 4.8; e=error terms.

Figure 4.2. Diagrammatic overview of a two-factor hypothesised measure of talk, and one-factor alternative for CFA Analysis

Table 4.9. Confirmatory factor results for emotion and cognition focused talk, using time 1 and time 2 survey data with London bus drivers

	Model description	χ^2	df	$\Delta \chi^2/df$	SRMR	CFI	IFI	RMSEA
Time 1	Hypothesised two-factor measure	50.98	19		.04	.96	.96	.08
	Alternative one-factor measure	154.568	20	103.588, 1	.10	.77	.79	.20
Time 2	Hypothesised two-factor measure	36.786	19		.05	.97	.97	.06
	Alternative one-factor measure	128.912	20	92.126, 1	.10	.81	.82	.18

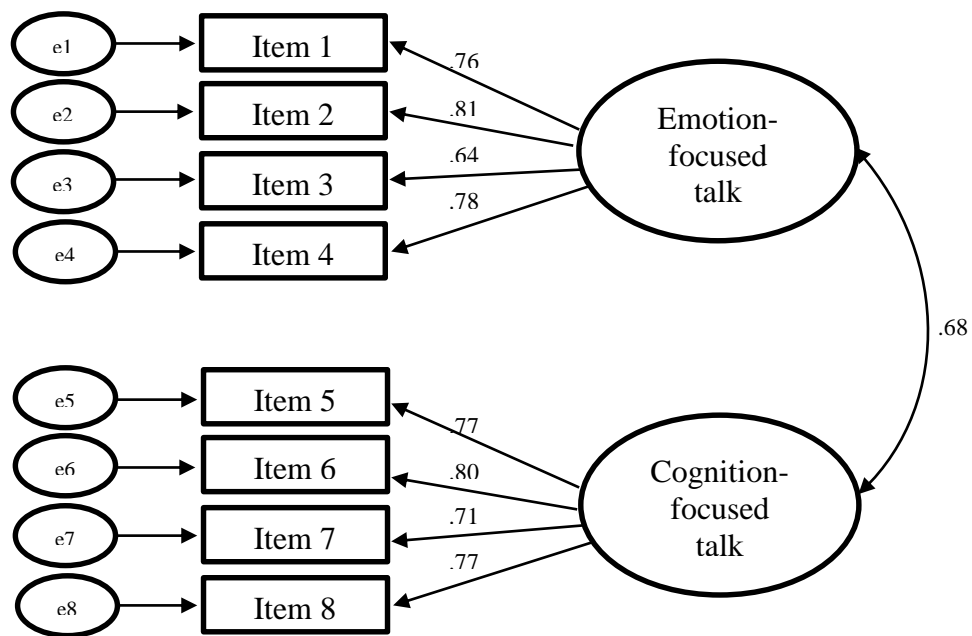
Note. Time 1 N=244; Time 2 N=166. χ^2 difference was judged relative to the hypothesised two-factor measure). CFI=comparative fit index; IFI=incremental fit index; SRMR=standardised-root-mean-square residual; df=degrees of freedom. * $p<.05$.

The factor loadings at each time point were also excellent, such that they were all above the absolute defined minimal cut-off of $>.03$ (Comrey & Lee, 1992), and even above more conservative cut-offs suggested at $>.55$ or $>.60$ (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Factor loadings for each item of newly created talk measure are presented in table 4.10, and diagrammatically in figure 4.3.

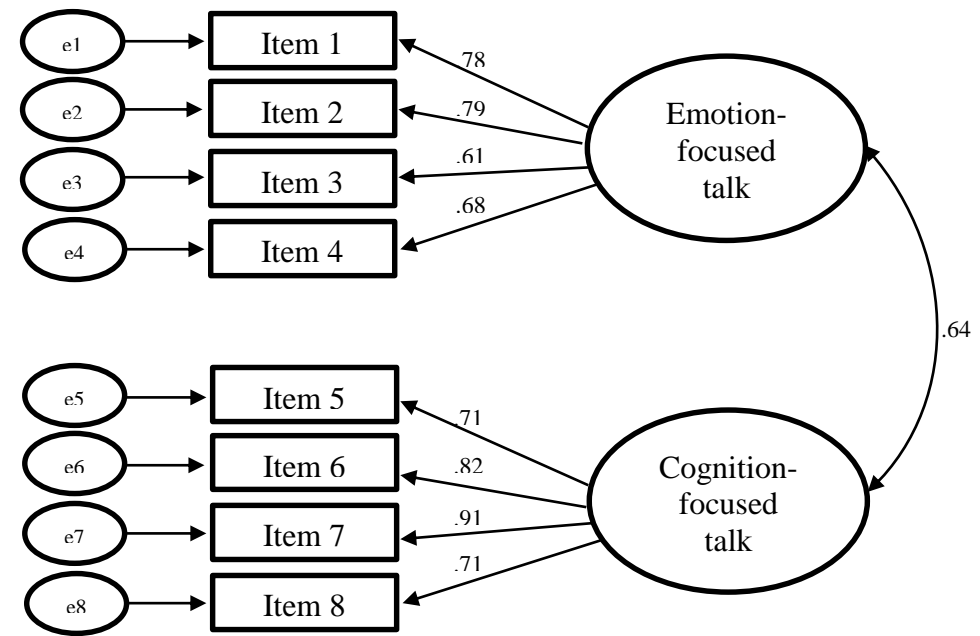
Table 4.10. Factor loadings for each sub-category of talk measure, emotion and cognition focused talk.

Sub-category	#	Factor loadings time 1 ^a	Factor loadings time 2 ^b	Item
Emotion-focused talk	1	.76	.78	I spoke angrily about how outraged I was.
	2	.81	.79	I let my negative feelings out.
	3	.64	.61	I wasn't listening to what the other person was saying, I just let all my feelings out.
	4	.78	.68	I let off steam.
Cognition-focused talk	5	.77	.71	I talked to someone to get a different perspective.
	6	.80	.82	I talked about a possible solution to what I experienced.
	7	.71	.91	I talked about actions that I could take.
	8	.77	.72	I talked about different strategies to use to try and change the situation.

Note: N= time 1^a= 244; time 2^b=166



1. Time 1 CFA sample results



2. Time 2 CFA sample results

Figure 4.3. CFA factor loadings for two-factor hypothesised measure of talk, at time 1 and time 2 data points

4.6.5 Conclusion of phase 4

The two CFA analyses conducted confirm the factor structure of the talk measure created in phase 3, confirming validity of its psychometric properties.

4.7 Chapter Summary

As the first of three empirical studies, this chapter breaks ground in bringing a novel perspective to the study of victims of workplace injustice. It provides empirical support for the integration of the justice literature with the phenomenon of talk, by confirming that victims of workplace unfairness *do* engage in conversation following their brush with injustice. In four waves of exploration and statistical analyses, this chapter has confirmed two broad categories of talk, developed items to represent these categories and subjected a new 8-item measure to psychometric evaluation. In sum, what victims talk about post-injustice includes their *emotions* regarding their experience and their *cognitions* aimed at an understanding of what has happened and how to move on. In positioning this new measure of talk into a real-workplace setting, the following chapter considers the antecedents of talk: what is it that triggers a victim to engage in talk?

Chapter 5:

Study 2: Antecedents of talking about workplace injustice

5.1 Chapter Overview

The four phases of research comprising study 1, presented in the previous chapter, provide empirical and theoretical support for the presence of talk in the context of workplace injustice. In light of this, a new measure of talk was created. In the first application of this new measure, the current chapter focuses on study 2 and presents an empirical investigation of the *antecedents* of talk as it asks: what triggers victims of unfairness to engage in talk?

5.2 Introduction

“The company as a whole takes more interest in its shareholders than it does in its employees who work for their bonuses...”

“When I worked under my previous manager I felt very uneasy and unfairly treated. I felt victimised. Made my morale very low.”

“On a matter of sickness, genuine sickness, I was told by a covering manager how I had to be here to take important people to work, therefore implying I wasn't sick and that I was unimportant...”

Study participants describing their experiences of unfairness at work in interviews gathered as part of Study 1 (chapter 4)

The above quotes, taken from interviews conducted as part of the present thesis (study 1) describe the toll that workplace unfairness can take on its victims. The experience of injustice is posited as being a ubiquitous reality of organisational life (Bies & Tripp, 2002), with its impact triggering victims at its receiving end to engage in any number of responses; these include counterproductive work-behaviours (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Ambrose et al., 2002), increased feelings of anger (Bies & Tripp, 2002) and sickness (Elovainio et al., 2002). In addition to these responses, research from the previous chapter has uncovered that victims of workplace unfairness can also engage in talk.

Indeed, qualitative interviews and surveys provided evidence that those subjected to unfair treatment at work seek the company of others in order to talk about their experience. This finding brings a novel perspective to the study of victims of workplace injustice contributing to researchers' calls for a justice research agenda that focuses on injustice through the eyes of those who experience it (Weiss & Rupp, 2011; Barclay & Saldhana, in press).

In furthering this research agenda, this chapter is the first field investigation of the integration of the phenomenon of talk into a workplace (in)justice paradigm. It seeks to explore more specifically the conditions under which talk takes place; in other words, what features of an unjust encounter trigger someone to turn to another to share their experience? In light of the aims of this thesis outlined in chapter 2, the question that guides this chapter is: what are the antecedents of talk following a victim's experience of workplace injustice?

Figure 5.1 depicts the hypothesised empirical model for investigation. In sum, it is posited that the emotion of anger, plus the thwarting of justice needs, trigger engagement in talk. In presenting its hypotheses, this chapter will proceed by discussing the direct paths of the model first (the first half of the model), and then the indirect paths leading to talk (the second half of the model).

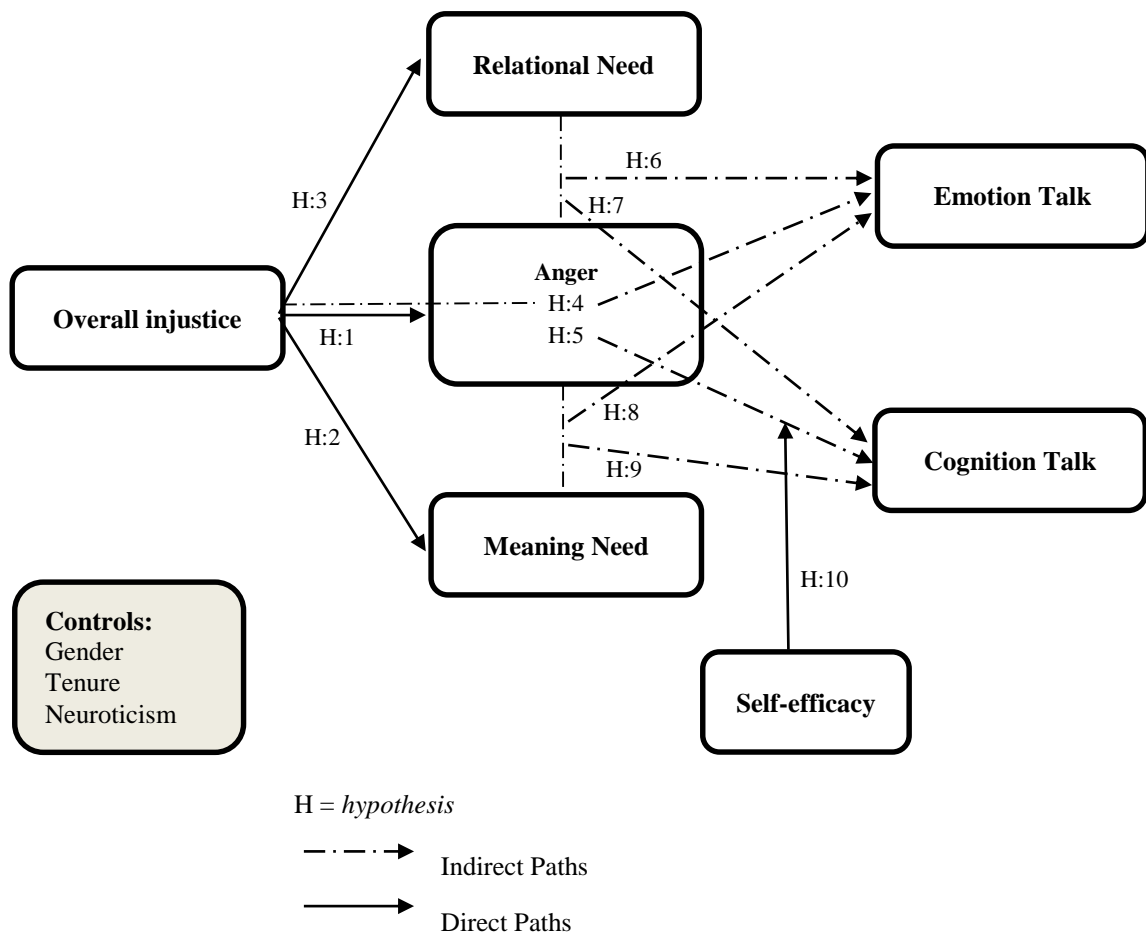


Figure 5.1. Schematic hypothesised model of the antecedents to talk in the context of workplace injustice

5.2.1 Workplace injustice and anger

The first antecedent posited is the negative emotion of anger, which is argued as being driven by perceptions of injustice. The question is, how do perceptions of injustice drive a victim to engage in talk via the emotion of anger?

(In)justice is a function of the outcomes one receives (*distributive* injustice), the procedures used to determine those outcomes (*procedural* injustice), the sensitivity of interpersonal treatment (*interpersonal* injustice) and clarity of communication received (*informational* injustice) (Colquitt, 2001). It is also conceived of as an overall

combination of these dimensions (Ambrose & Schminke, 2009). Emotions are an individuals' reaction to an event. As Frijda (1993: 381) states: "Emotions...are about something...One is happy about something, angry at someone, afraid of something..." Anger is described as a 'demeaning offence against me or mine' which arises when an individual experiences an event as hindering their objectives (Lazarus, 1991). It is described as an *outward-focused* emotion (Smith, Haynes, Lazarus & Pope, 1993; Barclay et al., 2005), which arises when individuals attribute a negative outcome to the actions of others; in other words, it is determined that someone else has caused harm when they ought to have behaved differently.

Theoretical and empirical insights provide impetus to the choice of anger as the central emotion in figure 5.1. Theoretically, fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998, 2001) asserts that perceptions of injustice are drawn on in a counterfactual thought process. Perceptions of unfairness are evaluated by a cognitive stage, referred to as the "black box" between a precipitating event and the resultant response (Cropanzano, Weiss, Suckow & Grandey, 2000: 55). In a counterfactual thought process an individual's appraisal involves the following: *would* the situation have been preferable had the perpetrator acted differently, *could* the perpetrator have carried out an alternative course of action and *should* the perpetrator have acted differently? It is through this cognitive process that an individual arrives at a fairness judgement: the easier it is for an individual to imagine a positive outcome, the more 'what *could* have been' makes 'what did happen' unfavourable. Following these justice judgements, an

emotional response ensues and this is asserted in affective events theory (AET, Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). AET suggests that workplace events trigger emotional reactions, which in turn drive behaviours (job satisfaction, performance). The scholars argue for parallels between the structure of a justice situation and a typical emotional event, arguing that an injustice situation is an *affective* event. They note that, "...the justice paradigm can be understood as a special instance of the more general appraisal models of emotion and that the typical justice situation can be seen as an affective event..." (ibid: 787).

Empirically, justice researchers also emphasise the emotion arousing capacity of injustice, with anger posited frequently as an outcome. In perhaps one of the first justice studies exploring discrete emotional reactions, Weiss et al. (1999) investigated emotional reactions to events by interacting procedural (un)fairness with outcome (un)fairness in a decision making task. The procedural conditions involved one of three variations; a confederate mentioning that a friend had already undertaken the study and had provided answers (*favourably biased condition*); a participant overhearing this conversation (*unfavourably biased condition*); and finally, no information given at all (*procedurally just condition*). The outcome conditions involved either pairs of participants winning or losing the task. The scholars discovered that the emotion of anger, as self-rated by participants, was at its highest when both the procedure and the outcome were unfavourable. Barclay et al. (2005) similarly found that, notwithstanding favourable outcomes, procedural and interactional injustice serve as carriers of attributional information and are associated with high levels of negative emotions. They

demonstrated that negative emotions (anger and guilt) were ultimately a product of outcome favourability (an individual's severance package) and the layoff process deployed (procedural and interactional fairness). Further justice research posits anger as an outcome of underpayment (distributive injustice) (Adams, 1965), the derogation of one's status and power (interpersonal injustice) (Bies & Tripp, 1996) and unfair processes (procedural injustice) (Vermunt, Wit, van den Bos & Lind, 1996). It has also been posited as an outcome of the additive effect of justice types (i.e. the impact of unfairness from all justice types) (Goldman, 2003). In line with theoretical and empirical research positing an association between injustice and anger, therefore, it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 1: *The experience of workplace injustice is positively related to the emotion of anger.*

5.2.2 Workplace injustice and justice needs

Before outlining the hypotheses for relational and meaning needs, I will take a step back and introduce justice needs.

Researchers in the field of justice agree that fairness has profound implications on individuals and organisations (Colquitt et al., 2001; Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2001). Despite this, there is no one agreed upon reason as to why justice matters. A review by Cropanzano et al. (2001) shed light on this notion by presenting the **multiple needs model** of justice (represented in figure 5.2), which groups together justice research according to what motivates an individual's concerns for fairness. Four sets of needs, central to human functioning, are proposed to explain why justice matters. *Control*

needs stipulate that individuals are motivated with being able to predict and control events. *Self-regard* is the need to maintain a positive view of oneself. A need for *belonging* pertains to concerns for inclusion, standing and respect from others. And, a need for *virtue* is an individual's desire to sustain a belief in the world as a meaningful place. Importantly, although four needs are postulated, in later theorising (Cropanzano, Rupp, Mohler & Schminke, 2001; Cropanzano, Goldman & Folger, 2005), self-regard and belonging were merged together into one category (relational), leaving only three groups of justice needs.

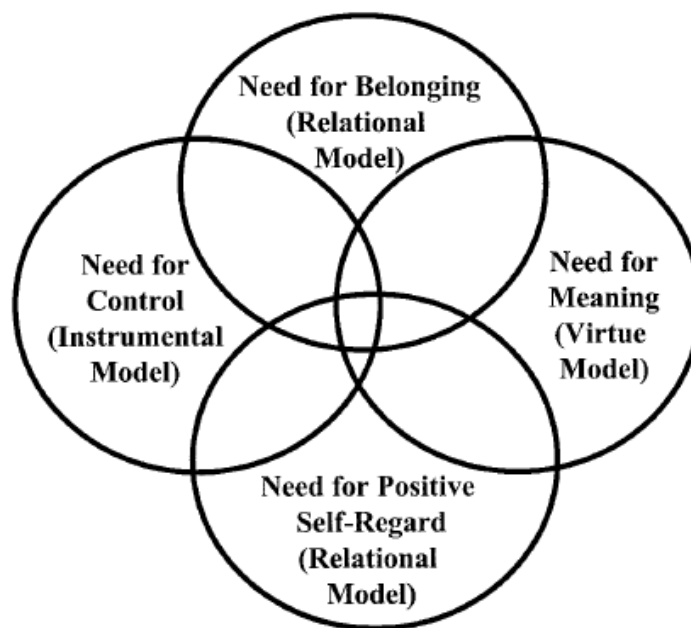


Figure 5.2. The multiple needs model of justice. Cropanzano et al. (2001: 176)

Figure 5.1 argues for the salience of the relational and virtue needs as following workplace injustice. To the author's knowledge, no paper has to date explicitly tested for the prevalence of these needs per se following one's experience of injustice.

I do not include a focus on the need for control for two reasons. First, the need for control has been part of early extensive research on justice needs, with less attention being paid to comparing how the other needs operate together in an injustice context (Reb et al., 2006). Second, research within both the talk and justice literatures propose that relational and virtue needs will have greater influence than control needs in predicting talk following a workplace injustice. This is because both relational and virtue needs evoke one's sense of self, which is theorised to be a powerful predictor of talk: research on talk asserts that talk is initiated when one feels a personal threat that strikes at the very core of their sense of self (Rimé, 2009). Similarly, the relative impact of each justice need can be interpreted by considering the personal implications associated with it. Justice research notes that relational and virtue needs are more personally impacting compared to instrumental needs. The group-value and relational models argue that individuals are sensitive to fair treatment since it conveys their standing in a group (Tyler & Lind, 1992), and that people care about issues of identity and status, which inform them about their status and inclusion in a group and their relationship with authority figures (Lind & Tyler, 1988).

Having explained justice needs, hypotheses for the relational and meaning needs will now be presented.

Workplace injustice and relational needs

Belonging and self-regard needs are merged together under the term relational. This need is most central to the group value/relational models of justice presented by Lind,

Tyler and their colleagues (e.g. Lind, 1995; Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992; Tyler, 1997). These models posit that what is of importance to individuals is the need to be respected and valued as members of social groups. Fairness is desired because it impinges upon our human need to form interpersonal relations with others, allowing us to build lasting relationships with those we interact with.

Just treatment amplifies value, dignity and respect, providing individuals with a sense of identity. This is central to one's sense of relational self, which incorporates one's values, beliefs and abilities, and is described as an individual's most prized personal possession (Sedikides & Gregg, 2007). One of the primary motives of human behaviour is to maintain a positive view of the self (Baumeister, 1993, 1998; Steele, 1988). This need is so crucial that individuals are argued as going to great lengths in order to promote and protect their sense of self, playing up its strengths and downplaying any weakness (Sedikides & Gregg, 2007). Self-regard is intertwined with self-esteem, described generally as one's attitude towards oneself (ibid; Brockner, 1988). In this vein, fair treatment at work signals regard for individuals, letting them know that they are valued and respected members of a group and an organisation. Interactional justice itself is built upon the idea that treatment of employees at work should follow principles of respect and dignity (Colquitt, 2001). Empirical evidence from the justice sphere reports a positive relationship between just treatment at work and one's sense of self, captured as self-esteem and self-evaluations (Brockner, Heuer, Magner, Folger, Umphress, van den Bos & Siegel, 2003; Smith & Tyler, 1997; Schroth & Shah, 2000).

Injustice renders these needs for regard, esteem and belonging into dispute with a threat to this need manifesting itself as a distressing time for individuals. The impact of injustice is to lower one's sense of esteem and belonging. Brockner, Gower, O'Malley, Reed and Glynn (1993) studied the impact upon survivors who remained in an organisation following layoffs; in response to a perceived threat of future layoffs, survivors were more likely to experience lowered self-esteem and self-evaluations. Heck, Bedeian and Day (2005) report that unfair procedures and outcomes led employees to feeling less valued and fulfilled, lowering their self-esteem. Unfairness signals to individuals that they are not included, valued or respected members of a collective. Thus, if justice is a carrier of important goal-relevant information central to one's needs, unjust treatment threatens one's belongingness to a group and harms one's sense of self-esteem. As Cropanzano et al. (2001: 177) assert: "Injustice tends to separate people from others, and justice brings them closer together". It is thus hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2: *The experience of workplace injustice is negatively related to a relational need.*

Workplace injustice and meaning needs

Turning now to virtue, a need for meaningfulness is driven by "...a basic respect for human dignity and worth..." (Cropanzano et al., 2001: 175). Individuals are interested in fairness because we hold a collective concern that all people are entitled to being treated fairly. Justice relates to morality and values, and it is this need that individuals look to in order to provide themselves with a sense of purpose, ethics, morality and

virtue. This need is perhaps most closely captured in Folger's (1998) deontic model of justice, which proposes that people care about justice for the sake of *justice* itself.

Much research evidence supports this, with studies demonstrating that individuals choose to remain virtuous and fair even when they do not profit themselves from an exchange or interaction. Turillo, Folger, Lavelle, Umphress and Gee (2002) demonstrated in one of their experiments that participants would act sacrificially to reward someone who had been fair to them. Their experiment comprised participants being paired with a *fair* partner (who had chosen a \$10/\$10 split) or an *unfair* partner (\$18/\$2 split). Participants were required to choose a 'punish or reward' pay-out condition. In the punish condition participants could split a \$12 pool with their partner (\$6 for self and \$6 for their partner), or sacrifice \$1 and allocate \$5 to themselves and \$0 to their partner. In the reward condition, participants could allocate \$6 for themselves and \$0 to their partner, or act sacrificially by taking \$5 for themselves and allocating \$5 to their partner too. Results showed that participants chose the option that paid the least possible to themselves and their partner. They therefore did not act out of economic rationality. Neither did they act out of a relational future concern for their partner, since they had not met their partners previously and the experiment did not include further rounds with the same partner. Participants acted out their path because it was the 'right thing to do'.

Psychologists have treated the need for virtue more generally as representing an individual's concern with finding meaning in their lives (Cropanzano et al., 2001). For

example, Williams (1997) initially suggested that humans have a need for a meaningful existence. In other words, the need for virtue has been linked to morality, such that fairness generates moral standards which enable individuals to be virtuous humans in a world that provides significance to their existence. It is this thread that informs the present thesis.

Injustice harms us because it violates our perception of what is right or morally appropriate (Folger, 1994, 1998). The impact of injustice is to lower one's sense of stability, order and meaning. We are gravely affected by injustice because if justice provides a sense of stability and therefore meaning, then injustice - emanating from one's perception of unfair outcomes, procedures, and interpersonal treatment – is the breakdown of this sense of stability and meaning. Injustice destabilises an individual so that they experience a tension between 'the way things are meant to be' and the resultant reality of how 'things really are'. Indeed, van den Bos and Miedema (2000) argue implicitly for an association between unfairness and meaning related needs, by asserting that when people are uncertain about fundamental aspects of their lives (i.e. a breakdown in order, stability, meaning), they pay greater attention to matters of fairness: It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 3: *The experience of workplace injustice is negatively related to a meaning need.*

5.2.3 Workplace injustice, anger and talk

Turning now to the mediated paths, it is predicted that injustice will trigger both emotion and cognition talk, via anger. Indeed, anger should trigger both emotion and cognition talk, an assertion that holds true in studies of talk, which suggest that expression is the direct result of felt distress, sadness and anger (Rimé, 2009b). Repeated empirical investigations conclude that it is exposure to a negative experience that instigates a negative emotional reaction, which in turn triggers talk (Luminet et al, 2000; Pennebaker et al., 2001; Rimé, 2009). This trajectory of research evidences that people share everyday emotional experiences with others, such that talk follows such events as sitting exams, giving birth or losing a loved one. In one study, Rimé, Paez, Basabe and Martinez (2010) measured the social sharing of emotion immediately after the 2004 Madrid terrorist attacks. What characterised early conversations was higher event related emotional arousal: individuals felt a need to off-load their emotional experience. The results of phase 1 in chapter 4 provide additional support in highlighting the presence of talk following an unjust encounter: 89% of interviewees engaged in talk post-injustice.

A theoretical reason that can be posited to explain this reaction can be drawn from appraisal theories of emotion. Lazarus (1991) writes that each emotion involves an action tendency which is an outlet for one's physiological response. For example, fear-anxiety is tied with avoidance and escape, guilt with making amends, shame with hiding, and anger with an outward response to release frustration, such as attack. Applying this assertion to the present argument, it is suggested that if individuals act in

congruence with their felt emotion then one outlet they can deploy to release their emotional frustration is to offset it via talk. This argument has resonance with Freud's early writing which posited an association between pent up frustration and its discharge (Breuer & Freud, 1895). Thus, in light of this preceding argument it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 4: *The experience of workplace injustice will have an indirect effect on emotion talk through anger.*

Hypothesis 5: *The experience of workplace injustice will have an indirect effect on cognition talk through anger.*

5.2.4 Relational need, anger and talk

The aforementioned reasoning on the relational needs suggests that injustice has the potential to destabilise an individual's self-system, rendering upon them a state of lowered self-esteem and of detachment. One's relational self is thus weakened. This thesis argues that such victims of workplace injustice will be motivated to reduce this distressing condition, to repair their relational selves, via talk. It is argued that this state of threatened relational need will lead to both emotional and cognition talk via anger.

Injustice delivers a fatal blow to one's relational self, bringing with it a host of negative affect, such as anger. Korman (1976) was one of the first scholars to suggest that an individual's self-evaluation plays a key role in determining their motivation, attitudes and behaviours at work. It is of no surprise, therefore, that the manifestation of a relational need threat, following injustice, is also reported as leading to detrimental emotional consequences. Bies and Tripp (2002) note that injustice is experienced as

‘hot and burning’, arguing that a threat to one’s dignity results in a host of negative emotional experiences, including anger. Bies (2001: 90) argues that injustice is associated with such personally intense pain because people possess a view of themselves as sacred, and violations are therefore experienced as “...a profound harm to one’s psyche and identity – that is one’s sense of self...” Tangential evidence of the impact on one’s sense of self can be gauged from attachment literatures: a sense of detachment from others manifests itself in the form of negative emotions, such as anger (Mikulincer, 1998).

Anger in turn will lead to talk for a number of reasons. Justice research argues that individuals are motivated to reduce their state of distress or discontent, in other words, to restore a sense of justice when it becomes disrupted (Bies & Tripp, 1993). This logic connects the anger arising from a relational need threat to talk. Engaging in talk is posited as a mechanism via which individuals may be able to repair a sense of self by off-loading their feelings and attaining validation from another person. Such an idea is central to clinical psychology and underlies the goal of psychotherapy in which conversation between a clinician and patient attempts to provide a sense of understanding, validation and perspective to the latter’s negative life experience (Scheff, 2001; Greenberg, 2002). It is also central to tangential evidence in attachment theory wherein it is posited that individuals turn to others to engage in interaction, seeking validation under challenging circumstances (Mikulincer, 1998). Within the social psychology talk literature, Rimé (2009) argues that it is a negative experience which directs people to talk, from which their needs for comfort, empathy and validation are

met. One can argue therefore that an outlet individuals will seek following their injustice experience will be to offset it via talk. Thus, in light of this preceding argument it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 6: *The experience of a lowered relational need will have an indirect effect on emotion talk through anger.*

Hypothesis 7: *The experience of a lowered relational need will have an indirect effect on cognition talk through anger.*

5.2.5 Meaning need, anger and talk

The aforementioned reasoning on the meaning need suggests that injustice has the potential to destabilise an individual's sense of meaning, rendering upon them a state of uncertainty and instability. One's meaning self if thus weakened. I argue that victims of workplace injustice will be motivated to reduce this distressing condition, to repair their sense of meaning, via talk. It is argued that this state of threatened meaning need will lead to both emotional and cognition talk via anger.

Perhaps one of the most interesting and significant papers exploring the resultant emotional outcome of a breakdown in meaning, is the unique situation in which the need for meaning is paramount - terror management theory (the fear of death), which has been integral to experimental research by van den Bos and Miedema (1999). Mortality salience embodies a dilemma wherein although like other organisms humans will one day also perish, unlike other organisms, we as humans know that death is a certainty. The scholars demonstrate that compared to participants who are not asked to think about their mortality, those who are asked to, react more negatively towards those they hold

accountable for violating their norms and values: such reactions include the display of strong negative emotions including anger and hostility. What this research shows is that fairness matters to individuals, and especially so when they are uncertain about things that hold value and meaning for them – such as in this case, their own mortality.

Tangential support for resultant negative emotions is evidenced in the work of Janoff-Bulman (1992) whose research on ‘shattered assumptions’ explores how the fundamental assumptions humans hold about the meaningfulness and benevolence of the world are shattered by traumatic events. This process is accompanied by feelings of negative affect, such as anger (*why me?*) as individuals attempt to make sense out of their experience.

A contention of meaning researchers is that individuals will actively search for ways to escape their state of meaninglessness. When one experiences a meaning needs failure, their desire to escape is driven by a motivation to attain a sense of order and recreate meaning. I argue that talk is a way in which meaning can be re-attained. Meaning scholars argue that language is a carrier of shared meaning (Baumeister & Vohs, 2002). This is supported by social psychologists who argue that conversation is a ‘glue’ that binds people together; it nourishes because it absorbs threats from daily life (Moscovici, 1984). In the social psychology talk literature, Rimé (2009) argues that it is a negative experience which directs people to talk, and from which they recoup a sense of meaning in their lives once again.

Compelling evidence for the role played by talk following disruptions to stability comes from literature on sensemaking (Weick, 1993, 1995). Sensemaking has been defined as a social process in which individuals interpret their environments in and through interactions with others (Maitlis, 2005). Weick, Sutcliffe and Obstfeld (2005) argue that sensemaking occurs at the point at which a state of affairs is perceived to be different from the expected *modus operandi*. At this juncture, individuals attempt to make sense of the disruption, looking for reasons that will enable them to continue life. They argue that sensemaking is about organising through communication; it takes place *through interactive talk*. In doing so, it is about bringing meaning into existence, and by extension, stability and order back into one's world. The scholars argue that sensemaking is the search for meaning as a way to deal with uncertainty; "...people...make sense of equivocal inputs and enact this sense back into the world to make that world more orderly..." (410). Thus, in light of this preceding arguments it is hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 8: *The experience of a lowered meaning need will have an indirect effect on emotion talk through anger.*

Hypothesis 9: *The experience of a lowered meaning need will have an indirect effect on cognition talk through anger.*

5.2.6 The moderating impact of self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is defined as individuals' beliefs about their capabilities to produce designated levels of performance (Bandura, 1994). Self-efficacy has been reported as predicting important work-related outcomes including attitudes (Saks, 1995), performance (Martocchio & Judge, 1997; Judge, Jackson, Shaw, Scott & Rich, 2007)

and stress (Jex, Bliese, Buzzell & Primeau, 2001). It has also been studied in the form of a trait, referred to as generalised self-efficacy (GSE) (Chen, Gully & Eden, 2001), defined as an individual's belief in their overall competence and ability to perform across different situations. It is expected that individuals with higher self-efficacy will succeed across tasks and situations, compared to those who are less efficacious (Chen et al., 2001).

Higher self-efficacy refers to one's subjective belief that they can exercise control over events, particularly in threatening or stressful situations; such individuals will take charge by engaging in acts that reduce the likelihood of negative outcomes (Bandura, 1994). Brockner's (1988) plasticity hypothesis describes the moderating impact of low versus high efficacy. This hypothesis asserts that individuals with low efficacy are more susceptible to environmental influences (performance feedback, role ambiguity), and thus more likely to experience lowered job satisfaction and lowered motivation. Higher efficacy, on the other hand, acts as a guard against such adverse situations. The moderating role of self-efficacy has been supported: Jex et al. (2001) found, in a sample of US army personnel, that high self-efficacy weakened a stressor-strain relationship; strain was lower for those personnel with higher levels of efficacy. Judge, Thoresen, Pucik and Welbourne (1999) reported that positively coping with organisational change was influenced by dispositional traits, including that of self-efficacy.

It is suggested that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between anger and cognition talk. I have chosen this construct to moderate cognition talk specifically to test

conditions under which a victim may move out of their emotional frustration following injustice and focus on finding a solution to their predicament. This requires a focus not on one's blocked goal, but on moving ahead. It is expected that individuals higher in self-efficacy are more likely to engage in cognition talk, than those lower in self-efficacy. Lower efficacious individuals are more likely to be affected by their experience of injustice such that they may be reluctant to abandon their frustration and anger regarding their experience of injustice; they may not be ready to reframe, re-interpret or think of solutions to their unfairness. Therefore:

Hypothesis 10: *Self-efficacy will moderate the relationship between anger and cognition talk such that the relationship is stronger for individuals who are higher in self-efficacy than for individuals who are lower in self-efficacy.*

5.3 Methods

As outlined in chapter 3, a repeated cross-sectional survey was carried out at two time points separated by six weeks. The data and analyses for this study come from the first survey, with a replication of the results conducted with the second time point of data to examine the validity of the findings.

5.3.1 Participants

The sample for this study incorporated 166 bus drivers from a London (UK) based bus company. All in all, surveys were made available to 266 drivers and of these, 166 chose to participate, and did so at both time points (62% response rate). Participants were based across three different depots throughout London (one in the south, one in the east and one in the west). The average age of participants was 43 years ($SD = 15.66$), and

their tenure with the company was on average 7.94 years ($SD = 7.33$). Ninety-two percent of the participants were male. Company data indicated that the ethnicity of participants was as follows: White European (71%), Black African (8%), Black Caribbean (2%), Asian (9%), White Other (6%) and Other (4%).

5.3.2 Procedure

Data was collected in the form of a paper based survey delivered across the three bus depots. Given the spread of locations and number of drivers, this phase was spread over a few months. The procedure for coding each survey, delivery and collection is outlined in chapter 3.

5.3.3 Measures

Employees provided ratings of workplace injustice, anger, relational and meaning justice needs, generalised self-efficacy and talk. The following control variables were gathered: gender, tenure, neuroticism. Given the time constraints involved in drivers completing surveys during their working hours (they were at the depot only briefly to ‘clock in’ and ‘out’ of their shifts) it was important to keep the survey as concise as possible, and the scales short. I reviewed the surveys with the company Managing Director, and at his request reduced the length of two scales: organisation based self-esteem (measuring relational needs) and generalised self-efficacy. These scales were perceived as perhaps being received more sensitively than others, given their focus on the ‘self’. The scales used in the current study continue to exhibit high reliability and this suggests that their psychometric quality remained intact.

Common method bias is defined as a source of measurement error wherein variance attained in one's results are attributable more to the measurement model rather than to the construct of interest (Podsakoff et al., 2003: 879). In order to counteract such bias, two actions were taken with regards to the surveys. First, questions were counterbalanced in order to avoid unduly influencing a respondent's interpretation and response to a measure based solely on its relation to other measures in the survey. Second, I attempted to reduce evaluation apprehension by informing respondents that there were no right or wrong answers and that they should approach each question honestly and candidly. They were also assured that their responses would not be shared with their supervisors or depots.

Workplace injustice. Workplace injustice was measured using Ambrose and Schminke's (2009) six-item measure of overall justice. Each item was adapted to include the name of the company instead of the word *organization*. Sample items included, 'Overall, I'm treated fairly by <company>', 'Usually, the way things work at <company> are not fair', 'Most of the people who work here would say that they are treated unfairly'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .89$). This variable was reverse scored to reflect the nature of one's *injustice* experience

Anger. Anger was measured using three items from the PANAS-X (Watson & Clark, 1994). These were: 'angry', 'hostile' and 'irritable'. Respondents were asked to what extent they felt these emotions at work at this moment. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *very slightly/not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. ($\alpha = .90$).

Relational justice need. A relational justice need was measured using eight-items from Pierce, Gardner, Cummings and Dunham's (1989) organizational based self-esteem (OBSE) measure. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statements at this moment. Sample items included, 'I am taken seriously around here', 'I am important around here', 'I count around here'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .88$).

Meaning justice need. A meaning justice need was measured using Lambert, Baumeister, Stillman and Finchman's (2012) three-item measure of state meaningfulness. Respondents were asked to what extent the statements accurately reflected them at this moment. Sample items include, 'My work has a great deal of purpose right now', 'I have a good sense of what makes my work meaningful'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .91$).

Emotional Talk. Emotional talk was evaluated using a measure created for this study, as outlined in chapter 4. The four validated items included, 'I let all my negative feelings out' and 'I let off steam'. Respondents were asked to what extent they engaged in talk following their experience of workplace injustice. Items were measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*. ($\alpha = .83$).

Cognition Talk. Cognition talk was evaluated using a measure created for this study, as outlined in chapter 4. The four validated items included, 'I talked about a possible

solution to what I experienced' and 'I talked about actions I can take'. Respondents were asked to what extent they engaged in talk following their experience of workplace injustice. Items were measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*. ($\alpha = .86$).

Generalised self-efficacy (GSE). Self-efficacy was measured using six-items from Chen et al. (2001) generalised self-efficacy measure. Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed with the statements at this moment. Sample items included, 'I believe I can succeed at anything to which I set my mind', 'Compared to other people, I can do most tasks well' and 'When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .88$).

Gender. Gender was controlled because in line with popular stereotypes, women are often found to be more prone to talk via sharing their emotions compared to men (Bergmann, 1993) though this has not always been evidenced in research (Rimé, 2009). (gender: 1 = *male*, 2 = *female*).

Tenure. Employee tenure was controlled for given that experience within a company may influence the degree to which an employee is able to manage their experience of injustice. For instance, it may affect the degree to which employees engage in emotional versus cognition talk. Research on responses to stress at work cite tenure as moderating an individual's responses, such that knowledge of an organisation's systems and procedures can lead to more adaptive responses (i.e. Parasuraman & Cleek, 1984).

Respondents were asked to report the total length of time they had worked for their company; this information was verified with company records too. (tenure: years).

Neuroticism. Neuroticism was controlled for since one's propensity to experience negative emotions might make them react more strongly to injustice events, and/or influence the degree and nature of talk they engage in. This is in line with previous research (Aquino et al., 2006) which controlled for the impact of neuroticism on adverse outcomes following injustice. Neuroticism was measured using three-items from the International Personality Pool (2001). Items included "I often feel sad" and "I worry about things". Respondents were asked to what extent they felt these emotions at work at this moment. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *very slightly/not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. ($\alpha = .82$).

5.3.4 Analysis

I tested model 5.1 with structured equation modelling (SEM) using Amos (Arbuckle, 2012) version 21.0. I deployed a fully latent model, whereby all indicators were used to represent all variables. Parameter estimation was set to maximum likelihood (ML, which assumes multivariate normality) which is the automatic setting in Amos. The hypothesised model was tested using Anderson & Gerbing's (1988) comprehensive two-step analytical strategy. The measurement model was first confirmed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and then SEM was performed on the structural model to estimate the fit of the hypothesised model to the data.

The significance of indirect effects was assessed using bootstrapping procedures (Shrout & Bolger, 2002), a technique which is central to testing such effects in Amos. Bootstrapping is a non-parametric approach to hypothesis testing, estimating the standard errors empirically using the available data (Mooney & Duval, 1993). In this procedure, multiple samples are drawn from the original data set and the model is re-estimated on each sample. In line with previous studies (i.e. Ferris, Brown & Heller, 2009), I set the resampling to 1000 and used the bias corrected percentile method to create 95% confidence intervals.

In order to test moderation effects, the interaction term and the independent variables comprising it (anger, self-efficacy) were modelled as single indicators of latent variables. These variables were mean-centred and then product terms were created. Mean-centering is important in order to reduce nonessential multicollinearity; in other words, centering minimises relationships between variables and the product terms that are subsequently created (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2013). The product terms were used as single indicators of the latent variables.

McDonald and Ho (2002) suggest that researchers provide a theoretical justification of not only their hypothesised model but also plausible alternatives. An alternative model(s) pertains to theoretically justified alternative structural models that are equally plausible. Hoyle and Panter (1995) and Boomsma (2000) suggest that competing, plausible models should be specified a priori. In accordance with this guidance, one alternative plausible model was tested, and it is represented in figure 5.4.

5.3.5 Results

Table 5.1 provides the descriptive statistics, correlations and scale reliabilities for the variables in this study. Coefficient alphas are shown in parentheses on the diagonal. Table 5.2 provides a summary of all model fit indexes. Table 5.3 presents the direct estimates, table 5.4, the indirect path estimates and table 5.5 the interaction effects. Figure 5.3 towards the end of this section, provides a diagrammatic overview of the direct path coefficients for the hypothesised model (figure 5.1) for this chapter.

As shown in table 5.1, the zero-order correlations are all within a moderate range and provide preliminary insights into the hypothesised antecedent relationships. Overall injustice was significantly correlated with anger ($r = .53, p < .01$), and significantly negatively correlated with a relational need ($r = -.50, p < .01$) and a meaning need ($r = -.42, p < .01$). Anger was significantly correlated with emotion talk ($r = .39, p < .01$) and self-efficacy ($r = -.21, p < .01$). A relational need was significantly correlated with anger ($r = -.42, p < .01$), as was a meaning need ($r = -.42, p < .01$).

Table 5.1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a

	Variable	Mean.	SD.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Gender (1=male, 2=female)	1.08	.26										
2	Tenure (years)	7.94	7.33	-.01									
3	Neuroticism	2.38	.94	.10	.09	(.82)							
4	Overall injustice	2.76	.87	-.06	-.04	.38**	(.89)						
5	Anger	2.13	1.21	-.04	-.02	.52**	.53**	(.90)					
6	Relational need (OBSE)	3.25	.82	.23**	-.02	-.30**	-.50**	-.42**	(.88)				
7	Meaning need	3.41	.97	.09	-.01	-.29**	-.42**	-.42**	.46**	(.91)			
8	Emotional talk ^b	2.71	1.41	.01	.17*	.42**	.29**	.39**	-.09	-.07	(.83)		
9	Cognition talk ^b	3.17	1.47	-.05	.05	.15*	.04	.09	.12	.01	.55**	(.86)	
10	Generalised self-efficacy	3.89	.76	.12	-.03	-.17*	.11	-.21**	.35**	.23**	-.14	.14	(.88)

a $n = 166$. Internal reliabilities (alpha coefficients) for the overall constructs are given in parentheses on the diagonal

b Emotion talk and cognition talk were measured on a 7-point scale

** $p < 0.01$

* $p < 0.05$

Results of model fit

As shown in table 5.2, the *measurement model* results indicated a very good fit to the data ($\chi^2 [df = 470] = 778.336$, CFI = .92, IFI = .92, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .07). These results provided further evidence that examination of the structural model is justified. Paths were then added to create the structural model, as depicted in Figure 5.1.

Table 5.2. Summary of model fit indices

	X2	df	$\Delta X2/df$	SRMR	IFI	CFI	RMSEA
Measurement Model	778.336	470	-	.07	.92	.92	.06
Hypothesised Structural model (controls)	978.421	601	-	.09	.90	.88	.06
Independence Model	-	-	-	-	.00	.00	.225
Hypothesised Structural model (no controls)	865.804	510	112.617/91	.08	.92	.92	.06

In line with prior recommendations (Becker, 2005; Antonakis, Bendahan, Jacquart & Lalive, 2010), I ran SEM for two *structural* models, one with and one without the control variables (gender, tenure and neuroticism). A structural model *with controls* provided a good fit to the data ($\chi^2 [df = 601] = 978.421$, CFI = .88, IFI = .90, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .09), but it was not significantly better than the hypothesised model *without controls*. Importantly, none of the predicted paths for the controls were significant except for neuroticism which was associated with emotion talk ($\beta = .45$, $p < .01$). However, this result had no bearing the significance of any other paths, and did not make a difference to the model fit

In the interests of parsimony and in accordance with recommendations, I ruled out the control variables as a potential explanation of our phenomenon of interest. A structural model *without controls*, provided a very good fit to the data ($X^2 [df = 510] = 865.804$, CFI = .92, IFI = .92, RMSEA = .06, SRMR = .08).

Results of hypotheses

Hypotheses 1-3 predicted direct and main effects between workplace injustice and anger, a relational need and a meaning need. These are displayed in table 5.3.

Table 5.3. Hypothesised direct effects (regression weights)^a

Predictor variable		Dependent variable	β	S.E.	Standardized β
Overall injustice	→	Anger	.57**	.13	.46
Overall injustice	→	Relational Need	-.47**	.07	-.57
Overall injustice	→	Meaning Need	-.58**	.08	-.52
Relational Need	→	Anger	-.20	.13	-.13
Meaning need	→	Anger	-.19*	.09	-.17
Anger	→	Emotional Talk	.53**	.11	.45
Anger	→	Cognition Talk	-.29*	.11	-.21

^a N = 166 ; **p < 0.01 ; * p < 0.05

Hypothesis 1 predicted a positive relationship between injustice and anger. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .57$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 2 predicted a negative relationship between injustice and a relational need. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = -.47$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 3 predicted a negative relationship between injustice and a meaning need. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = -.58$, $p < .01$).

Hypotheses 4-7 predicted indirect effects, and these are presented in table 5.4.

Table 5.4. Hypothesised indirect effects (regression weights) ^a

Predictor variable – Mediator – Dependent Variable					β	Standardized β
Overall Injustice	→	Anger	→	Emotional talk	.40**	.28
Overall Injustice	→	Anger	→	Cognition talk	.10	.06
Relational need	→	Anger	→	Emotional talk	-.38**	-.22
Relational need	→	Anger	→	Cognition talk	-.09	-.04
Meaning need	→	Anger	→	Emotional talk	-.28**	-.22
Meaning need	→	Anger	→	Cognition talk	-.07	-.05

^a N = 166 ; ** p < .01 ; * p < .05

Hypotheses 4 and 5 predicted indirect effects of injustice on emotion and cognition talk via anger respectively. Hypothesis 4 (indirect effect on emotion talk) was supported ($\beta = .40$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 5 (indirect effect on cognition talk) was not supported ($\beta = .10$, $p = NS$).

Hypotheses 6 and 7 focused on the indirect effects of a relational need on talk via anger. Hypotheses 6 (indirect effect on emotion talk) ($\beta = -.38$, $p < .01$) was supported. Hypothesis 7 (indirect effect on cognition talk) ($\beta = -.09$, $p = ns$) was not supported.

Hypotheses 8-9 focused on the indirect effects of a meaning need on talk via anger. Hypothesis 8 (indirect effect on emotion talk) was supported ($\beta = -.28$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 9 (indirect effect on cognition talk) was not supported ($\beta = -.07$, $p = ns$).

Hypothesis 10 predicted an interaction effect, such that self-efficacy was posited as moderating the relationship between anger and cognition talk. This is presented in table 5.5. This hypothesis was not supported ($\beta = .08$, $p = ns$).

Table 5.5. Hypothesised interaction effects^a

			β	S.E.	Standardized β
Anger	→	Cognition Talk (main effect)	.19	.12	.14
Generalised self-efficacy	→	Cognition Talk (main effect)	.08 [†]	.13	.05
Interaction effect			.42	.24	.16

^a N = 166 ; ** p < 0.01 ; * p < 0.05 ;

Figure 5.3 below provides a summary of the direct path coefficients for the hypothesised model.

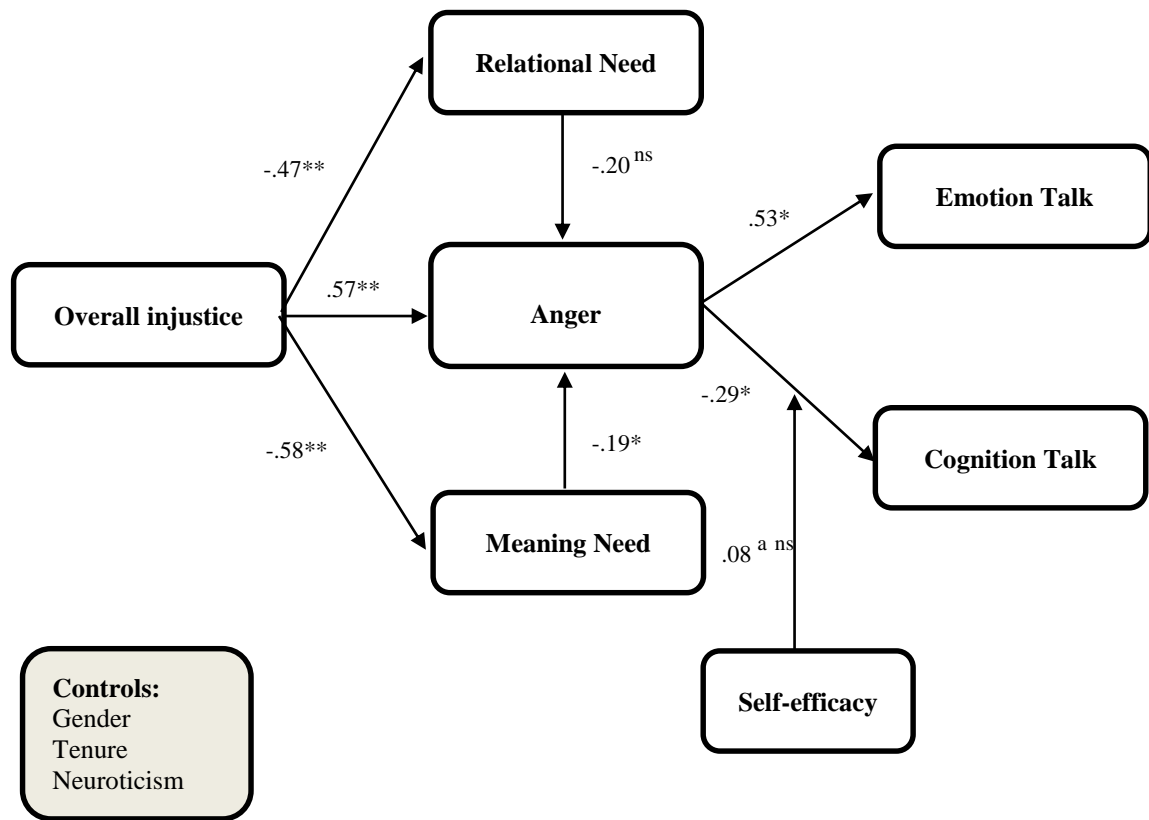


Figure 5.3. Schematic hypothesised model of the antecedents of talk in the context of workplace injustice, with path coefficients.

Alternative SEM model

In the alternative SEM model, represented in figure 5.4, there are direct paths from the justice needs (relational and virtue/meaning) to both emotion and cognition talk, circumventing anger. It is expected that it is less likely to fit the data but is nevertheless plausible. The *alternative* model was also run with control variables present in the structural model. This allowed for a robust comparison to the hypothesised mediated structural model. It provided a poor-adequate fit to the data ($X^2 [df = 412] = 727.903$, CFI = .89, IFI = .89, RMSEA = .07, SRMR = .1), but these were not significantly better than the hypothesised mediated model. Importantly, none of the paths from relational or

meaning needs to either emotion or cognition talk were significant. This result allows the ruling out of this alternative model as an explanation of the phenomenon under investigation.

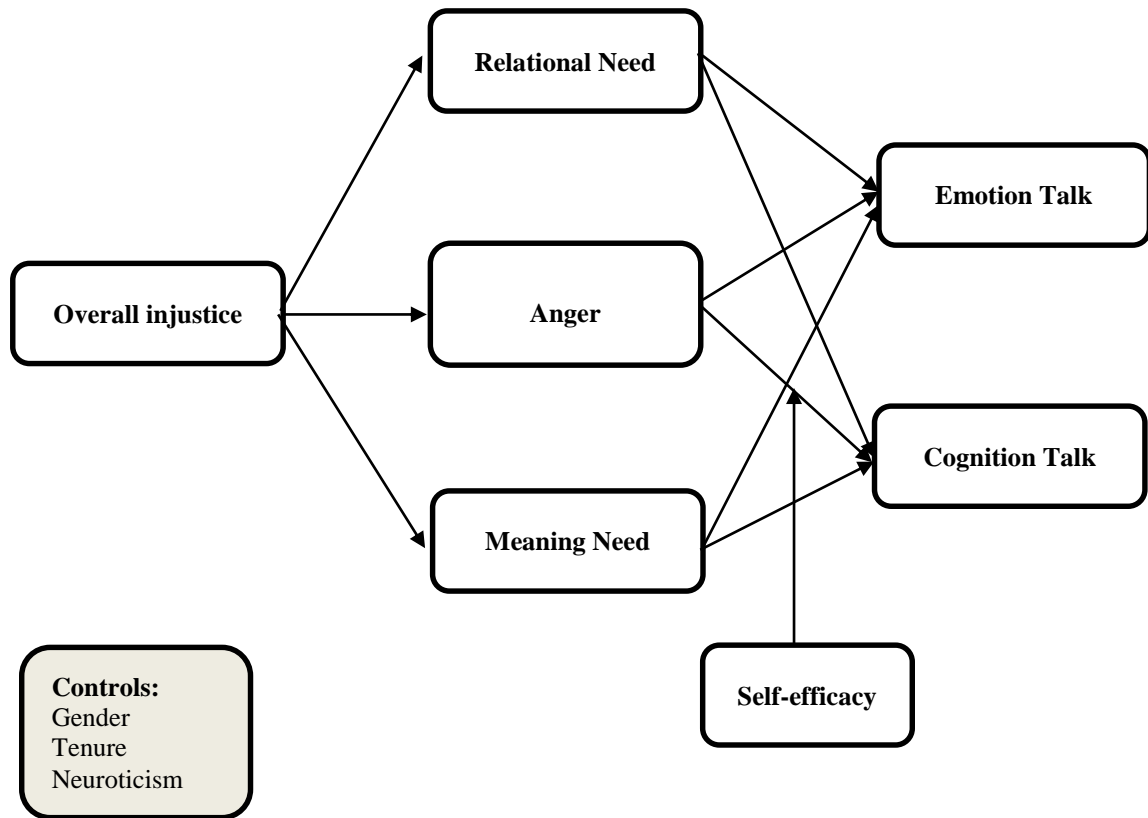


Figure 5.4. Alternative plausible model, with direct paths from relational and virtue justice needs to both forms of talk.

Supplementary results from the repeated second time point survey

I re-ran all the above hypotheses with the second time point of data gathered (separated by 6 weeks). These results are presented in appendix 8. The results were fully replicated. The hypothesised model (as per figure 5.1) fit was strong. The hypothesised direct paths from injustice to anger, a relational need and a meaning need were significant. The hypothesised indirect paths from injustice to emotion and cognition talk, via anger, a relational need and a meaning need were also significant. And again,

the moderating effect of self-efficacy on the relationship between anger and cognition talk, was not supported.

However, there are some mixed results between the first and second time point of data with regards to cognition talk. The first time point of data, as presented above, revealed that there were no significant indirect paths from injustice through to cognition talk (that is, injustice → anger → cognition talk; relational need → anger → cognition talk; meaning need → anger → cognition talk). Significant results were only found in relation to emotion talk. However, with the second time point data, significant results were found for each of these indirect paths to *both* types of talk, emotion and cognition. In light of the mixed results between the first and second time points, there is some support for the asserted hypotheses that the negative emotion of anger, as well as the justice relational and meaning needs, will each trigger both types of talk.

5.4 Discussion

“Everybody talks about a bad day at work, it’s ‘cos it was a bad day that we talk!”

Study participant describing their experiences of unfairness at work in interviews gathered as part of Study 1 (chapter 4)

In presenting the first field investigation using the new measure of talk created in the previous chapter, the present study has sought to find answers to the question: what triggers victims of unfairness to engage in talk? The findings from this study provide a number of fresh and novel insights in response to this question. There are five sets of

findings arising from the present study, and each will be discussed in turn: a) corroborating evidence for the presence of talk in an injustice context, b) injustice leads to anger and a breakdown in relational and meaning justice needs, c) anger is the lynchpin connecting injustice with talk, d) no results of significance were found connecting thwarted relational needs with anger, and finally e) no results of significance were found for the moderating impact of self-efficacy.

Corroborating evidence of presence of talk in the context of workplace injustice

Though a secondary aim of this chapter, findings from the present study, in a real workplace context, provide support for chapter 4. Specifically, corroborating the overall conclusion of chapter 4, this study presents additional support for the presence of talk in the context of workplace injustice, and does so in a real field context using a sample of bus drivers for whom issues of fairness and unfairness are salient on a daily basis. This finding makes an important contribution to the organisational justice literature. Extant research within the justice realm has amassed a wealth of evidence over the years concurring on the notion that those who perceive injustice *react* (Bies & Tyler, 1993). Typical reactions which have dominated the justice literature for decades are documented as comprising ‘dark side’ behaviours (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Colquitt et al., 2001; Ambrose et al., 2002)². Findings from the present study indicate that the question ‘what do employees do when they are treated unfairly?’ cannot be answered by simply referring to dark side behaviours. I am not asserting that such reactions do not exist; a wealth of amassed literature points to the ubiquitous presence of workplace

² I also acknowledge a steady stream of recent research which explores the conditions under which reactions such as *forgiveness* ensue: i.e. Tripp, Bies & Aquino, 2007; Wenzel & Okimoto, 2010.

injustice, as it does to the negative implications of injustice in the form of anger and counter-productive behaviours. Findings from the present study indicate that in addition to counter-productive responses, victims *also* talk about their unjust experience; in other words, exploring injustice through the eyes of those who experience it shows that victims of injustice seek out the company of a significant other in order to share and narrate their experience.

Injustice leads to anger and a breakdown in relational and meaning justice needs

In turning to the primary investigations of this chapter, the first set of findings from the present study demonstrate three specific outputs following a victim's experience of a justice violation. These outputs pertain to anger, as well as thwarted relational and meaning justice needs. Let us discuss each in turn.

A common finding in the justice literature is that the experience of unfairness is an emotionally charged one (Bies & Tripp, 1996; Folger & Skarlicki, 1998). My results support this notion by showing that anger – an emotion which is experienced as an offence against *me* or *mine* - to be a prime emotion arising following a victim's experience of injustice. This finding corroborates a well-established trajectory of justice research which both theoretically and empirically emphasises the emotionally arousing capacity of workplace unfairness. Indeed, theoretically, fairness theory (Folger & Cropanzano, 1998) is drawn on to provide an insight into the counterfactual thought process a victim of injustice engages in, in deciding upon the fairness of a situation. Empirically, a host of studies draw on affective events theory (AET; Weiss &

Cropanzano, 1996) in order to explain how a workplace violation triggers the emotional reaction of anger (Weiss et al., 1999; Barclay et al, 2005). In addition to corroborating this research, the present study extends it too by delineating anger as a response in the context of talk.

With regards to the relational and meaning justice needs (Cropanzano et al., 2001), the present study evidences two sets of findings. First, injustice leads to a breakdown in victims' relational needs, measured as their sense of self-esteem. If one's sense of self is a prized possession (Sedikides & Gregg, 2007), then injustice led participants of my study to feel less favourable about themselves. Second, and in the same way, injustice leads to a breakdown in victims' meaning needs. Indeed, if fair treatment generates stability and order, providing significance to one's work (Folger, 1998), then injustice led participants of my study to experience destabilisation, an incongruence between the way things are meant to be' and the resultant reality of how 'things really are'. Research supports a relationship between organisational justice and justice needs. For example, it is asserted that fair treatment conveys standing, respect and inclusion (Tyler & Lind, 1992; Brockner, 1988), as well as virtue, order and stability (Folger, 1998). Theoretically, justice scholars contend that *injustice* will lead to a breakdown in justice needs. The findings of the present study both replicate and extend these empirical and theoretical notions: it replicates justice research by similarly demonstrating the importance of justice needs; it extends justice research by being, to my knowledge, one of the first empirical studies showing that indeed unfair treatment at work violates

relational and meaning needs, rendering upon victims a state of lowered sense of self and meaning.

Anger is the lynchpin connecting injustice to talk

Continuing with the primary investigations of this chapter, the second set of findings sought to uncover answers to the question: what triggers a victim to engage in talk? Findings demonstrate that anger is the catalyst for talk. In other words, anger is the primary driver of talk; it is anger which mediates the path from injustice to talk; it is also anger which mediates the paths from both thwarted relational and meaning needs to talk. The aforementioned research provides theoretical impetus to the notion of anger as a key trigger of talk. Indeed, studies on talk repeatedly show that one's negative experience is the precursor to engage in talk (Pennebaker et al., 2001; Rimé, 2009). My own results from chapter 4, from interview data, demonstrate that 89% of participants engaged in either emotion or cognition talk following their unfair workplace experience.

Before elaborating on these findings, it is important to note that though the first time point of data, as presented in this chapter, did not find significant results linking anger as a mediator with cognition talk in particular, such a path was confirmed as significant with the second time point of data (as presented in appendix 8). For the first time point of data, this outcome was not evident despite there being direct significant links from anger to cognition talk. How can we explain such findings? The sample and sample size were the same across both time points of data so explanations pertaining to the

usage of a different sample, or a small sample size that was not powerful enough to detect trends in the data, are not valid.

The one explanation that might explain such differential findings across the two data time points is victims' experience of injustice over the 6-week period. Though data on the severity of injustice was not captured at either time point, anecdotal evidence that I accumulated whilst being on site, may provide an explanation. At the first time point, drivers were voting on upcoming changes with regards to their pensions. Such changes would have meant that their financial input into the company pension scheme was not only going to increase, but such input was going to be required over a longer period of time in order for money to be paid once the drivers retired. The explanation I am asserting is one of context: it is plausible to argue that the sample felt a heightened sense of anger at the first time point and that this emanated in the form of greater levels of emotion talk. Results of the voting overwhelmingly indicate that drivers voted against pension reform changes (approximately 89% against). Theoretically this assertion has appeal. The early writings of Freud (Breuer & Freud, 1895) gave rise to the idea of the predominance of emotional discharge as a natural response to one's aggrieved psychological and mental state. Social psychological research (Klinger, 1975; Martin & Tesser, 1989; Rimé, 2009) asserts that immediately after one's experience of a negative event – and particularly one that is highly emotionally laden for them - a person may not be ready for cognitive work implied by such activities as reframing, gauging an alternative perspective or thinking of solutions, because the emotionally laden experience takes time to settle, inhibiting the elicitation of complex cognitive

processing. Informed by such reasoning, it might well be the case that a ‘cooling down’ period is required after an intensely emotional experience and before victims can engage in cognition talk. There were no issues of such severity at the second time point of data collection, and given the aforementioned explanation, perhaps this might explain the greater prevalence of cognition talk at this time point. Clearly further investigation is required in replicating these findings in order to be assured of the significant effects on cognition talk.

In light of the findings from the second time point of data, this discussion will proceed with the understanding that both types of talk are triggered by the emotion of anger. In elaborating on the finding that anger is a lynchpin connecting injustice to talk (injustice → anger → emotion and cognition talk), as well as justice needs to talk (relational need → anger → emotion and cognition talk; meaning need → anger → emotion and cognition talk), we can conclude that what the results of this chapter point to is that victims of injustice share their experiences with significant others by engaging in talk which is reflective of both an off-loading of their emotions, as well as an attempt to interpret their experience and find some kind of a solution to move on. As the AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) elaborates, workplace events trigger engagement in behaviours: engagement in talk is thus the outcome of a victim’s unjust experience.

What is interesting, however, is the impact of anger on emotion and cognition talk respectively. Though direct links between anger and both types of talk were not hypothesised per se, nor their direction, it is clear that whilst anger has a *positive*

relationship with emotion talk, it has a *negative* relationship with cognition talk. The direction of this association was found in both times points of data gathered. In other words, though both types of talk are engaged in, the presence of anger leads to increased levels of emotion talk and lesser levels of cognition talk. In making sense of this finding, we can turn once again to theoretical notions of emotional congruence (Lazarus, 1991). It is plausible to argue that given that the affective experience underlying anger and emotion talk is essentially similar, in the sense that both are characterised by a strong negative emotion, this congruence between both is what drives their positive association. Thus, anger leads naturally to talk which expresses one's pent-up frustrations. On the other hand, cognition talk embodies attempts at rationally trying to make sense of a situation, reframe it, and find meaning in it as well as a possible solution – activities that are more likely to occur in the presence of lessened anger. This finding similarly merits future consideration, and particularly to ascertain whether other variables may explain when and who may be more likely to engage in cognition talk. This point is elaborated on under 'future research' below.

Overall, the important role played by the emotion of anger provides impetus to both justice and talk literatures. On the one hand, the finding that anger acts as a lynchpin connecting injustice to talk not only demonstrates an alternative outlet for victim reactions in the context of injustice (in comparison to 'dark side' behavioural responses), but provides merit to recent calls for a greater focus on affect within the justice literature (Colquitt, 2013). This study shows that an unfavourable justice judgement triggers anger which in turn triggers talk. The focus on affect is made even

more prominent given that such recent calls in the justice literature further argue that research integrating justice and affect should explore whether emotions mediate justice effects in the presence of cognitive mediators (ibid). The model guiding the present chapter does just that. The relational and meaning oriented justice needs (Cropanzano et al., 2001) are cognitive representations of desired individual outcomes. This study shows that the negative emotion of anger connects the indirect effect of justice needs and talk.

No results of significance for an association between a thwarted relational need and anger

In both the first and second time point of data, the findings revealed that a thwarted relational need did not lead a victim of injustice to engage in anger. This finding is perplexing since research evidences that our sense of self is one of our most valued possessions signifying our value, dignity and respect. When our sense of self is threatened, it renders upon us a state of deep distress, which can lead to anger as an expressive outlet for the harm felt (Tedeschi et al., 1974; Bies & Tripp, 1996).

However, perhaps an alternative explanation can be offered here. It may be that a breakdown in one's relational need (that is a thwarting of their self-esteem) actually leads to self-conscious emotions (inward-focused), such as shame or embarrassment (Lazarus, 1991). Such emotions act by making individuals very sensitive to others' reactions towards them. Whilst a breakdown in relational needs is indeed associated with perceived harm to one's sense of self, given that people possess a view of

themselves as ‘sacred’, it may well be that this state of distress is too difficult for individuals to be outwardly emotional about. In other words, they perceive a sense of shame or embarrassment, stemming perhaps from their belief that they should have been able to avoid whatever it is that they experienced at work. This in turn may lead to inward, rather than outward focused emotional expression. So, contrary to my prediction, this state of affairs may actually inhibit the expression of anger, as by engaging in anger, one may perceive an even greater sense of disappointment about themselves; the act of *not* engaging in anger may actually be a strategy of protecting one’s sense of self from further harm. This theoretical explanation merits future investigation.

No results of significance for the moderating impact of self-efficacy

Additionally, no support was found for the predicted moderation effect of self-efficacy on cognition talk. Though higher efficacious individuals were predicted as being more likely to engage in cognition talk since they are less likely to be affected by environmental influences, such as their experience of injustice, this was not supported. This is perplexing since it is lower efficacious individuals who, because they are more reluctant to abandon their anger, are perhaps less likely to engage in cognition talk. One explanation might be regarding the measure of this construct (Chen et al., 2001). It includes such questions as “I believe I can succeed at anything to which I set my mind” and “Compared to other people, I can do most tasks well”, questions that perhaps invite greater social desirability in responses, such that the sample of participants were more likely to agree than disagree with such statements in order to be viewed more favourably

(Crowne & Marlowe, 1960). Although the properties of the construct produced satisfactory reliability and confirmatory factor analysis results, there might not have been as much variability in response as would be expected from a general population.

5.4.1 Limitations

This study has some limitations which should be noted. The first major limitation is that though care was taken to avoid common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003) by counterbalancing survey items to reduce unduly influencing a respondent's interpretation and response to a measure, this study suffers from being a cross-sectional self-report investigation. It lies open to criticism of same-source and same-time bias. Problems inherent in such a design are that self-report studies are open to common source variance, suffering in particular from 'measurement context effects' (ibid.). This pertains to measuring a predictor and criterion variable at the same time point, using the same medium; this can lead a study to producing artifactual covariance which is driven by the context of study rather than the constructs of study themselves.

It should be noted, however, that the present study is perhaps best assessed by cross-sectional design rather than separating predictor and criterion variables over separate time periods. The separation of predictor and criterion variables is problematic since it would invite even greater amount of retrospective bias. The issue lies with the nature of talk – conversations unfold soon after an event. Too much temporal separation leaves a researcher open to missing the fundamental intricacies of conversation that occur and perhaps artificially inflating the links between injustice, needs and talk.

Another limitation is that my sample was predominantly male. However, gender was controlled for and showed no significant interaction with variables in the hypothesised model. Additionally, research on talk asserts that negative events lead to engagement in social conversation regardless of the gender of the talker (Rimé, 2009). Homogeneity of the sample was thus not perceived to effect generalisability of the results in any way.

A final limitation is that a new measure of talk was deployed, which has not been used in previous studies. However, a purpose of the present study was to test this new measure, and results show that it yielded sound and acceptable confirmatory factor results both in its construction (as explained in chapter 4), as well as through the SEM techniques applied in deducing good fitting measurement and structural models.

5.4.2 Suggestions for future research

This study contributes to a nascent area of enquiry and clearly more research is needed to expand our understanding of the conditions under which victims of injustice engage in talk following their experience. A primary area for future research is to delve deeper into the discrepancy of findings for cognition talk between the first and second time point of data. We can ask whether time has a bearing on when victims will engage in cognition talk, particularly following what they perceive to be a severely emotional injustice encounter. No study of talk, to my knowledge, has considered the temporal and unfolding nature of talk in this regard, but tangential evidence for its merits can be gleaned from a study on coping (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985) which makes an interesting point about the dynamics that unfold in a person-environment relationship under

conditions of stress. Specifically, close to one's experience of an acutely unpleasant event there is greater attributional ambiguity as individuals search for a sense of clarity about what has happened; as an event unfolds it carries less attributional ambiguity, given that more information is sought and the significance of an encounter becomes clearer. Might this be the moment during which a victim can engage in cognition talk? It is difficult to have explored this notion in the present study since it relied on retrospective accounts of injustice and talk, where perhaps the emotionally laden memory of a victim's experience was more salient. However, this idea may be best suited to study through an experienced sampling methodology (diary study). This approach would avoid problems inherent in retrospective bias (as evident in the present study), allowing me to capture engagement in talk as and when it occurs in 'real time' on a daily basis.

Anger was found to be the significant lynchpin between injustice and justice needs, and talk in the present study. A second area of future research could examine further the role played by emotions in the injustice → talk association. A starting point might be an exploration of the notion of outward and inward-focused emotions which was presented above, in conjunction with the non-significant findings for the association between thwarted relational needs and anger. Whilst outward-focused emotions, like anger, arise when individuals hold another person accountable for an injustice, inward-focused emotions, such as shame and guilt, arise when individuals evaluate themselves unfavourably and feel as if others are passing negative judgement on them (Tangney & Fischer, 1995; Lazarus, 1991). It has been evidenced that inward-focused emotions

arise following one's perception of injustice, particularly when an unfavourable outcome is coupled with favourable interactional and procedural justice (Barclay et al., 2005); for example, research has shown that individuals who received negative feedback from a supervisor they considered fair, were more likely to feel responsible for that feedback (Leung, Su & Morris, 2001). In the context of the present thesis, one can question whether a victim's experience of inward-focused emotions might also have an impact on talk, but in the reverse direction by preventing it? Self-conscious emotions can inhibit engagement in talk as a form of self-protection deployed by a victim; engaging in talk will trigger their feelings of shame and guilt ('it is all my fault') and hence a way to escape such thoughts is to prevent talking about one's experience. In complimenting the research question guiding this chapter (what are the antecedents driving talk?), we could ask whether the experience of inward-focused emotions may actually *inhibit* talk as a form of self-protection.

5.4.2 Conclusion

The present study is one step towards a greater appreciation of workplace injustice as experienced through the eyes of a *victim*, providing impetus to the integration of both organisational justice and talk as fields of enquiry. A number of insightful findings arose from the present study.

Taken together, empirical evidence from this study corroborates findings in the previous chapter of this thesis; namely, that victims do engage in talk in the context of their unfair experiences. Injustice was found to trigger anger, as well as thwart relational and

meaning oriented justice needs. A significant finding of this chapter was that the conditions under which victims of injustice engage in talk is driven by the negative emotion of anger; it is anger which connects injustice with talk, as well as relational and meaning needs with talk. Given this understanding, and in fulfilling the research aims of this thesis in shedding light on whether talk operates as a recovery mechanism, we move to chapter 6 to explore the *consequences* of engaging in talk.

Chapter 6:

Study 2: Consequences of talking about workplace injustice

6.1 Chapter Overview

Following on from the previous chapter's exploration of the antecedents of talk in the context of workplace injustice, this chapter presents findings for the second set of questions comprising study 2. It presents an empirical investigation of the *consequences* of talk, asking: what are the consequences of engaging in talk for victims of workplace injustice? Does talk operate as a victim-centred recovery mechanism?

6.2 Introduction

“Talking really helps, changes the way I feel about what happens – sometimes for the best, and sometimes I just want to give as good as I get.”

“Nothing beats a good conversation with my wife when I get home – there's stuff I can tell her that I wouldn't dream of saying at work. She understands how I feel and we discuss what I should do.”

Study participants describing their experiences of unfairness at work in interviews gathered as part of Study 1 (chapter 4)

As the subject of debate primarily within the fields of clinical and social psychology, the phenomenon of talk has evolved over history from being a form of verbal therapy aimed at curing deep-seated psychological conditions (Breuer & Freud, 1895), to being viewed as effective if the release of one's emotions is coupled with cognitive processing (Scheff, 2001; Greenberg, 2002). In bringing this theoretical construct to life in the context of workplace injustice, through inductive research, this thesis discovered two types of talk in chapter 4: emotion and cognition. Whilst emotion focused talk represents the release of strong negative emotions, cognition focused talk involves actively working towards resolving one's problem.

This chapter also integrates the phenomenon of talk into a workplace (in)justice paradigm by exploring the consequences of engaging in talk. Given the aims of this thesis outlined in chapter 2, the question that guides the present study is: does talk operate as a recovery mechanism, as evidenced in clinical and social psychology, assisting victims with overcoming the negative effects of workplace injustice? As the earlier quotes highlight, talk is helpful but it might also lead to consequences (“*I just want to give as good as I get!*”) that, whilst making the victim feel better, may not be desirable from the organisation’s perspective. Figure 6.1 presents the hypothesised empirical model for investigation. In sum, I will test three sets of paths: direct paths from both emotion and cognition focused talk to the victim-centred outcomes, as well as a moderated path wherein I predict that cognition talk will moderate the relationship between emotion talk and the posited outcomes. The remainder of this review will outline the theoretical underpinnings of this model.

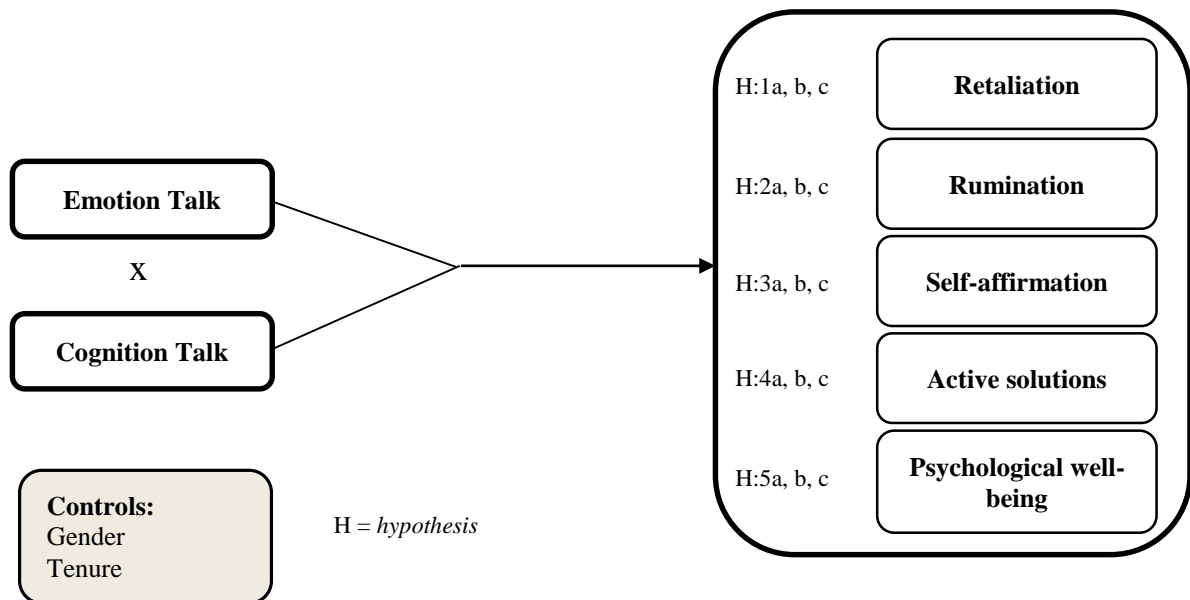


Figure 6.1. Schematic hypothesised model of the consequences of talk in the context of workplace injustice

6.2.1 The interaction between emotion and cognition talk

One of the key debates which characterised the realm of clinical psychology research during the early part of the twentieth century disputed the viability of Freud's hydraulic model of anger (Breuer & Freud, 1895). This model purports that the experience of negative events leads to the build-up of anger within an individual; if this pressure is not released via catharsis (verbal emotional discharge), it will cause an 'explosion' in the form of adverse physiological and psychological symptoms. A moratorium on this perspective (Bandura, 1973) instigated the rise of research which posited that what was missing from Freud's early analysis (*a point Freud made himself, albeit rather subtly*) was a cognitive component. In other words, the talking cure is effective when emotional discharge is coupled with mental processing.

In understanding why the combination of emotional discharge and cognitive processing go hand in hand, clinical and social psychologists concur on two insights, which underscore figure 6.1. First, in both literatures, it is argued that there is a preponderance of emotional expression in the immediate aftermath of a negative episode. Murray et al. (1989) demonstrated in an experiment on the effects of talk, that the expression of emotions dominated initial talking session. Rimé (2009) concludes that it is emotions that individuals initially share following their experience of a negative or challenging encounter. Emotional discharge is paramount since it triggers a host of socio-affective benefits such as empathy, validation and shared understanding (Rimé, 2009). Additionally, inhibition (that is *not* talking by consciously withholding thoughts and feelings about an event) can lead to a host of physical and psychological dysfunctions

(Pennebaker, 1990). However, although emotional discharge is beneficial, it brings about temporary relief only. If it is not coupled with cognitive processing, emotional expression will exacerbate tension (Geen & Quanty, 1977; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999).

This leads to the second insight. Articulation which gives rise to the act of processing one's experience, such that thoughts are restructured, organised, labelled and assimilated, provide one with a sense of coherence to their experience, making it more likely that they can process an event and 'move on' from it (Rimé, 2007; Pennebaker, 1997). Indeed, a 'positive' change in individuals, in the form of reduced anger, reductions in symptomatology and interpersonal distress, a sense of resolution, and improved physical and mental health is not evident until emotional discharge is coupled with cognitive processing (Geen & Murray, 1975; Greenberg, 2002; Greenberg et al., 2008). Otherwise emotions may dissipate, but they do not disappear – they continue to simmer below the surface, and talking about them can contribute to individuals expending physical and mental energies on continual rumination. Comparable results are demonstrated within social psychology, with the combination of sharing one's emotions, and cognitively reframing and modifying one's schema, leading to optimal results such as lowered emotional distress, increased positive mood and self-esteem changes (Murray et al., 1989; Nils & Rimé, 2008; Rimé, 2009).

This is the theoretical reasoning that underlies the rationale of the model to be tested in this chapter (figure 6.1). Individual paths from both types of talk to the outcomes will

be tested, as well as an interaction effect, wherein cognition talk operates as a moderator between emotion talk (the preponderance of which following a negative episode is outlined above) and the victim-centred outcomes. It is argued that emotion talk alone will not bring about the desired predicted directions of the victim-centred outcomes; this will occur when emotion talk is coupled with cognition talk.

6.2.2 The importance of recovery in the choice of consequences

Though elaborated on in the sections below, overall, the choice of outcome variables construed as consequences in this study is guided by four reasons. First and foremost, these outcomes are driven by this thesis' focus on *victim-centred recovery*; it is about understanding the perspective of the aggrieved employee who has experienced a fairness violation: to what extent does talk, a recovery mechanism, influence how a victim addresses a violation? I ask, what are the consequences that are relevant to a victim's experience? This perspective is in contrast to viewing responses to unfairness through the eyes of managers and/or the organisation: in other words, the focus is not on how a manager or organisation might choose to 'fix' an injustice in an attempt to elicit on-going loyalty or citizenship from an aggrieved employee, but rather, the focus is upon a victim's journey with consequences chosen to represent how they might respond.

Second, recovery is about the emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey that a victim engages in post-injustice. My focus in this chapter is to elucidate each of these tenets as I ask; to what extent will recovery pertain to engagement in emotional, cognitive and behavioural consequences following talk? The outcomes chosen reflect a range of

responses fitting each of these categories. For example, retaliation captures a behavioural response; rumination is one's pattern of thoughts; self-affirmation blends a focus on cognitive appraisal with a reflection on how one feels about their esteem and worth; active solutions combines cognitive thought with a focus on a behavioural search to move on from one's predicament; and finally, psychological well-being reflects a victim's emotional reactions to, and judgements about, their life.

Third, recovery is about a victim working towards a resolution (Barclay & Saldhana, in press). It encompasses a victim's responses in their on-going efforts to manage the aftermath of a violation of fairness. These efforts, ideally, will lead a victim of injustice to restore themselves to a state of equilibrium which is *positive* for them – i.e. they *feel* better, their *thoughts* are focused on moving on from a violation, their sense of value and meaning at work have found some solace. The reason for including a range of outcomes – from retaliation and rumination, which one could argue are both 'negative' responses since they consume a victim's emotional and cognitive resources and may lead to negative implications from an organisation's perspective - to psychological well-being and self-affirmation, which tap into a victim's profound sense of self and well-being – was to assess the breadth and depth of a victim's responses following their engagement in talk. It is the contention of this chapter, in line with the aforementioned review of talk, that if the interplay of emotion and cognition talk is effective, then talking about *both* following their experience of workplace unfairness, will lead to positive outcomes for a victim of injustice. This equates to lesser retaliatory intentions

and rumination, a greater sense of self-affirmation, increased search for solutions and more positive well-being.

Finally, each of these outcomes is relevant to the justice literature since it has been studied by justice scholars as a variable of interest. For example, retaliation is a frequently cited outcome variable in justice research on the ‘dark side’ (Skarlicki & Folger, 1997; Tripp et al., 2002; Aquino et al., 2006; Tripp et al., 2007; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009); rumination is explored as emanating from a preoccupation with injustice (Bies et al., 1997); psychological well-being is included in justice research that examines the negative impact of injustice (Tepper, 2001; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009), self-affirmation is a notion central to the group-value and relational models of justice which convey the importance of fairness as signifying one’s identity and status (Tyler & Lind, 1992); constructs akin to finding solutions have featured in justice research exploring employee responses to workplace changes, such as layoffs (Leana & Feldman, 1990; Bennett, Martin, Bies & Brockner, 1995). The choice of such outcomes is key in being able to translate and make relevant the findings of the present thesis – which integrates organisational justice with a new phenomenon of talk – into a justice realm.

Having reviewed the outline of the model presented in figure 6.1, we shall now turn to elaborate on each hypothesised path.

6.2.2 Talk and retaliation

Retaliation is described as attempts to ‘get even’ and punish the perpetrator perceived as being responsible for causing harm (Tripp et al., 2002). It has not featured as a variable of interest within the talk literature, but occupies a central position in justice research on the ‘dark side’ (Ambrose, 2002). It is often described as adverse reactions by an employee who engages in such acts as theft, sabotage as well as more covert reactions such as withdrawal and decreased citizenship (Skarlicki & Folger, 2004).

Though it can be argued that retaliation can be construed as a justified action on behalf of an aggrieved victim who has experienced a violation of fairness at the hands of an authority figure, I am conceiving of retaliation as a reaction following talk which encompasses both short and long term negative implications for a victim. Short-term negative implications purport to the notion that retaliation is emotionally and cognitively taxing for the victim; it requires both feeling and exerting strong reactions including anger, resentment, rage, and hatred, with a desire to punish (Aquino et al., 2001; Miller, 2001; Cortina & Magley, 2003). Long-term negative implications pertain to adverse consequences for the victim from the organisation’s perspective, for example, disciplinary action if an individual were to get caught; retaliation implies a preoccupation with ‘getting even’ and such effort can also detract from job performance (Skarlicki & Folger, 2004).

The question then becomes, how does retaliation relate to a talk mechanism? As aforementioned, there is likely to be a preponderance of emotional expression in the

immediacy of a negative episode. In the context of the present study, though this may have temporary benefits in that victims of injustice feel better, prolonged use of, or a reliance on, this type of talk will perpetuate negativity and tension (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999) making it both likely and possible for victims to engage in retaliation against the person they hold responsible for their injustice.

In asserting a theoretical link between emotion talk and retaliation, we can turn to affective events theory (AET; Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996). This theory posits that one's feelings and thoughts about an event can trigger a behavioural response, such as retaliation. In other words, affect and judgement lead to a behavioural response. With regards to affect, research evidences that individuals who feel greater anger are more likely to engage in retaliatory behaviour (Allred, 1999; Bies & Tripp, 2002). In applying this logic, I argue that emotion talk in particular can lead to retaliation. Emotion talk, as articulated in chapter 4, is a type of talk that embodies the release of strong negative emotions. It is the affect underlying this talk that can trigger victims to engage in retaliation. This notion holds intuitive appeal: pent-up frustration and anger characterising emotion talk can give way to engagement in a response that is a natural outlet for such feelings. Tangential evidence can be gauged from theories on emotion. In particular, Lazarus (1991) asserts the idea that each emotion embodies a physiological response to action. For example, when one is fearful, their response is often avoidance; when one feels shame, their response is to hide. Anger leads to responses that entail a release of frustration, such as attack. Applying this to the present study, if emotion talk embodies strong pent-up anger emanating from one's experience

of injustice, then in acting in congruence with that felt emotion, it is possible for a victim of injustice to engage in a retaliatory response as an outward release of this negativity.

Additionally, with regards to judgement, in line with the AET's propositions, a behavioural response is driven by a decision making process through which an individual's cognitions justify an act of retaliation. This supports a link between cognition talk and retaliation, such that a victim's attitude following an evaluation of the unfair situation gives rise to such thoughts as 'I will get even with the perpetrator'.

Talking about *both* emotions and cognitions is argued as being a mechanism to offset a victim's engagement in retaliatory behaviour, permitting the effectiveness of a 'talking cure' which can lead to a positive change in an individual (Pennebaker, 1997; Greenberg, 2002; Rimé, 2009). In particular, cognition talk in the current context will work to attenuate a link between emotion talk and retaliation. This is because this type of talk relates to the restructuring of one's thoughts, assimilation of an experience and the attainment of a broader perspective, all of which can bring a sense of coherence to what has happened and the reframing of an issue which may lead to an assessment that the cost to the victim of engaging in retaliation, is not worth it. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 1a: *Emotion focused talk is positively related to retaliation.*

Hypothesis 1b: *Cognition focused talk is positively related to retaliation.*

Hypothesis 1c: *Cognition talk attenuates the relationship between emotional talk and retaliation, such that the relationship is weaker at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels of cognition talk.*

6.2.3 Talk and rumination

Rumination is “...a class of conscious thoughts that revolve around a common instrumental theme and that recur in the absence of immediate environmental demands requiring the thoughts...” (Martin & Tesser, 1996: 7). Rumination is automatic, repetitious and intrusive, and can often hinder one’s ability to attend to other matters. In light of this definition, it is the contention of this study that talk can have implications for rumination, and that prolonged and sole engagement in emotion or cognition talk can lead to ruminative thinking.

In support of this is the notion that though rumination is a recurring pattern of thoughts, it is underscored by strong emotions. Indeed, Bies et al. (1997) argue that rumination is the amplification of negative emotions; as the cause of one’s predicament is pondered on repeatedly, it stands to reason that the emotions associated with retrieving such thoughts again and again, should perpetuate one’s negative emotional state. Corroborating evidence for this comes from associative network theories (i.e. Bower, 1981, 1991; Clark & Isen, 1982; Teasdale, 1983). In accordance with these theories, emotions are organised in a semantic network in memory. Each emotion is conceptualised as a central organising node that links together related information. When an emotion node is activated, past events and beliefs associated with that emotion are retrieved, prolonging or increasing the emotion. Rumination, therefore, enhances

such activation and exacerbates one's negative emotion; this is supported in laboratory studies which demonstrate that ruminating about one's negative state worsens mood (Fennell & Teasdale, 1984; Lyubomirsky & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1993).

Emotion talk is similarly the embodiment of one's pent up negative emotions about an act of injustice. As research on expression evidences, not sharing one's feelings may lead to inhibition which can be harmful for one's health and psyche (Pennebaker, 1990). However, a preponderance of or sole reliance on emotion talk – i.e. articulating one's negative emotions repeatedly - is going to prolong, perpetuate and fuel feelings associated with one's unjust experience, such that in line with the aforementioned reasoning, such talk will encourage the retrieval of past events and their adjacent emotions in an on-going cyclical fashion. Indeed, it has been evidenced that rumination is more pronounced and intense when people engage in communication to vent their emotions (Bies & Tripp, 1996) about how they feel. Prolonged rumination, triggered by continuous emotion talk, will also influence one's cognitive abilities (Ciarocco, Vohs & Baumeister, 2010) making it less likely that victims of injustice will find solutions to their problems (Lyubomirsky & Nolen-Hoeksema, 1995) and move on from their predicament (Martin & Tesser, 1989).

In making a link for cognition focused talk, literature on the effects of rumination in the context of depression asserts that rumination can also be cognitively taxing (Martin & Tesser, 1989; Nolen-Hoeksema, 2000; Gross & John, 2003; Andrews & Thomson, 2009), since one's predicament leads to continual thoughts about the situation. And

rather ironically, a way out of one's predicament is also to think about it again and again. Even if an effective solution is generated via cognition talk, if it is not possible to implement it (in other words a victim cannot see a 'way out'), this in turn may perpetuate ruminative thoughts. Indeed, rumination research points out that a way to move on from perpetual, intrusive negative thoughts is to attempt to remove the environmental cue(s) that trigger such thinking - and where this is not possible, repetitive cycles of thought will ensue (Neal, Wood, Wu & Kurlander, 2011).

It is talking about *both* one's emotions and cognitions that can lead a victim to put a stop to repeated cycles of ruminative thought. First, the outlet for pent-up frustrations through emotion talk in the very short-term will encourage the release of one's feelings, which, if inhibited, would cause further distress (Pennebaker, 1990). However, a reliance on emotion talk will only exacerbate tension and negativity (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999). In line with the main argument of this study, it is the presence of cognition talk which involves a victim reframing their situation, taking an alternative perspective and entertaining objective notions about how to move on, that has the potential to free an individual from repetitive cycles of thought. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 2a: *Emotion focused talk is positively related to rumination.*

Hypothesis 2b: *Cognition focused talk is positively related to rumination.*

Hypothesis 2c: *Cognition talk attenuates the relationship between emotional talk and rumination, such that the relationship is weaker at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels of cognition talk.*

6.2.4 Talk and self-affirmation

Self-affirmation theory asserts that individuals are driven to maintain a positive self-image (Baumeister, 1982), self-integrity and a perception of themselves as good and virtuous (Steele, 1988). People are motivated to restore their sense of self when it is disrupted through such acts as affirming some important aspect of the self. For example, if a student has received a bad grade, they may affirm their sense of self by thinking “I am also a good friend” – that is, affirmation of the self in an alternative domain.

As presented in chapters 2 and 3, the concept of self-affirmation speaks closely to group-value oriented theories of justice (Lind & Tyler, 1988; Tyler & Lind, 1992), as well as the ‘relational justice need’ within the multiple needs model of justice (Cropanzano et al., 2001). Both of these emphasise the importance of the *self*, arguing that what is pertinent to individuals is a sense of identity, value, standing and respect from others. The notion that individuals seek to reaffirm the self when it has been threatened is also explicated within the justice realm. The work of van den Bos (2001) is one of the few in the justice paradigm to focus on self-affirmation. In an experiment, he manipulated a threat to one’s sense of self in the form of heightening participants’ mortality salience (i.e. telling participants to think about their own death). He found that mortality salience in turn increased participants’ needs for self-evaluation – in other words, individuals were keen to restore their sense of threatened self (when they did this, they reacted less strongly to fairness violations).

In light of this, my argument is that talk can have implications for self-affirmation; in particular, talk is the avenue via which a sense of self, threatened and lowered by an injustice, can be restored. Self-affirmation includes both an affective and a cognitive component. It has been construed in this study as a *cognitive* thought process pertaining to how one *feels* about themselves (Pietersma & Dijkstra, 2012). For example, victims may remind themselves of all the things they do well, that they are proud of and that they value the most. Both types of talk as asserted in this thesis can work to satisfy each of these components of self-affirmation, cognitive and affective, in leading to positive recovery for a victim.

Perhaps more so than with any other consequence variable postulated in this study, emotion talk is likely to have the greatest positive influence on self-affirmation. This is because the benefits to be reaped in the short-term with emotion talk lend themselves to enhancing one's sense of self and self-esteem; talking to another assists a victim with feeling better about themselves since the listener provides comfort, validation and affirmation of a victim's perspective (Rimé, 2009). Rimé (ibid: 75) argues that "...distressed individuals experience socio-affective needs...this quest plays an important role in individuals' motivation to socially share their emotional experiences profusely and to do it quite willingly." Additionally, in line with the emotional release and inhibition hypotheses (Pennebaker et al., 2001; Pennebaker, 1997), emotional talk has benefits in decreasing any distress that may arise from repressing and inhibiting how one feels.

It is the added presence of cognition talk that will strengthen a victim's affirmation of the self, leading to a positive sense of recovery. This is because the task implied by cognition talk – reframing one's experience, seeking an alternative perspective, reinterpretation to gain greater objectivity around the injustice event – will encourage abandoning one's frustrated goals and recreating a sense of meaning, permitting a victim of injustice to take stock of a situation and re-evaluate their sense of self. In addition to feeling better, a victim can therefore also possess more positive thoughts about themselves. In line with theory aforecited, one might also argue that a sole reliance on emotion talk may in the longer term lead to hindering recovery; though socio-affective benefits are reaped in the immediate instance, a continuous focus on strong emotions and negative thoughts arising from an injustice may impede efforts to recover their wounded sense of self, since perpetually talking about the negative situation is likely to invite negative feelings about it. In sum, whilst emotion talk will provide immediate benefits pertaining to recovery which focuses on providing comfort and re-validation of a victim's sense of self, it is the addition of cognition talk that will permit a re-evaluation of the unjust experience encouraging a restoration of one's self. It is therefore hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 3a: *Emotion focused talk is positively related to self-affirmation.*

Hypothesis 3b: *Cognition focused talk is positively related to self-affirmation.*

Hypothesis 3c: *Cognition talk strengthens the relationship between emotional talk and self-affirmation, such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels of cognition talk.*

6.2.5 Talk and active solutions

The search for active solutions can be defined loosely as taking steps in order to ameliorate the impact of a negative situation. Being active in such a manner involves attempts made at changing, managing, taking direct action, generating a solution to one's problem and acting upon it (Garnefski, Kraaij & Spinhoven, 2001).

Attempts at taking action to alter one's state of affairs – as opposed to dwelling on a situation and venting, for example – have been shown to lead to positive outcomes for employees. Such outcomes include redeployment (Leana & Feldman, 1990), less stress (Wilhelm & Ridley, 1988) and avoidance of work-life conflict (Rotondo, Carlson & Kincaid, 2003). In studies of a company layoff, Bennett et al. (1995) explored a construct akin to active solutions; their dependent variable was the extent to which an employee engaged in the process of searching for a new job – in other words, doing something to actively move on from a layoff situation rather than dwelling upon it. They found that employees who engaged in such active processes were better able to cope with the layoff situation. Perhaps rather counter-intuitively, this finding was more significant for people who perceived greater unfairness. The scholars reason that such employees were actively taking charge of their unfair situation.

I argue that talk can have implications for a victim's active search for solutions. In arguing for the presence of a search for solutions following talk, we can turn once again to predictions in AET (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) which was argued above as mapping onto the triggering of talk. AET posits that a behavioural outcome (such as

active solutions) is the result of both an *affective* reaction and/or a *judgement* driven reaction. Both types of talk as asserted in this thesis can work to satisfy each of these components in leading to positive recovery for a victim.

It is posited that the experience of injustice is an emotionally charged one for its victims (Bies & Tripp, 2002). Indeed, what the study by Brockner, Wiesenfeld and Martin (1995) demonstrates is that during this highly affective time of perceived unfairness, individuals are still able and likely to engage in the search for a solution to their predicament. In the same way, I argue that emotion talk can trigger a search for solutions. Expression of emotional discharge in the context of unfairness is functional since doing the converse - inhibiting how one feels - can increase distress (Pennebaker, Zech & Rimé, 2001; Pennebaker, 1997).

In line with AET, a search for active solutions can also be driven by a *judgement*, a decision-making process akin to saying “I will do something about this.” Such decisions, reflecting the nature of this type of talk, pertain to a reframing of one’s experience, encouraging understanding about the impact of a situation in order to gain an alternative perspective and seeking to move on. This type of talk lends itself perhaps more readily to the outcome of active solutions, compared to other consequences of talk posited in this study.

In line with theory aforecited, one might argue that a sole reliance on emotion talk may in the longer term lead to hindering recovery; though socio-affective benefits are reaped

in the immediate instance, a continuous focus on negative thoughts arising from an injustice may impede efforts to find a solution. In sum, whilst emotion talk will provided much need discharge from a situation to focus on a search for active solutions, cognition talk will cement such efforts, permitting a re-evaluation of the unjust experience encouraging engagement in a victim's search for solutions. It is thus hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 4a: *Emotion focused talk is positively related to active solutions.*

Hypothesis 4b: *Cognition focused talk is positively related to active solutions.*

Hypothesis 4c: *Cognition talk strengthens the relationship between emotional talk and active solutions, such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels of cognition talk.*

6.2.6 Talk and psychological well-being (PWB)

Psychological well-being (PWB) is defined as one's evaluation of their life, with such evaluations including emotional reactions, moods and judgements formed about satisfaction with various facets of life such as work and marriage (Diener, 1984; Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1999). Positive well-being is represented by pleasant moods, low negative moods and higher life satisfaction. The choice of including this victim-centred outcome was to provide insight on the impact of talk on an individual's subjective life beyond the realm of work. Studies within the justice framework have shown that the impact of an injustice extends beyond the scope of work, affecting workers' psychological, physical and mental health (Tepper, 2001; Elovainio et al., 2001).

The expression literature converges on the notion that verbal and written expression is associated with improved PWB (Pennebaker & O’Heeron, 1984; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009). A meta-analytic review by Smyth (1998) reports that individuals who engage in expression report higher PWB. Segal et al. (in press) report lower rates of hopelessness and depression amongst those who engage in talk; and the converse is also true - not talking has been evidenced as leading to lowered satisfaction with one’s life (Finkenauer & Rimé, 1998).

It is the contention of this study that talk can have implications for a victim’s PWB. PWB includes an affective and a cognitive component (Diener, 1984): it involves an evaluation of satisfaction which draws on how one *feels* and what one *thinks* about their life. The relationship between this composition of PWB and the effectiveness of expression is put forth by Pennebaker (1997). He asserts that expression assists with two factors which in turn can increase both the affective and cognitive components of PWB: the freeing of psychological resources, and, an assimilation of a negative experience. We can relate both of these factors to emotion and cognition talk respectively.

As evidenced in the pattern of effects predicted for self-affirmation, emotion talk will lead to a victim reaping benefits of a socio-affective kind, such as comfort, love, empathy and recognition from another. The release of negative emotions via emotion talk permits a decrease in psychological and physiological work which would otherwise be spent on continuously pondering on an injustice. Emotion talk alone permits benefits

of the affective kind only. It is the added presence of cognition talk that will strengthen the association with PWB. Indeed, cognition talk, through its reframing and re-evaluation of an experience, is necessary in permitting its assimilation, satisfying the cognitive component of PWB. In line with theory aforesaid, one might also argue that a sole reliance on emotion talk may in the longer term negatively impacting recovery, since, though socio-affective benefits are reaped in the immediate instance, a continuous focus on strong emotions arising from an injustice may impede efforts to feel satisfied about one's life. Both emotion and cognition talk therefore, will thus trigger favourable benefits related to PWB. It is thus hypothesised that:

Hypothesis 5a: *Emotion focused talk is positively related to psychological well-being.*

Hypothesis 5b: *Cognition focused talk is positively related to psychological well-being.*

Hypothesis 5c: *Cognition talk strengthens the relationship between emotional talk and psychological well-being, such that such that the relationship is stronger at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels of cognition talk.*

6.3 Methods

6.3.1 Participants & Procedure

The sample and procedure deployed for this chapter is the same as that used in chapter 5: again, the data for this chapter comes from the first of the two time point surveys, with a validation of the results conducted with the second time point of data gathered.

6.3.2 Measures

Employees provided ratings of emotion talk, cognition talk, retaliation, rumination, self-affirmation, active solutions and psychological well-being. The following control

variables were gathered: gender and tenure. In order to counteract issues of common method bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), the order of questions in the survey were counterbalanced (to avoid unduly influencing a respondent's interpretation) and respondents were informed that there were no right or wrong answers.

Emotion Talk. Emotion talk was evaluated using a measure created for this study, as outlined in chapter 4. The four validated items included, 'I let all my negative feelings out' and 'I let off steam'. Respondents were asked to what extent they engaged in talk following their experience of workplace injustice. Items were measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = never to 7 = always. ($\alpha = .83$).

Cognition Talk. Cognition talk was evaluated using a measure created for this study, as outlined in chapter 4. The four validated items included, 'I talked about a possible solution to what I experienced' and 'I talked about actions I can take'. Respondents were asked to what extent they engaged in talk following their experience of workplace injustice. Items were measured on a 7-point scale from 1 = *never* to 7 = *always*. ($\alpha = .86$).

Retaliation. Retaliation was measured using four items from McCullough, Rachal, Sandage, Worthington, Brown and Hight's (1998) Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory. Sample items included, 'I'll make him/her pay', 'I wish that something bad would happen to him/her' and 'I'm going to get even'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *never* to 5 = *always*. ($\alpha = .91$).

Rumination. Rumination was measured using four items from the Cognitive Emotional Regulation Questionnaire developed by Garnefski et al. (2001). Sample items include, 'I often think about how I feel about what I have experienced', 'I am preoccupied with what I think and feel about what I have experienced' and 'I dwell upon the feelings the situation has evoked in me'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = never to 5 = always. ($\alpha = .85$).

Self-affirmation. Self-affirmation was measured using three items from a six-item self-affirmation scale developed by Pietersma and Dijkstra (2012). Sample items include: 'I remind myself that I do some things very well' and 'I think about all the things I can be proud of'. One-item was used from Hepper, Gramzow and Sedikides' (2010) six-item self-affirming reflections scale, 'I remind myself of my values and what matters to me.' Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = never to 5 = always. ($\alpha = .92$).

Active solutions. Active solutions was measured using four-items from Carver's brief COPE inventory (Carver, 1997). Sample items include: 'I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it', 'I take additional action to try and get rid of the problem' and 'I do what has to be done, one step at a time.' Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = never to 5 = always. ($\alpha = .81$).

Psychological well-being. Psychological well-being was measured using five items from the Satisfaction with Life scale (Diener, 1984). Sample items include: 'In most ways my life is close to my ideal', 'The conditions of my life are excellent' and 'I am

satisfied with my life'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = never to 5 = always. ($\alpha = .87$).

Gender. Gender was controlled for two reasons. First, there is evidence that men hold more favourable attitudes towards retribution and revenge, and this may impact upon both retaliatory outcomes, as well as clouding their levels of emotion talk (Stuckless & Goranson, 1992). Second, in line with popular stereotypes, women are often found to be more prone to talk via sharing their emotions compared to men (Bergmann, 1993) though this has not always been evidenced in research (Rimé, 2009). (gender: 1 = *male*, 2 = *female*).

Tenure. Employee tenure was controlled for given that experience within a company may influence the degree to which an employee is able to manage their experience of injustice. For instance, it may affect the degree to which employees engage in one or both types of talk, or the way in which they engage (or not) in retaliation, rumination or the search for active solutions in particular. Research on responses to stress at work cite tenure as moderating an individual's ensuing responses, such that knowledge of an organisation's systems and procedures can lead to more adaptive responses (i.e. Parasuraman & Cleek, 1984). Respondents were asked to report the total length of time they had worked for their company; this information was verified with company records (tenure: in years).

6.3.3 Data Analysis

To test the hypotheses, I conducted moderated regression analyses. For each outcome variable, in step 1, I controlled for gender and tenure. In step 2, I included the main effects of emotion and cognition talk respectively. In step 3, I included the interaction terms. All variables were mean-centred to reduce multicollinearity (Aiken & West, 1991). To assist in interpretation of the interactions, simple slopes were produced diagrammatically (Dawson, 2014) and plotted according to procedures outlined by Aiken & West (1991), by examining the statistical significance of the slopes at low, medium and high levels of the moderator variable.

6.3.4 Results

Preliminary analysis: Confirmatory factor analysis

Given that each of the variables within this study was essentially rooted in an affective, cognitive or behavioural component, and in order to verify their separation as constructs, I ran a confirmatory factor analysis for each variable deployed: emotion talk, cognition talk, retaliation, rumination, self-affirmation, active solutions and psychological well-being. As predicted, in line with the study's hypotheses, each variable loaded onto its separate factor (such that a seven-item factor solution emerged, loading onto separate factors) and provided a good fit to the data (Kline, 2005): ($\chi^2 [df = 327] = 694.776$, CFI = .90, RMSEA = .08, SRMR = .07).

Results of hypotheses

Table 6.1 provides the descriptive statistics, correlations and scale reliabilities for the variables in the study. Coefficient alphas are shown in parentheses on the diagonal.

The table provides preliminary insight into the hypotheses. Emotional talk was significantly related to all the outcome variables: retaliation ($r = .58, p < .01$), rumination ($r = .63, p < .01$), self-affirmation ($r = .33, p < .01$); active solutions ($r = .38, p < .01$), psychological well-being ($r = -.19, p < .05$). Cognition talk was significantly related to all outcome variables, except psychological well-being and job satisfaction: retaliation ($r = .31, p < .01$), rumination ($r = .60, p < .01$), self-affirmation ($r = .56, p < .01$) and active solutions ($r = .62, p < .01$).

Tables 6.2 – 6.6 present results from the moderation analyses. Figure 6.5 towards the end of this section, provides a diagrammatic overview of the standardised beta-weights for the hypothesised model for this chapter.

Table 6.1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities^a

Variable	Mean.	SD.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Gender (1=male, 2=female)	1.08	.26									
2 Tenure (years)	7.94	7.33	-.01								
3 Emotional talk ^b	2.70	1.41	.00	.17*	(.83)						
4 Cognition talk ^b	3.17	1.47	-.05	.05	.55**	(.86)					
5 Retaliation	1.96	1.10	-.01	.05	.58**	.31**	(.91)				
6 Rumination	2.54	.99	-.07	.13	.63**	.60**	.63**	(.85)			
7 Self-affirmation	3.21	1.16	-.03	.01	.33**	.56**	.15	.53**	(.92)		
8 Active solutions	2.75	1.02	-.06	.03	.38**	.62**	.34**	.62**	.70**	(.81)	
9 Psychological well-being	3.14	.86	.13	.11	-.19*	.01	-.15	-.01	.17*	.10	(.87)

a $n = 166$. Internal reliabilities (alpha coefficients) for the overall constructs are given in parentheses on the diagonal

b Emotional talk and cognition talk were measured on a 7-point scale

** $p < 0.01$

* $p < 0.05$

The *first set of hypotheses* predicted the impact of talk on the victim-centred outcome of retaliation. Results for this set of hypotheses are displayed in table 6.2. Hypothesis 1a predicted that emotion talk would be positively related to retaliation intentions. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .60, p < .01$). Hypothesis 1b predicted that cognition talk would be positively related to retaliation intentions. This hypothesis was not supported ($\beta = -.02, p = ns$). Hypothesis 1c predicted that cognition talk would attenuate the relationship between emotional talk and retaliation, such that the relationship would be weaker at higher levels of cognition talk. The interaction between emotion talk and cognition talk was not significant ($\beta = .002, p = ns$). In sum, there was no moderating effect of cognition talk.

The *second set of hypotheses* predicted the impact of talk on the victim-centred outcome of rumination. Results for this set of hypotheses are displayed in table 6.3. Hypothesis 2a predicted that emotion talk would be positively related to rumination. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .42, p < .01$). Hypothesis 2b predicted that cognition talk would be positively related to rumination. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .36, p < .01$). Hypothesis 2c predicted that cognition talk would attenuate the relationship between emotion talk and rumination, such that the relationship would be weaker at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels. The two-way interaction between emotion and cognition talk was significant ($\beta = -.12, p < .05$).

Table 6.2. Moderation analyses: Retaliation (hypotheses 1a, b, c)

Dependent variable: Retaliation

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.01	.33	-.004	-.056	-.02	.27	-.006	-.098	-.02	.27	-.006	-.099
Tenure	.007	.01	.05	.625	-.008	.01	-.05	-.766	-.008	.01	-.05	-.762
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.46	.06	.60	7.55**	.46	.06	.60	7.29**
Cognition Talk					-.01	.05	-.02	-.256	-.01	.06	-.01	-.22
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									.001	.03	.002	.025
<i>Adj R²</i>		-.01				.32				.31		
ΔR^2		.003				.32**				.31		
<i>F</i> Δ		.197				39.61**				.001		
<i>df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Table 6.3. Moderation analyses: Rumination (hypotheses 2a, b, c)

Dependent variable: Rumination

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.25	.29	-.07	-.830	-.19	.21	-.05	-.878	-.16	.21	-.04	-.740
Tenure	.02	.01	.13	1.63	.01	.01	.04	.658	.01	.01	.03	.589
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.29	.04	.42	6.08**	.32	.05	.45	6.45**
Cognition Talk					.24	.04	.36	5.33**	.20	.05	.30	4.13**
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.06	.03	-.12	-2.03*
<i>Adj R²</i>		.01				.48				.49		
ΔR^2		.021				.48**				.01*		
<i>F</i> Δ		1.68				72.93**				4.15*		
<i>Df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The plot of this interaction is displayed in figure 6.2. In probing the interaction, an examination of the simple slopes demonstrates statistical significance for the effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and rumination at low levels of cognition talk only (*low*: simple slope=.215, $t(163)=2.68$, $p<.001$; *high*: simple slope=.032, $t(163)=.23$, $p=ns$). In sum, in supporting the interaction effect predicted in hypothesis 1c, as figure 6.2 shows, high levels of cognition talk do attenuate the effect of emotion talk on rumination; in other words, higher levels of cognition talk weaken the relationship between emotion talk and rumination. It is at lower levels of cognition talk that emotion talk has a significant effect on rumination, but the effect is such that although rumination is weaker at lower levels of emotion talk, it increases at higher levels of emotion talk.

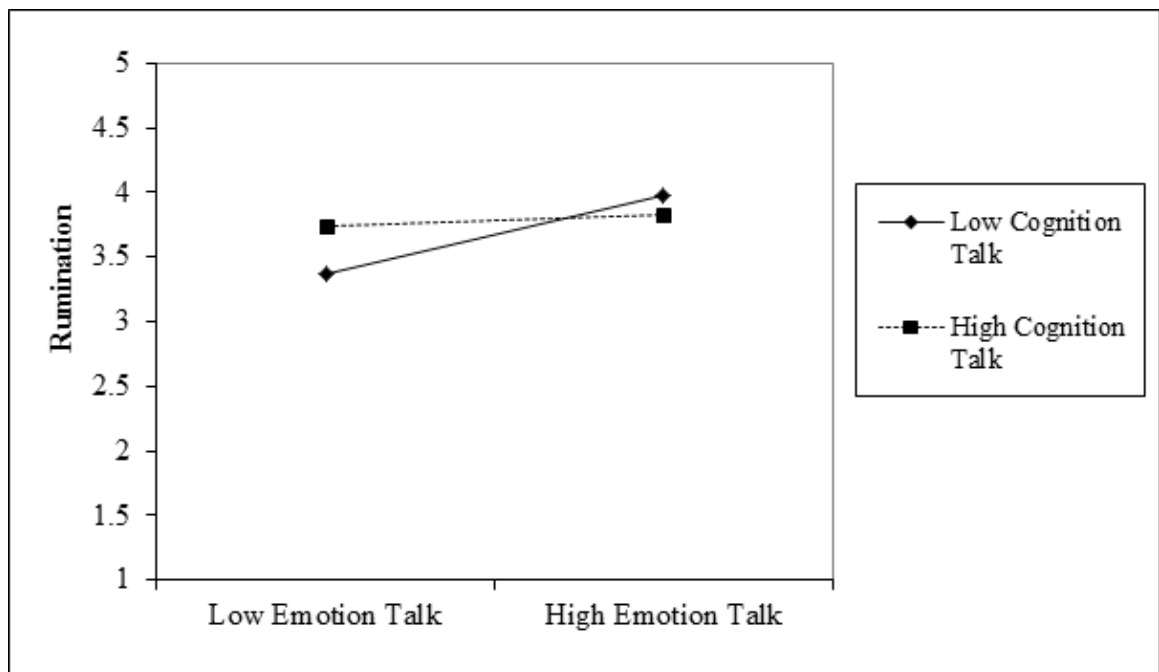


Figure 6.2. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and rumination

The *third set of hypotheses* predicted the impact of talk on the victim-centred outcome of self-affirmation. Results for this set of hypotheses are displayed in table 6.4. Hypothesis 3a predicted that emotion talk would be positively related to self-affirmation. This hypothesis was not supported ($\beta = .05$, $p = ns$). Hypothesis 3b predicted that cognition talk would be positively related to self-affirmation. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .48$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 3c predicted that cognition talk would strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation, such that the relationship would be stronger at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels. The two-way interaction between emotion and cognition talk was significant ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .05$).

The plot of this interaction is displayed in figure 6.3. In probing this interaction, an examination of the simple slopes demonstrates statistical significance for the effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation at high levels of cognition talk only (*low*: simple slope = $-.092$, $t(163) = -.79$, $p = ns$; *high*: simple slope = $-.328$, $t(163) = -1.56$, $p < .05$). In sum, there is an interaction effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation. However, an inspection of figure 6.3 shows a similar general pattern for both low and high levels of cognition talk, on their effect on the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation. Both high and low levels of cognition talk strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation at low levels of emotion talk; as emotion talk increases, both low and high cognition talk appears to *weaken* the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation.

Table 6.4. Moderation analyses: Self-affirmation (hypotheses 3a, b, c)

Dependent variable: Self-Affirmation

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.13	.34	-.03	-.392	-.03	.29	-.007	-.105	.009	.29	.002	.030
Tenure	.01	.01	.09	1.19	.01	.01	.06	.955	.009	.01	.06	.892
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.01	.06	.01	.166	.04	.06	.05	.632
Cognition Talk					.43	.06	.54	6.85**	.37	.06	.48	5.58**
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.07	.04	-.14	-1.91*
<i>Adj R²</i>		-.003				.29				.31		
ΔR^2		.010				.31**				.02*		
<i>F</i> Δ		.80				34.80**				3.66*		
<i>df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

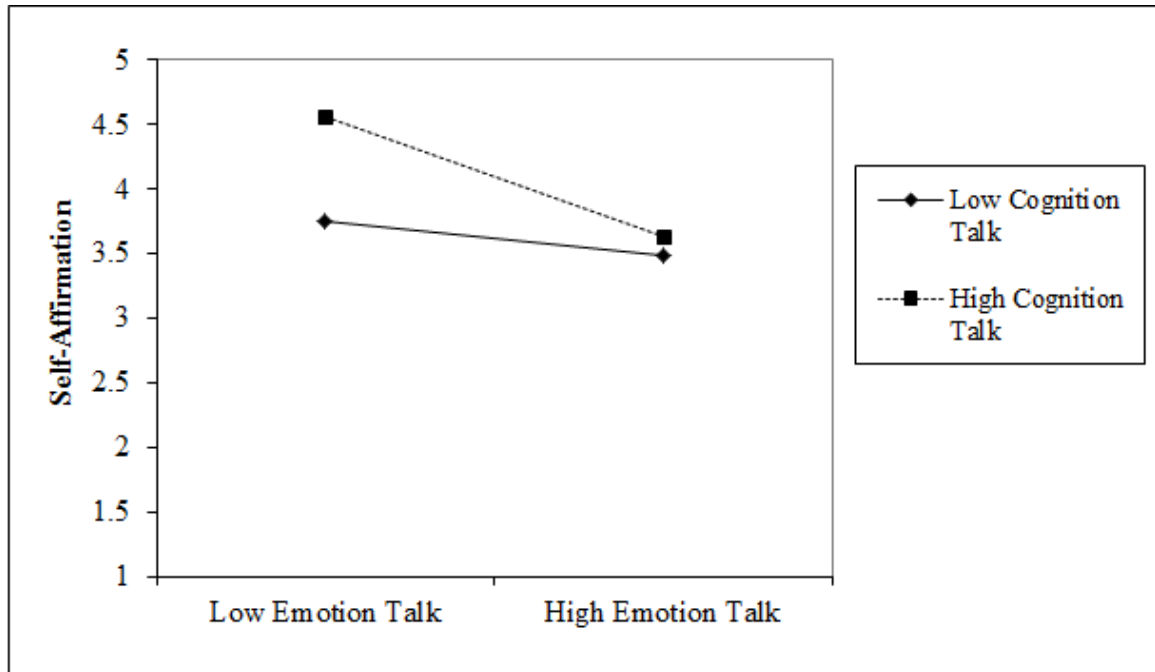


Figure 6.3. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and self-affirmation

The *fourth set of hypotheses* predicted the impact of talk on the victim-centred outcome of active solutions. Results for this set of hypotheses are displayed in table 6.5. Hypothesis 4a predicted that emotion talk would be positively related to active solutions. This hypothesis was not supported ($\beta = .09$, $p = ns$). Hypothesis 4b predicted that cognition talk would be positively related to active solutions. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .52$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 4c predicted that cognition talk would strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions, such that the relationship would be stronger at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels. The two-way interaction between emotion and cognition talk was significant ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .05$).

Table 6.5. Moderation analyses: Active solutions (hypothesis 4a, b, c)

Dependent variable: Active solutions

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.20	.30	-.05	-.683	-.11	.24	-.02	-.453	-.07	.24	-.01	-.311
Tenure	.004	.01	.02	.367	-.001	.009	-.01	-.156	-.002	.009	-.01	-.234
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.03	.05	.05	.71	.06	.05	.09	1.20
Cognition Talk					.40	.05	.58	7.75**	.35	.05	.52	6.37**
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.07	.03	-.14	-2.05*
<i>Adj R²</i>		-.01				.37				.38		
ΔR^2		.004				.38**				.02*		
<i>F</i> Δ		.303				48.50**				4.21*		
<i>df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The plot of this interaction is displayed in figure 6.4. In probing this interaction, an examination of the simple slopes demonstrates statistical significance for the effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions at *high* levels of cognition talk only (*low*: simple slope=-.052, $t(163)=-.59$, $p=ns$; *high*: simple slope=-.262, $t(163)=-1.75$, $p<.05$). In sum, there is an interaction effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and active solution. However, an inspection of figure 6.4 shows a similar general pattern for both low and high levels of cognition talk, on its effect on the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions. Both high and low levels of cognition talk strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions at low levels of emotion talk; as emotion talk increases, both low and high cognition talk appears to *weaken* the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions.

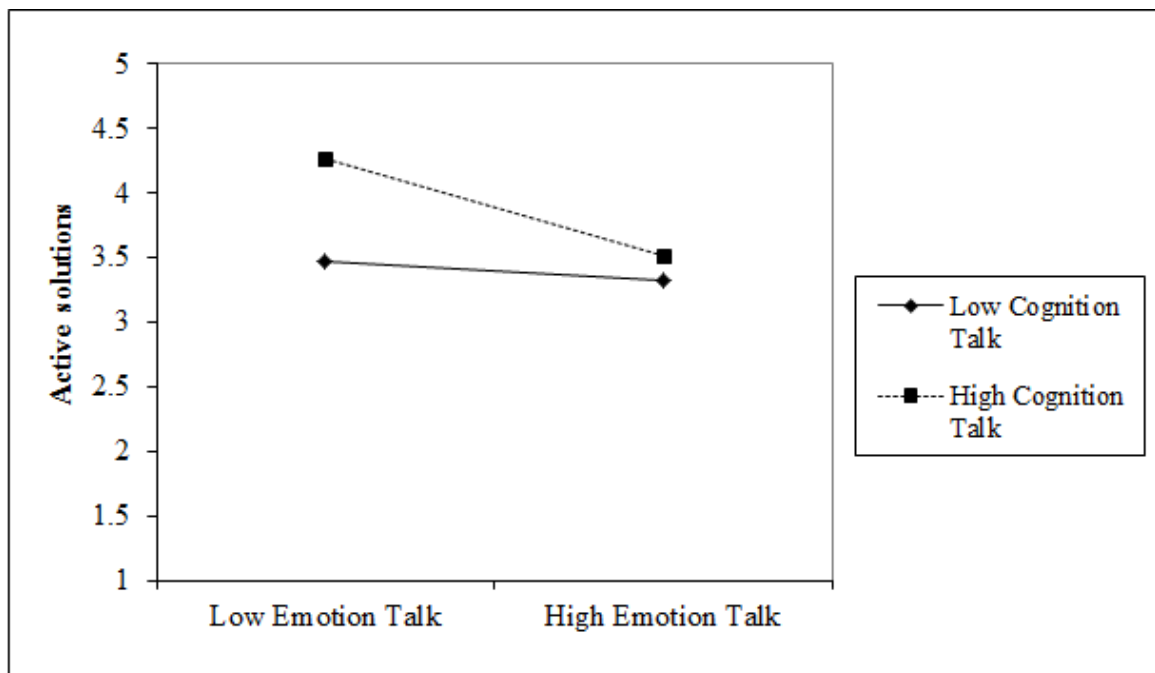


Figure 6.4. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and active solutions

The *fifth set of hypotheses* predicted the impact of talk on the victim-centred outcome of psychological well-being (PWB). Results for this set of hypotheses are displayed in table 6.6. Hypothesis 5a predicted that emotion talk would be positively related to PWB. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = -.32$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 5b predicted that cognition talk would be positively related to PWB. This hypothesis was supported ($\beta = .20$, $p < .01$). Hypothesis 5c predicted that cognition talk would strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and PWB, such that the relationship would be stronger at higher levels of cognition talk than at lower levels. The two-way interaction between emotion and cognition talk was not significant ($\beta = .05$, $p = ns$). In sum, there was no moderating effect of cognition talk.

Supplementary results from the repeated second time point survey

I re-ran all the above hypotheses with the same variables gathered at the second time point of data (separated by 6 weeks). These results are presented in appendix 9. The results were very similar.

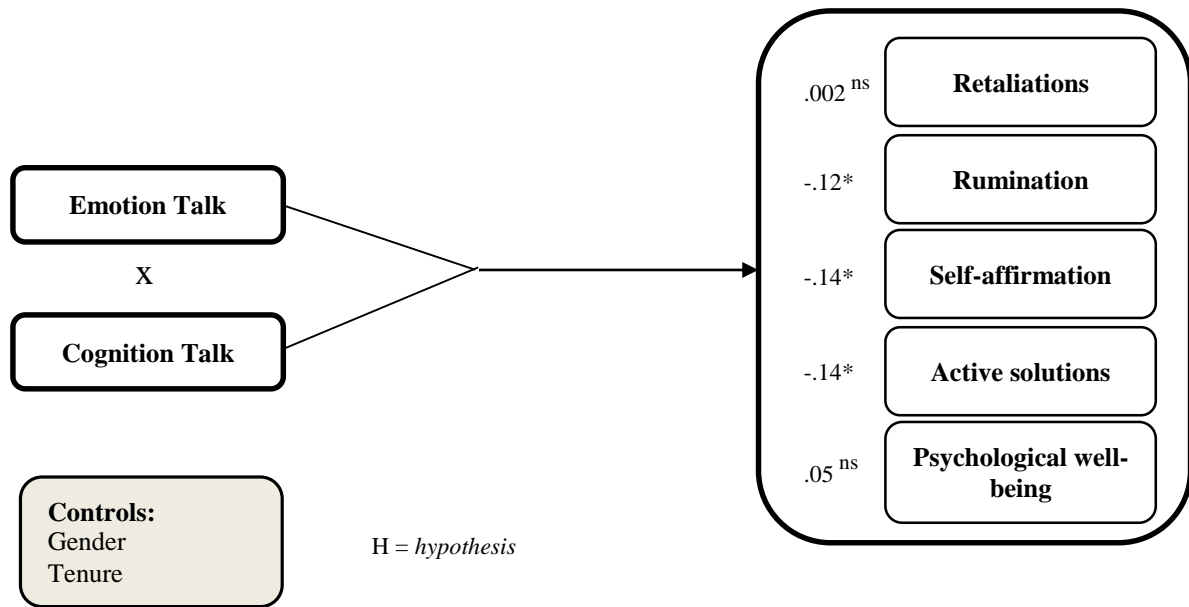
No significant support was found for an interaction between emotion and cognition talk for retaliation, self-affirmation or PWB. However, significant effects were found for rumination and active solutions.

Table 6.6. Moderation analyses: Psychological well-being (hypothesis 5a, b, c)

Dependent variable: Psychological well-being

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	.41	.25	.12	1.60	.43	.24	.13	1.75	.42	.25	.13	1.70
Tenure	.01	.009	.10	1.39	.01	.009	.15	1.96	.01	.009	.15	1.90
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					-.18	.05	-.30	-3.31**	-.19	.05	-.32	-3.35**
Cognition Talk					.10	.05	.17	1.92	.11	.05	.20	2.01**
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									.02	.03	.05	.627
<i>Adj R²</i>		.02				.07 *				.07		
ΔR^2		.03				.06 *				.00		
<i>F</i> Δ		2.239				5.484 *				.393		
<i>df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$



Moderation results. Coefficients are unstandardised. * $p < .05$; ^{ns} = not significant

Figure 6.5. Schematic hypothesised model of the consequences of talk in the context of workplace injustice with moderation coefficients.

6.4 Discussion

“The memory of an injury to feelings is corrected by an objective evaluation of the facts, consideration of one’s actual worth, and the like.”

Freud (1893/1962: 31, italics added)

As early as the nineteenth century Freud recognised the value of talk which coupled emotional discharge with an objective evaluation of one’s negative experience. A steady trajectory of clinical and social psychological research attests to such a ‘talking cure’, and it is this enquiry that has formed the basis of this chapter’s investigation, conducted in the context of workplace injustice. Overall, an array of insights emanate

from this chapter shedding light on the interplay between emotion and cognition talk, as well as its interaction on victim-relevant outcomes.

This chapter began by arguing that a ‘talking cure’ is effective when emotional discharge is coupled with cognitive processing. In translating this to the present thesis, and drawing on clinical and social psychological literatures, I have posited that talk will lead to effective – i.e. positive outcomes for a victim – when emotion talk is coupled with cognition talk; in other words, when victims of workplace injustice are able to release their frustrations as well as organise their thoughts and re-evaluate their experience. There are three main sets of findings arising from the present study and each will be discussed in turn: a) significant interaction effects for three victim-centred outcomes of rumination, self-affirmation and active solutions which point to an effect I am referring to as an *asymmetry effect*, b) significant main effects for emotion and cognition talk which I am referring to as a *symmetry effect*, and, c) no significant interaction effects for two victim-centred outcomes of retaliation and psychological well-being.

Evidence of “asymmetry effects”: Significant interaction effects for three victim-centred outcomes of rumination, self-affirmation and active solutions

Significant interaction effects were found for three victim-centred outcomes: rumination, self-affirmation and active solutions. A consistent pattern of findings was uncovered in relation to each of these outcomes, and these will be commented upon in turn.

Rumination

Rumination is an intrusive pattern of thoughts which is argued as hindering one's ability to attend to other matters (Martin & Tesser, 1996). An interaction effect certainly showed that the presence of cognition talk weakened the association between emotion talk and rumination – in other words, when high levels of cognition talk and emotion talk are engaged in together, there is less rumination overall. However, a closer inspection of the findings showed significant slope results at lower levels of cognition talk. In particular, there is an interesting pattern of results when lower levels of cognition talk are coupled with increasing emotion talk. What is evident is that when victims of injustice engaged in *less* cognition talk and *less* emotion talk simultaneously, then ruminative thinking was also low: in other words, less venting on the part of a victim as well as less re-evaluation of their unjust experience, led to victims thinking less about their unjust experience. This finding in itself holds intuitive appeal – if a victim is not focused on talking about their experience a great deal, then the opportunity for ruminative thinking to occur is fairly low. However, when victims vented and released their frustrations more – such that they were evidencing increasing levels of emotion talk - then low levels of cognition talk - evident in talking less about reframing, re-evaluating and moving past one's unjust experience - did not have the desired effect of dissipating rumination. Rather, the pairing of *greater* emotional talk and *lesser* cognition talk had the effect of *increasing* rumination.

This result is interesting because it provides an insight into the interplay between emotion and cognition talk that is not referenced in current literatures. Put simply, as

the emotional intensity of one's talk increases, then the presence of low levels of cognition talk are not helpful because they do not assist with lessening rumination. We can ask therefore whether talking more about frustrations and anger (high emotion talk) has the effect of **drowning out** the effects of even a little amount of talk that centres on the notion of finding solutions to one's predicament? Intuitively this question has merit. If we imagine a victim of workplace injustice consistently and angrily venting their emotions, and only thinking about re-evaluation of their experience sporadically, then a preponderance of negative emotions will work to fuel continuous ruminative thoughts dissolving any fruitful impact of cognition talk. Inadvertently, this finding provides support for the long-theorised assertion in clinical psychology that prolonged anger only serves to exacerbate tension in the long run (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999).

Self-affirmation

Comparable results are evident with regards to the victim-centred outcomes of self-affirmation and active solutions. Self-affirmation embodies the idea that individuals are driven to maintain a positive self-image, particularly when it is threatened (Baumeister, 1982; Steele, 1988). An interaction effect was significant but the direction of slopes showed a distinctly different pattern to what was predicted, once again. The overall results appear to be impacted by increasing levels of emotional intensity characterising a victim's talk. Indeed, what my findings show are two sets of key results. First, when victims engage in talking about their thoughts pertaining to an injustice, such that they consider re-framing and re-evaluating their experience, and they do so in combination with *lower* levels of venting, then they do engage in reaffirming their sense of self.

Second, such self-affirmation efforts decline as the levels of venting increase, regardless of the amount of cognition talk engaged in. Indeed, rather than victims of injustice feeling and engaging in greater self-affirmation after engaging in a combination of emotion and cognition talk – as clinical and social psychological literature indicates – my findings show the reverse is true: at increasing levels of emotion talk, the impact of cognition talk appears to dissipate, and this is particularly true for higher levels of cognition talk. Specifically, as the degree of emotion talk that victims engaged in increased – such that they vented a great deal about their experience – then regardless of the degree of re-framing and re-evaluation of their unjust experience they did (that is, cognition talk) - they affirmed and restored a sense of their self, less and less. This finding is particularly evident at higher levels of cognition talk, which were predicted to strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and self-affirmation, such that victims engaged in greater affirmations of their worth. The results of this chapter actually show that at increasing levels of emotional intensity – that is, when one continues to vent their emotional frustrations about an injustice – high levels of cognition talk, evident as increased efforts by a victim to re-frame, re-evaluate and think about a solution – actually function to limit self-affirmation efforts. Results show overall that victims of injustice were not able to restore their sense of self at increasing levels of cognition talk.

Again, this result is interesting because it once again sheds light on an asymmetry effect between both types of talk. Put simply, as the emotional intensity of one's talk increases, the presence of cognition talk – particularly high levels of it – is not helpful in assisting victims with re-affirming their sense of self. This finding, though the reverse

of what was predicted, also holds intuitive appeal. We can imagine a scenario wherein the perpetual venting of one's frustration will work to **drown out** attempts to engage in the positive act of restoring one's sense of self damaged through an act of injustice. In other words, emotional intensity exacerbates emotion tension (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999).

Active solutions

A search for active solutions is defined as taking steps to ameliorate the impact of a negative situation by generating solutions and acting upon them. The findings from this study show a similar differential impact of high/low cognition talk on high/low emotion talk. An interaction effect was significant but the direction of slopes showed a distinctly different pattern to what was predicted. Once again, the results of this victim-centred outcome are impacted by increasing levels of emotional intensity characterising a victim's talk. Two sets of results are pertinent once again. First, when victims talk more about reframing, re-evaluating and finding a way out of their unjust experience (i.e. *high* levels of cognition talk) in the presence of talking less about their strong negative emotions (i.e. *low* levels of emotion talk), then there is an increased and higher search for active solutions. In other words, there is a positive impact of cognition talk on active solutions, but this impact is evident at *low* levels of emotion talk specifically. Second, the search for active solutions declines as the levels of venting increase, regardless of the amount of cognition talk engaged in. Indeed, rather than victims of injustice feeling and engaging in a greater search for solutions after engaging in a combination of emotion and cognition talk – as clinical and social psychological

literature indicated – my findings show the reverse: increasing levels of emotion talk dissolve the impact of cognition talk and this is particularly true for higher levels of cognition talk.

In sum, as the degree of emotion talk that victims engaged in increased – such that victims of injustice were venting a great deal about their experience – then regardless of the extent of re-framing and re-evaluation of their unjust experience they did (that is, cognition talk) - they were searching for solutions less and less. As with self-affirmation, this finding is particularly evident at higher levels of cognition talk, which were predicted to strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions. Results show overall that victims of injustice were not able to increase their search for a way out of the injustice predicament at increasing levels of cognition talk.

What we are seeing with these results, once again, is a similar pattern between how cognition and emotion talk operate. Specifically, talking more about reframing one's experience and finding a solution to move forward is effective in terms of increasing one's engagement in the search for active solutions, but only in the presence of less venting (i.e. low emotion talk). In the presence of more venting (i.e. high emotion talk), any effect of cognition talk on one's search for active solutions dissipates. We can once again ask whether, for victims of workplace injustice, talking more about their strong emotions has the effect of **drowning out** the influence of cognition talk?

In summarising findings in relation to rumination, self-affirmation and active solutions, what this study provides evidence of is what I will refer to as an **asymmetry** effect between high and low level of both types of talk, emotion and cognition. In other words, cognition talk appears to be most effective at low levels of emotion talk, and less effective at higher levels of emotion talk. Theoretically this finding points to the idea that victims of workplace injustice will reap greater benefits relating to positive recovery outcomes, when their levels of venting decrease and thoughts about how to move past an injustice increase. Otherwise, high levels of venting drown out any potential beneficial effects of cognition talk. One can argue that this finding is instinctive, and indeed it is. Theoretically, it has been alluded to wherein scholars posit that prolonged emotion discharge exacerbates tension (Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999). And, to my knowledge, only one experimental study has alluded to such an effect. Murray et al. (1989) found that recovery (in the form of self-esteem changes) was most prominent in those subjects whose pattern of talk over a four-day period showed signs of decreased emotion expression and increased cognitive changes. The present study makes an added contribution to this research, producing complimentary and novel insights from the realm of workplace injustice. It concurs with clinical and social psychological research that both emotional discharge and cognitive processing are pertinent to recovery; while the former allows for a release of negative emotions which would otherwise cause distress through inhibition, the latter allows for the re-evaluation which provides a necessary focus to move on. The added contribution of the present study is in its elucidation of how the differing levels of emotion and cognition talk function in a real workplace setting. This notion merits further investigation.

Evidence of “symmetry effects”: Significant main effects for emotion and cognition talk

In addition to results from an interaction of emotion and cognition talk, findings pertaining to the direct (main effects) impact of emotion and cognition talk on victim-centred outcomes are also noteworthy. As expected, both types of talk were found to predict rumination and PWB. However, interestingly, only emotion talk was positively related to retaliation, and only cognition talk was positively related to self-affirmation and active solutions. There appears to be an interesting dichotomy at work here which links the type of talk with a specific type of outcome. Specifically, emotion talk appears to be a key driver of a largely emotional driven outcome – retaliation – with cognition talk triggering largely cognitive outcomes – self-affirmation and active solutions. These results were replicated for the second time point of data (presented in appendix 9): emotion talk was a driver of retaliation, with cognition talk triggering self-affirmation and active solutions. These results are interesting since what was hypothesised was that both types of talk would independently lead to positive benefits for each of the five victim-centred outcomes posited in this chapter.

In making sense of these findings, one can argue that they also carry intuitive and theoretical appeal. Since emotion talk embodies a victim’s pent-up frustration it will naturally lead to engagement in outcomes that correspondingly, and perhaps largely, embody affect. Similarly, cognition talk embodies a victim’s attempts at reframing and re-evaluating their injustice experience with attempts to find a solution, actions that will naturally lead to engagement in outcomes that correspondingly embody judgement and decision making. In other words, there is a differential effect with regards to the direct

impact of talk; such an effect I have termed a **symmetry** effect, a term that encapsulates the pattern of similarity between the type of talk and its effect on outcomes. Given the outcomes that this effect manifests itself on – retaliation, self-affirmation and active solutions – though they clearly have emotional and cognitive undertones, there is arguably a preponderance of either one of the other. Retaliation is more often than not construed as an emotional outlet for a victim's anger; self-affirmation, though driven by one's thwarted sense of self ('*I feel* like I have been disrespected') is construed as a cognitive judgement about oneself; and active solutions, though triggered by a victim's state of perceived injustice ('This is unfair!'), is similarly construed as an outcome driven by problem solving and cognitive processing.

In sum, the preliminary findings from this chapter seem to indicate that both emotion and cognition talk impact certain victim-centred outcomes of relevance in a symmetrical fashion. These findings are of relevance since they support as well as challenge the theoretical contentions of this study. First, with regards to 'supporting' theoretical contentions is the finding of the positive association between emotion talk and retaliation; it was predicted that the association between emotional talk and retaliation would be attenuated in the presence of cognition talk. Though there was no support for this interaction effect, if future research similarly does not find an interaction effect, we may speculate whether emotion talk alone has the effect of increasing retaliatory intentions, with no attenuating impact evident from cognition talk. Does this mean that feelings of retaliation are so strong that cognition talk can play no part in this outcome at all? Or, do these findings perhaps point to a missing link of time such that early on 'in

the heat of the moment' the presence of emotion talk is so grave that cognition talk has no role to play, until perhaps these feelings have dissipated? This notion was alluded to above in the findings for an *asymmetry* between the roles played by both types of talk. This finding warrants much closer attention in future research because it has a bearing on whether talk can actually mitigate a victim's engagement in this outcome which can be both emotionally and cognitively taxing for a victim and lead to potentially negative implications for him/her in the eyes of the organisation.

Second, with regards to 'challenging' theoretical contentions are the findings of the association between cognition talk and self-affirmation and active solutions. Though it was predicted that the presence of both types of talk would confer benefits, it appears that with cognitively focused outcomes, cognition talk alone may lead to positive benefits for a victim; this is in spite of a significant interaction effect between emotion and cognition talk found for these two outcomes. The notion that cognition talk can lead directly to positive benefits for a victim, without the presence of emotion talk, has been noted in one previous study. Nils & Rimé (2008) found that compared to talking about how one feels about a stressful event, cognitively reframing the event produces recovery (in the form of attenuating distress and rumination). This notion merits future research as if this finding holds, it has significant implications on the role played by emotion talk and the collective impact of emotion and cognition talk.

No significant interaction effects for two victim-centred outcomes of retaliation and psychological well-being

Turning now to the recovery outcomes that did not produce significant results, no effects of significance were found for the combination of emotion and cognition talk on the victim-centred outcomes of retaliation and psychological well-being (PWB). With regards to retaliation, one reason for such non-significant findings might pertain to social desirability bias, which refers to the need for social approval (Crowne & Marlowe, 1964). This is the tendency for participants to present themselves in a favourable light, regardless of what they truly feel or think about a topic (Podsakoff et al., 2003). It might be the case that participants in this study were unwilling to be honest about their intentions to retaliate at the time of their experienced injustice – despite my assurances that their responses were confidential – for fear of portraying themselves in an unfavourable light. The problem here is that the concluding results may actually mask the true relationship between talk and retaliation (ibid).

With regards to PWB, this study had hoped to demonstrate the impact of talk on victim-centred recovery that spilled over into one's life, beyond the realm of work. There are three possible reasons for the non-significant interaction findings. First, one could question whether talk has a bearing on recovery at all outside a victim's place of work? Though there may be a case for this, it may be premature to accept this explanation particularly in light of previous studies on disclosure which have demonstrated a positive impact of expression on PWB (i.e. Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009). Second, perhaps the injustice experienced by victims was not 'severe' enough to merit an effect

on their life in general. I did not capture severity but this merits further investigation. And finally, we can turn once again to the importance of time. Studies that have shown the impact of expression on PWB have done so over the course of a few days, or after a one month follow up (Pennebaker & O’Heeron, 1984; Segal et al., (in press); Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009). There is merit in the idea that assessments of this outcome are best captured over a period of time; though a victim may disagree with the survey item for PWB ‘the conditions of my life are excellent’ at the moment an injustice occurs, perhaps as talk progresses – allowing victims to emotionally discharge and cognitively process the event – they feel greater positivity about their lives.

6.4.1 Limitations

This study is exposed to the same limitations as were outlined for chapter 5. In sum, this study also used self-report data to investigate the consequences of talk in the workplace, leaving it open to criticism of same-source and same-time bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003). As with chapter 5, however, greater impetus to the findings of this study can be gauged from the notion that the results of this study were replicated with the repeated survey conducted at the second time point (appendix 9). Both the previous chapter and this one also leave open the issue of causality: though it is tempting to infer causality in the findings reported, the cross-sectional nature of the studies’ design, plus the use of retrospective accounts, does not allow for the evaluation of inference. It may well be that the effects uncovered exist in an altogether different way. And finally, a limitation is that a new measure of talk was deployed, which has not been used in previous studies.

A limitation central to this particular study is that it did not account for the role of time. Talk has been construed as a static construct given that victims of injustice were asked to think back to an injustice they experienced and how they reacted in response to it. It is perhaps naïve to assume that working through an injustice is so straightforward and static. Tangential evidence in the coping domain refers to the events that unfold between a person and their environment after a stressful encounter as dynamic (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985); in other words, they are ever changing. What is missing from this study is an analysis of time and how both talk and its impact on outcomes unfolds as a function of time. An episode of recovering from injustice may not be so linear, but rather an ongoing process of experiencing feelings and cognitions as an event is worked through. Such questions that beg investigation include: are both types of talk engaged in, in one day? Do victims fluctuate in the types of talk they engage in? If so, how does this bear upon immediate as well as more temporal outcomes? Again, these are complex questions which drive at the heart of how an episode of talk unfolds. It is suggested that the best methodological approach to assess such questions is experienced sampling, and this is outlined below. Not only will it avoid some of the problems inherent in the present study's design, such as measurement context effects (as expanded on below), but it will allow the capturing of the phenomena of interest as and when it occurs, thus permitting analysis of how an episode of talk unfolds on a daily basis.

A final limitation is that this study did not account for the role of a listener, that is, the person whom a victim seeks out and engages in conversation about their injustice with. The listener has been construed as a 'significant other' in studies on talk (i.e. Nils &

Rimé, 2012; Rimé, 2009), which assert that talk is engaged in with a myriad of people, from friends, to family members and colleagues. Chapter 4 in the present thesis similarly denotes that talk takes place both at work with colleagues and managers, as well as outside work with friends and family members. The question thus left unanswered by the present study is: to what extent can a response(s) from a significant other shape a victim's actions post-injustice? For example, would a significant other who concurs with a victim's anger about an injustice spur a victim on to engage in retaliatory behaviours? Alternatively, would a significant other who attempts to pacify a victim by presenting him/her with a solution to their predicament, help to encourage a victim towards a more 'constructive' response, for themselves and their organisation? To my knowledge, no study to date has considered the role of the significant other in shaping a victim's response. This is, however, a key area for investigation since talk does not take place in a void – it is a social act that occurs with another, and this significant other is likely to have an impact on not only how a victim construes their experience of injustice, but how they decide to subsequently react.

6.4.2 Suggestions for future research

Similar to chapter 5, this chapter taps into a nascent area of enquiry, leaving us with perhaps more questions than answers. There are three primary areas of further study. First, the idea of an 'asymmetry' between both emotion and cognition talk, in their combined impact upon recovery, is worthy of future investigation. This is a novel contribution to the study of talk as a recovery intervention. Though clinical and social psychological literatures allude to the beneficial impact of a combination of emotional

discharge and cognitive processing – construed as both emotion and cognition talk in the present chapter – what the present study demonstrates that this combination is not so straightforward. Specifically, cognition talk – whether it is engaged in a little or a lot – can be drowned out by high levels of venting. Put another way, at higher levels of emotional intensity, the effects of cognition talk are cancelled out. This insight merits further investigation. As a starting point, researchers must seek to replicate findings of this study.

The second area of future research pertains to exploring the notion of time as both talk and recovery outcomes unfold. Explanations in light of this temporal effect were asserted in relation to some of the non-significant findings of this chapter. Indeed, it can be argued that this study has been limited in its ability to fully capture recovery given its reliance on retrospective and cross-sectional data. Might there have been a greater significance of findings – particularly for those recovery outcomes that are more transient in nature, such as self-affirmation and PWB – had talk and its ensuing impact on recovery been measured in ‘real-time’ as it unfolded, and captured again at a later interval? This characteristic is evident in many studies on disclosure and expression which report results of significance (Donnelly & Murray, 1991; Segal & Murray, 1994; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009). An ideal study would be a daily-dairy (experienced sampling methodology) which is conducted in relation to an injustice occurring on day 1, with talk and its impact on recovery outcomes tracked over the course of future days. Not only would this allow a researcher to capture the unfolding impact of talk and recovery, but it would avoid issues of retrospective bias inherent in the present study.

Future research should also focus on disentangling the direct versus interactional effects of the two types of talk, on outcomes of benefit for a victim of injustice. This follows on from the findings for *symmetry* in the above discussion. With regards to cognition talk, are there particular outcomes for which an interaction between emotion and cognition talk is unnecessary in producing benefits? With regards to retaliatory intentions, to what degree does cognition talk play a role if at all, and is this outcome driven solely by emotion talk with no mitigating effect of either cognition talk, or an interaction of the two types of talk? And for which outcomes does a combination of emotion and cognition talk have the most optimal benefits?: in this study, this was found in relation to both rumination and PWB. A replication of the results from this study is required and an experimental setting may be the best route, since it would allow a researcher to control the impact of a predictor variable on outcomes of interest. For example, a researcher can set up different conditions of talk (emotion only, cognition only and a combination of the two) and measure its impact of victim-centred outcomes.

And finally, future research should consider the extent of the role played by a significant other on a victim's responses to injustice. Such questions as the following provide fruitful avenues for research. Does the type of listener reaction trigger particular responses in victims: for example, can a significant other 'fuel the fire' versus 'pacify' the situation? When does a victim seek out a specific type of significant other and what bearing does this have on their experience of injustice and any subsequent response? For example, when might a victim turn to a friend versus a legal representative such as a lawyer? Might this be dictated by the severity of an injustice, such that the greater the

severity felt, the more likely a victim is to turn to the law? And furthermore, what differences might there be in how a victim responds in this case? All in all, this avenue of future research should seek to uncover the circumstances under which input from others may shape a victim's reaction to their injustice experience.

6.5 Conclusion

The present study has taken this thesis a further step closer to unravelling 'victim puzzles' (Shapiro, 2001) in light of workplace injustice. This study has demonstrated that, indeed, a combination of emotion and cognition talk impacts a victim's recovery from the negative effects of a workplace injustice; however, recovery is not as clear cut as perhaps articulated theoretically at the start of this chapter. One of the novel findings of this chapter points to an asymmetry effect such that higher levels of emotional intensity (evident in higher levels of emotion talk) actually function to cancel out the positive effects of cognition talk. A further finding hints at a symmetry effect between the type of talk and a given outcome: whether there exists congruence between emotion and cognition talk and outcomes rooted in either affect or cognitive processing respectively, merits further investigation.

Given an understanding of both the antecedents and consequences of talk in the context of workplace unfairness, in a real field setting, both this chapter as well as the previous pave the way for one final study which explores the impact of **time** in the form of exploring a victim's daily experiences of injustice and talk. It is to this we now turn in chapter 7.

Chapter 7:

Daily diary study of talk in the context of workplace injustice: an exploratory investigation

7.1 Chapter Overview

The previous three empirical chapters have contributed to this thesis by a) confirming the presence of talk in the context of workplace injustice, b) highlighting that anger and justice needs operate as antecedents to talk, and, c) evidencing that both emotion and cognition talk interact to impact victim recovery from injustice. Overall, they provide support for the integration of organisational justice and talk, as a new field of enquiry. This chapter presents findings from study 3, a ten-day daily diary study which sought to replicate and extend the results from chapters 5 and 6 in the context of a within-subjects design. The chapter asks: *at a daily level, what is the cognitive, emotional and behavioural journey comprising a victim's experience of recovery following a workplace injustice?*

7.2 Introduction

“Sometimes I talk every day really, about work, the good and the bad.”

“I’m unfairly treated by people usually every day, this is what I talk about when I get home.”

Study participants describing their experiences of unfairness at work in interviews gathered as part of Study 1 (chapter 4)

The overall aim of this thesis is to explore whether the mechanism of talk can assist victims of workplace injustice with recovery from the negative effects of unfairness. The previously presented empirical studies have each attempted to shed light on this by exploring a different angle of this research aim. However, each chapter has relied predominantly on a cross-sectional research design as its methodological tool. In other

words, so far, I have relied on a between-subjects design (i.e. comparing how participants within a sample differ from each other) to tap into the impact of injustice on talk and recovery. While providing an array of interesting and novel results which contribute to the justice literatures' understanding of injustice as experienced through the eyes of a victim, one can question whether these results can be replicated within the context of a victim's 'real-time' experience of injustice? Specifically, would comparable results be attained in the context of a within-subject design which investigated the impact of injustice on talk and recovery at a *daily* level? These questions provide the starting point for this chapter which deploys a ten-day daily diary study design.

Analysis of daily 'real-time' experiences of injustice on the day that they occur are pertinent for three reasons. First, Barclay and Saldhana (in press) argue that in order to explore the process of recovery within the context of workplace injustice, there needs to be an empirical paradigm shift. Current methodology pertaining to responses and remedies to managing injustice (i.e. Skarlicki & Latham, 1996; Greenberg, 2006; Reb et al., 2006) tends to rely on cross-sectional data captured in a between-subjects design. The problem with such studies is that they are open to retrospective bias in participants' accounts of their unjust experience, as well as limiting any within-person analysis pertaining to how victim's respond on the day their injustice occurs. In heeding Barclay and Saldhana's calls, this chapter shifts its methodological focus to a consideration of unjust experiences at a daily level in an attempt to gather deeper, richer and more meaningful data.

Second, the nature of the questions we are asking as researchers interested in a victim's recovery process – for example, what mechanisms underlie a victim's experience of injustice; how does recovery operate in impacting outcomes of relevant to a victim - necessitate a research methodology that can provide rich data which can add layers of depth to our understanding. Diary studies occur in the natural environment (such as a work environment) where events and experiences emerge in real-time, allowing for more robust analyses of data pertaining to immediate reactions to specific work events, such as injustice (Ilies, Schwind & Heller, 2007). Such immediate reactions aid a more in-depth understanding of both antecedents and consequences of recovery interventions since they capture the impact of transitory person and situation factors.

Finally, it has been posited that talk is a natural occurrence which emanates immediately following an emotional experience. Indeed, research reported by Rimé (2009) suggests that the modal pattern for talking, following a negative emotional encounter, is on the day an event occurs: this pattern of talking was reported in approximately 60% of cases across eight independent studies. This was evidenced in further studies which deployed a diary methodology in the context of everyday emotional life experiences; over 60% of talking occurred on the day an emotional experience took place (Rimé et al., 1998). The implications of this research for the present study is such that if talk occurs on the day an injustice event is experienced, then in the interests of drawing valid and robust conclusions about the impact of injustice on talk and its influence in turn on victim-centred outcomes, it makes sense to capture each of these phenomena as they occur at a daily level.

The present study therefore seeks to both extend and replicate findings from chapters 5 and 6. It seeks to *extend* by complementing the cross-section survey methodology of the two previous chapters, with insights gathered from how a victim's daily experience of workplace injustice is associated with their engagement in emotion or cognition talk, as well as with adjacent proximal outcomes. By doing so, I seek to make a contribution in analysing a person's trajectory immediately following their experience of injustice, answering such questions as do they talk on a daily basis? If so, what type of talk? What are the consequences of such talk? This chapter seeks to *replicate* by similarly considering both the antecedents and consequences of the phenomenon of talk. I aim to investigate whether the advantages of capturing such variables of interest at a daily level produce consistency in the nature of results uncovered retrospectively pertaining to a victim's recovery post-injustice.

In this study, similar to chapter 6, I have construed recovery (again) in the spirit of this thesis' aim of contributing to a more effortful research agenda by focusing on recovery of the victims of injustice – that is, the process through which a victim manages his/her unjust experience as they work towards some kind of resolution for themselves (Shapiro, 2001; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009; Weiss & Rupp, 2011). My focus on recovery includes the cognitive, emotional and behavioural process through which an individual progresses by engaging in talk with others; in other words, I aim to capture the daily unfolding dynamic of a workplace violation through the eyes of a victim at its receiving end. I will elaborate more on such recovery outcomes in the sections below.

Figure 7.1 depicts the model for investigation. Two sets of exploratory research questions guide this study. These pertain to the antecedents and consequences of talk. Each will be discussed in turn.

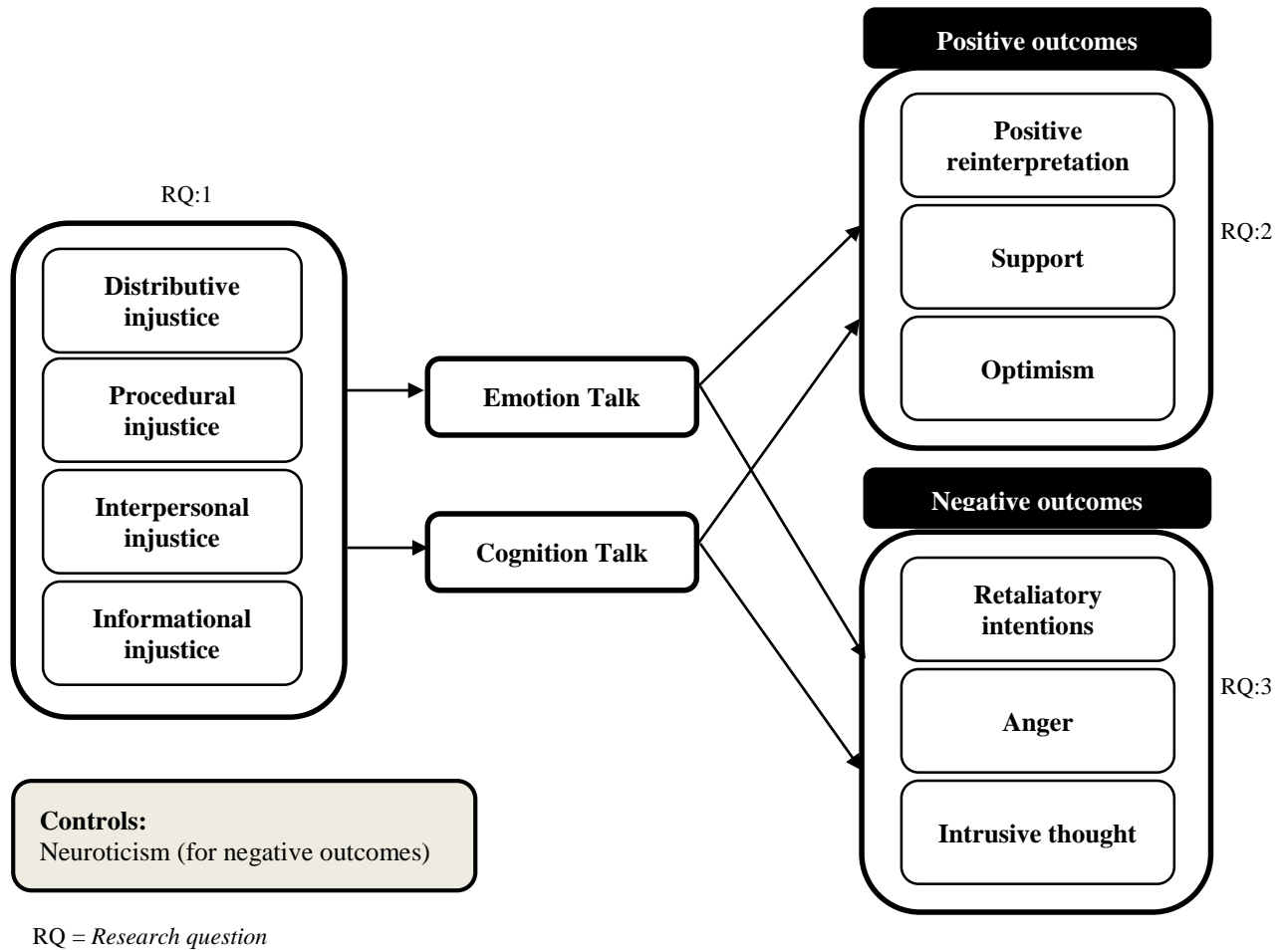


Figure 7.1. Conceptual model for investigation through a ten-day daily diary study

7.3 Antecedents of talk

Chapter 5 found evidence linking overall injustice perceptions to both emotion and cognition talk, via anger and thwarted justice needs. Fairness theory (Folger &

Cropanzano, 1998, 2001) and affective events theory (AET, Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996) provide the theoretical backdrop to the overall association between injustice and talk.

Fairness theory asserts that perceptions of injustice are evaluated through a counterfactual thought process, which involves an individual appraising: would the situation have been preferable had the perpetrator acted differently, could the perpetrator have carried out an alternative course of action and should the perpetrator have acted differently? Through this process a fairness judgement is arrived at, with perceptions of unfairness emanating from a thought process which determines that a positive outcome would, could and should have been possible. AET provides the theoretical link between felt injustice and talk. The theory posits that workplace events (of which injustice is an example) drive emotions, attitudes and behaviours such as talk. What characterises talk is not only its emotional component (particularly emotion talk), but that it is frequently cited as a natural occurrence following one's encounter with a negative experience, in both clinical and social psychological literatures (Pennebaker et al., 2001; Rimé, 2009)

The present study explores the influence of specific types of injustice on talk, in a main effects model (Colquitt et al., 2001). Four different types of (in)justice capture the fairness of outcomes (distributive in-justice), procedures (procedural injustice), sensitivity of interpersonal treatment (interpersonal injustice) and communication of decisions (informational injustice). The rationale for this is to gauge the relative influence of each justice dimension, exploring which is more salient in the daily context

of injustice, and indeed, whether there are any differential effects in the influence of these justice dimensions on both types of talk. The research question to be explored is thus:

Research Question 1: *What are the unique effects of each justice dimension on emotion and cognition talk at a daily within-person level in the context of workplace injustice?*

7.4 Talk and its daily consequences

Talk and its consequences, as depicted in figure 7.1, were chosen in order to further develop findings uncovered in chapters 5 and 6. Specifically, this study makes two changes with respect to how it has previously investigated talk and its specific consequences.

First, with respect to talk, mixed results were uncovered for the significance of cognition in chapter 5; with the first time point of data, whilst anger and lowered justice needs led to a victim's engagement in emotion talk, they did not lead to engagement in cognition talk. However, with the second time point of data captured (appendix 8) significant results were found for cognition talk. In chapter 6, the combination of emotion and cognition talk (emotional discharge and cognitively processing an event) was found to impact three of the five outcomes posited. In order to delve deeper into how the phenomenon of talk functions in the context of workplace injustice, the present study seeks to explore the respective influence of each type of talk (emotion and cognition) on consequences, separately, in a daily context of injustice. The rationale for this is to increase our understanding of the phenomenon of talk by breaking talk down into its

constituent components. This approach therefore seeks to build on the previous two chapters by exploring whether certain victim-centred outcomes are driven by one type of talk versus another. For example, does emotion talk, embodying one's pent-up strong negative emotions, drive retaliatory outcomes more than cognition talk, which encompasses a victim reframing, re-evaluating and searching for a solution to their predicament? Results from chapter 6 (table 6.2) indicate that emotion talk had a significant positive relationship with retaliation but cognition talk did not. Having addressed and found support for such a result in a cross-sectional study design, I explore whether the results translate into a daily context. In tandem with breaking down organisational justice into its four components, it is hoped that by dissecting talk, justice scholars may learn more about the utility of talk as a recovery mechanism in a daily context.

In this study I have also more explicitly split recovery outcomes into *positive* and *negative*. Though recovery is defined in this thesis as efforts towards restoration in the positive sense for victims of injustice (positive outcomes), I want to explore whether recovery can also entail engagement in such outcomes that may be cognitively, emotionally and behaviourally 'harmful' to a victim in order to provide robust insights into the effectiveness of talk as a recovery mechanism: I have construed such outcomes as negative. Though talk is predicted to enhance recovery – since its purpose is to permit emotional discharge arising from a workplace violation as well as the meaningful processing of the event – might the reverse be true? Can one type of talk, or both, lead

to engagement in adverse outcomes for a victim on a daily basis? These assertions will be elaborated on in the respective sections below.

7.4.1 Positive outcomes following talk

In extending the array of outcomes deployed following talk in chapter 6 and focusing more explicitly on how recovery may operate, this study explores the association between emotion and cognition talk and the following ‘positive’ outcomes: positive reinterpretation, support and optimism. Each of these outcomes is listed as ‘positive’ given its potential to impact a victim’s recovery process in a beneficial manner, as opposed to detrimentally. I ask whether one or more of these outcomes follows either one or both types of talk in the context of injustice measured at a daily level and more explicitly whether positive outcomes can comprise a victim’s recovery post-injustice.

Positive reinterpretation pertains to one’s tendency to manage an injustice by construing it in positive terms. It has been demonstrated as an outcome variable in the context of coping with adverse life events (Carver et al., 1989). For example, reinterpretation entails looking for something good in what has happened as opposed to dwelling on an unfavourable reality. One’s thoughts and actions are oriented towards not thinking about the unjust event since this may perpetuate distress.

Support is construed in the social psychological work of Rimé (2009) as one of the more positive outcomes of talking about a negative life encounter, albeit, with only temporary benefits for the talker. Support is loosely defined as feeling listened to and relieved at

being able to share one's unjust encounter with another. Support as a construct has its roots in the early work of the eminent social psychologist Schachter (1959) whose research demonstrated that seeking support in others is a distress reduction strategy; in other words, in times of undue stress people seek affiliation with others. It is argued that support, harnessed through conversation, assists with in reducing anxiety as well as providing cognitive clarity (Schachter & Klennert, 1982).

And finally, *optimism* is a belief that embodies confidence in the notion that things will work out (Lazarus, 1991). I explore this notion through the use of optimism. Optimism has been described both as a disposition (Scheier & Carver, 1987) and a positive emotion (Fredrickson, Tugade, Waugh & Larkin, 2003). Positive emotions have long been theorised as producing beneficial outcomes for individuals (Folkman, 1997), and are construed as integral to flourishing in adverse contexts. Indeed, Fredrickson et al. (2003) evidence the prevalence of optimism in the wake of crisis situations (in the context of the terrorist attacks in the US in 2001), arguing that though crises can deplete an individuals' resources, people can also feel optimistic and hopeful about the future; they found that those who did, were less like to suffer depressive symptoms in the long run.

These positive outcomes combine cognitive, behavioural and emotional components of a victim's journey respectively. Positive reinterpretation pertains to a cognitive outcome; support to a behavioural outcome; and, optimism, an emotional outcome. They can contribute to recovery in a positive sense since they can assist individuals with

working towards some kind of resolution that involves moving on from an unjust experience. In particular, they are a step towards positive recovery since each of these outcomes construes a negative encounter in positive terms, and by doing so, each should drive an individual closer to doing something actively about their predicament rather than dwelling on it. Indeed, as cited above, research on each of these positive outcomes supports the presence of positive reinterpretation, support and optimism in the context of challenging, negative encounters. Further theoretical support for the notion that each outcome can be beneficial in a challenging, adverse context such as workplace injustice, can be gauged from Fredrickson's (1998, 2001) broaden-and-build theory. This theory notes that whereas negativity – both in emotions and thoughts – narrows an individual's thought-action repertoire, encouraging engagement in actions such as fleeing and disassociating from a situation, positivity broadens an individual's thought-action repertoire such that it encourages exploration, interest and the desire to generate broader ways of thinking. Such positive outcomes, engendered by injustice, therefore contribute to a positive road to recovery. I thus ask:

Research question 2: *To what extent can emotion and cognition talk lead a victim to engage in positive reinterpretation, support and optimism, in the context of injustice at a daily within-person level?*

7.4.2 Negative outcomes following talk

In continuing the theme from previous chapters of focusing on negative outcomes following talk in the context of injustice, the following outcomes were chosen to

represent an alternative focus on a victim's process of recovery: retaliatory intentions, anger and intrusive thought.

Retaliation is a behavioural response to injustice, described as attempts to 'get even' and punish the perpetrator perceived as being responsible for causing harm (Tripp et al., 2002). Intrusive thought is a cognitive response, described as unwarranted and involuntary thoughts which can hinder one's ability to attend to other, everyday matters (Horowitz, Wilner & Alvarez, 1979). This is because intrusion of thought depletes an individual's resources, provoking in them an on-going state of uncertainty about the future (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996). I have added to this an emotional response in the form of anger. Anger is an outward-focused emotion which is described as a demeaning offence against 'me or mine'; it arises when an individual experiences an event as hindering their objectives (Smith et al., 1993). I ask whether one or more of these outcomes follows either one or both types of talk in the context of injustice measured at a daily level. To what degree do these *negative* responses comprise a victim's recovery at a daily within-individual level, immediately in the aftermath of an injustice? Each of these negative outcomes is construed in daily terms, with intrusive thought being measured in a time-lagged fashion in order to ascertain the effects of talk on subsequent days.

Although each of these outcomes can be interpreted as justified actions on behalf of a victim who is 'releasing frustration' or attempting to 'get even', I have conceived of these outcomes as 'negative' in the short-term given their adverse impact on a victim;

these responses are taxing on one's emotional, cognitive and behavioural resources. The release of tension and frustration may satisfy one's needs to 'get it all out', but as clinical psychology theory evidences, negative responses following an adverse outcome, do little more than exacerbate negativity (Geen & Quanty, 1977; Pennebaker & Beall, 1986; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999). It is this, I argue, which will delimit a victim's attempt to pursue recovery. Tangential research on coping similarly delineates that negative responses to dealing with stress, whether emotional, cognitive or behavioural, limit a person's recovery efforts since they prohibit a sense of clarity about what has happened and how to progress, both of which are necessary to 'move on' (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985). In the context of workplace injustice, we can argue that engaging in such negative responses might inhibit recovery since they consume emotional, cognitive and behavioural resources which could otherwise be spent on finding a solution/a way forward. I thus ask:

Research question 3: *To what extent can emotion and cognition talk lead a victim to engage in retaliatory intentions, anger and intrusive thought in the context of injustice at a daily within-person level?*

7.5 Methods

7.5.1 Participants

A convenience sample was deployed for this study. Participants comprised working professionals drawn from three samples: a European bank, an administrative team within a London based university and a convenience sample of working professionals. Data were requested from a team of 9 personnel at the bank, with responses received from 5 indicating a 55% response rate ($N=5$). Data was requested from 12 personnel at

the university with data received from 9, indicating a response rate of 75% response rate ($N=9$). The remainder of the participants were obtained through a convenience sample of my own professional contacts of working personnel ($N=18$). One participant did not complete daily entries for nine consecutive days; this data was removed from the final analysis. The total sample size was therefore 31 participants ($N=31$). All participants provided complete data over the ten days, apart from one person for whom two daily entries were missing. The analysis is based on cases equal 'person days' rather than 'persons': therefore, I obtained a sample size of 30 participants x 10 daily diary entries per participant + 1 participant x 8 entries. This equalled 308 daily observations. This can be considered to be an average sample size, comparable with other diary studies (Conway & Briner, 2002; Briner & Parkinson, 1993).

The average age of participants was 31 years ($SD = 5.33$), and their tenure with their organisations was on average 1.97 years ($SD = 2.26$). Seventy-four percent of the sample was female. The ethnicity of participants was as follows: White/White European (48%), Asian/Asian British (35%), Black/Black British (7%), Mixed race (7%) and Other (3%). 36% of the sample worked in education, 25% in finance, 10% in government (civil service), 7% in advertising, 7% in healthcare, 3% in construction, and 3% in telecoms, with 9% of the sample selecting Other. The majority of participants had a bachelor's degree (42%), with a further 39% having received a post-graduate degree, 3% leaving school with the equivalent of A-levels (age: 16-18 qualification), and a further 10% indicating they were school leavers (left education at age 16); 6% selected Other.

7.5.2 Procedure

The full procedure is outlined in chapter 3. In brief, data were collected via an online survey. A week before the daily survey was initiated, informed consent was obtained online, and participants completed a pre-survey. This pre-survey captured demographic data as well as responses to the neuroticism scale (Level 2 variable). The following week, an automatic email with the survey link embedded in it, was sent to participants at approximately the same time each evening, which was 16.00 hours (Monday-Friday only) for ten days. Each daily link was automatically switched off by midnight on the same day to ensure that each survey was completed on the same day, towards the end of participants' work days, each evening. I inspected time stamps collected for each daily survey completed by each participant, as a way of ensuring adherence to study aims. The inspection revealed that all surveys were completed on the required day, at the end of each working day. Each participant was paid a £10 Amazon gift voucher in exchange for their participation.

7.5.3 Measures

Participants provided ratings of the following variables listed below. They were asked to respond to each of these variables on a daily basis. Intrusive thought was introduced into the survey on day 2, to capture whether talk from the previous day had an impact on intrusive thought on subsequent days.

Given the time constraints involved on behalf of participants completing the daily diary surveys, it was pertinent to keep scales as concise and as short as possible. Therefore, in

line with best practice in published research (e.g., Ilies et al., 2007; Sonnentag et al., 2008; Rodell & Judge, 2009; Sonnentag & Binnewies, 2013), I used shortened scales by reducing the number of items of each scale. I used the highest factor loading items and ensured that the items I chose were representative of each specific scale respectively. The reliability of each of these shortened scales remains high, providing confidence in their psychometric quality.

Distributive injustice. Distributive injustice was measured using three items from Colquitt's (2001) Organisational Justice measure. Each item was prefixed with 'today' to reflect the daily nature of the diary study, with the prefix to each statement asking 'Think about the fairness of the treatment you received from your supervisor/manager today'. Sample items included, 'Today, the outcomes reflect the effort I have put into my work', and 'Today, the outcomes reflect what I have contributed to my work'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. This variable was reverse scored to reflect the nature of one's *injustice* experience. ($\alpha = .95$).

Procedural injustice. Procedural injustice was measured using three items from Colquitt's (2001) Organisational Justice measure. Each item was prefixed with 'today' to reflect the daily nature of the diary study, with prefix to each statement asking 'Think about the fairness you received from your supervisor/manager today'. Sample items included, 'Today, I was able to express my views and feelings during those procedures', and 'Today, I was able to influence the outcome arrived at by those procedures'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. This variable was reverse scored to reflect the nature of one's *injustice* experience. ($\alpha = .89$).

Interpersonal injustice. Interpersonal injustice was measured using three items from Colquitt's (2001) Organisational Justice measure. Each item was prefixed with 'today' to reflect the daily nature of the diary study, with the prefix to each statement asking 'Think about the fairness of the treatment you received from your supervisor/manager today'. Sample items included, 'Today, s/he treated me in a polite manner' and 'Today s/he treated me with dignity'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. This variable was reverse scored to reflect the nature of one's *injustice* experience. Items were reversed in order to attain an injustice score. ($\alpha = .90$).

Informational injustice. Informational injustice was measured using three items from Colquitt's (2001) Organisational Justice measure. Each item was prefixed with 'today' to reflect the daily nature of the diary study, with the prefix to each statement asking 'Think about the fairness of the treatment you received from your supervisor/manager today'. Sample items included, 'Today, s/he was open in his/her communications with me', and 'Today, s/he explained procedures thoroughly'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. This variable was reverse scored to reflect the nature of one's *injustice* experience. Items were reversed in order to attain an injustice score. ($\alpha = .90$).

Emotion Talk. Emotion talk was evaluated using a measure created for this study, as outlined in chapter 4. The four validated items included, 'I let all my negative feelings out' and 'I let off steam'. Respondents were asked to what extent they engaged in talk

following their experience of workplace injustice each day. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *very slightly/not at all* to 5 = *always*. ($\alpha = .89$).

Cognition Talk. Cognition talk was evaluated using a measure created for this study, as outlined in chapter 4. The four validated items included, 'I talked about a possible solution to what I experienced' and 'I talked about actions I can take'. Respondents were asked to what extent they engaged in talk following their experience of workplace injustice each day. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *very slightly/not at all* to 5 = *always*. ($\alpha = .94$).

Positive reinterpretation. Positive reinterpretation was measured using three items from Carver et al's. (1989) Ways of Coping Scale. Each item was written in the past tense to reflect participants' experience as it had passed on each day, and suffixed with 'at work'. Sample items included, 'I tried to grow as a result of the experience at work' and 'I learnt something from the experience at work'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .85$).

Support. Support was measured with two items written for this study. The items were: 'I felt listened to', 'It was a relief to be able to talk'. Participants were asked to 'Think about how you feel today. To what extent are you experiencing the following states right now?' Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .96$).

Optimism. Optimism was measured using three adjectives from Frederickson et al's. (2003) study on positive emotions in a crisis: 'hopeful', 'optimistic' and 'encouraged'. Participants were asked to 'Think about how you feel today. To what extent are you experiencing the following states right now?.' Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *very slightly/not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. ($\alpha = .90$).

Retaliatory intentions. Retaliatory intentions were measured using three items from McCullough et al's. (1998) Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory. The suffix of two items was changed to read "to the person who offended me at work". Sample items included, 'I wish that something bad would happen to the person who offended me at work' and 'I'm going to get even with the person who offended me at work'. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .73$).

Anger. Anger was measured using three adjectives from the hostility subscale of the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule – Expanded Form (PANAS-X; Watson & Clark, 1999). The adjectives were: 'angry', 'irritable', 'disgusted'. Participants were asked to 'Think about how you feel today. To what extent are you experiencing the following states right now?.' Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *very slightly/not at all* to 5 = *extremely*. ($\alpha = .94$).

Intrusive thought. Intrusive thought was measured using four items from the Impact of Events Scale (Horowitz et al., 1979). Each item was adapted to replace the word 'it'

with the words ‘the unfairness’, and participants were asked to respond to the following instructions: ‘...the following statements refer to the thoughts you had about any unfairness you experienced at work yesterday. How frequently did you do the following (i.e. over the past 24 hours)?’ Sample items include, ‘I thought about the unfairness when I didn’t mean to’, ‘I had waves of strong feelings about the unfairness’ and ‘Pictures of the unfairness popped into my mind’. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *never* to 5 = *always*. ($\alpha = .91$).

Neuroticism. Neuroticism was controlled for since one’s propensity to experience negative emotions might influence them to react more strongly to outcomes predicted as following emotion and cognitive talk at a daily level. This is in line with previous research (Aquino et al., 2006) that controlled for the impact of neuroticism on adverse outcomes following injustice. Neuroticism was measured using 6 items from the International Personality Pool (2001). Items included ‘I get stressed out easily’, ‘I worry about things’ and ‘I get upset easily’. Respondents were asked to think about how they would describe themselves and to rate their agreement with the statements. Items were measured on a 5-point scale from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*. ($\alpha = .85$).

The following demographic variables were collected in the pre-survey: age, gender, tenure, ethnicity and education.

7.5.3 Data Analysis

Given the multi-level nature of my data, where day-level data was nested within persons, I used Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) to test the hypotheses (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). HLM models data at two different levels. Level 1 captures ‘within individual’ variance and comprised the repeated daily measures of injustice (distributive, procedural, interpersonal and informational), emotion and cognitive talk, positive reinterpretation, support, optimism, retaliatory intentions, anger and intrusive thought. Level 2 captures ‘between individual’ variance and comprised the measure of neuroticism. In line with best practice (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992; Hofmann, Griffin & Gavin, 2000) Level 1 variables were centred on the mean for participants. This is advisable given that such centring removes all between-individual variance from Level 1 variables. Level 2 variables were centred on the grand mean, representing the overall mean from the averages created for each individual. The analysis deployed a random coefficients regression model using multiple Level 1 day to day predictors.

7.5.4 Results

Preliminary analyses: ICC(1) and confirmatory factor analysis

Prior to testing the exploratory hypotheses, I examined the degree of within-person and between-person variations of the variables. This was important to ensure that there was sufficient variance in the outcome variables to justify modelling the relationships between the outcome and predictor variables over time (Bryk & Raudenbush, 1992). I conducted an intra-class correlation (ICC(1)) for each variable. Intraclass correlations are measures of association with regards to the reliability of a variable, providing

insights into the proportion of variation within data. Table 7.1 presents the percentage variance within-person for each variable. There was substantial within-person variance ranging between 20% for interpersonal injustice and 83% for optimism. These results support the need for a multi-level investigation of the phenomenon, and a multi-level model approach to data analysis.

In order to verify the factor structure of my talk measure, I conducted a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) of both types of talk, emotion and cognition. I ran a CFA in Amos v.21 (Arbuckle, 2012) of a one factor (all items collapsed onto one factor) and two-factor (items loading on their respective emotion or cognitive factor) model of talk. These results are displayed in table 7.2. As expected, the two-factor model of talk provided a superior fit to the data ($\chi^2 [df = 19] = 153.007$, CFI = .95, IFI = .95, SRMR = .57) compared to a one factor model. Following best practice principles outlined by Kline (2005) good model fit can be interpreted when the χ^2/df ratio falls below 3.00, when IFI and CFI values are above .90 and when SRMR falls below 1.0.

Table 7.1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities^a

	Variable	Mean.	SD.	α	ICC(1)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1	Neuroticism	2.98	0.61	.85	-		-.06	-.09	.01	.12	-.13	-.02	-.02	-.15	-.01	.01	.06	-.17
2	Emotion talk	1.55	0.80	.89	.65			.77**	.21	.11	.20	.42*	.04	.65**	-.23	.04	-.41*	.25
3	Cognition talk	1.70	1.01	.94	.45		.69**		.07	-.06	.07	.27	-.12	.72**	-.05	-.14	-.20	.06
4	Distributive injustice	2.91	1.06	.95	.40		.17**	.13*		.68**	.53**	.60**	.52**	.01	-.45*	.44*	-.42*	.01
5	Procedural injustice	3.00	0.86	.89	.40		.11*	.02	.67**		.68**	.71**	.26	-.20	-.18	.19	-.05	.01
6	Interpersonal injustice	2.85	1.27	.90	.20		.18**	.09	.69**	.66**		.85**	.07	-.09	-.12	.02	-.07	.02
7	Informational injustice	3.01	1.16	.90	.25		.19**	.13*	.69**	.66**	.89**		.12	.01	-.19	.10	-.30	.06
8	Positive reinterpretation	2.05	0.91	.85	.77		-.04	-.13*	.13*	.05	.02	.03		-.09	-.01	.96**	-.03	.07
9	Support	2.84	1.36	.96	.59		.52**	.57**	-.01	-.07	-.03	-.01	-.15**		-.18	-.08	-.16	.01
10	Optimism	2.84	1.08	.90	.83		-.01	.09	-.18**	-.10	-.06	-.09	.01	-.04		.06	.43*	-.01
11	Retaliatory intentions	3.96	0.90	.73	.77		-.04	-.17**	.14*	.05	.02	.04	-.89**	-.24**	.05		-.02	.04
12	Anger	4.64	0.59	.94	.58		-.41**	-.20**	-.18**	-.07	-.11*	-.15**	-.05	-.16**	.21**	-.02		-.03
13	Intrusive Thought	2.06	0.91	.91	.77		.16**	.08	-.06	-.04	-.01	-.05	.01	.07	-.02	-.02	.01	

a $n = 31$. Correlations below the diagonal are within-person correlations ($N=308$). Correlations above the diagonal are day between-person correlations ($N=31$)

α : Cronbach's alpha reliabilities

ICC(1): intraclass correlations (percentage of variance at within-person level)

** $p < 0.01$

* $p < 0.05$

Table 7.2. Summary of confirmatory factor analysis on this thesis' talk measure

	X ²	df	Δ X ² /df	SRMR	IFI	CFI
Two-factor model: Emotion and cognitive talk	153.007	19	-	.57	.95	.95
One-factor model: Combine all items	602.406	20	449.399/1	.1174	.77	.76

Results of exploratory research questions

The descriptive statistics, correlations, reliabilities and ICC(1) values are displayed in table 7.1. Figure 7.2 towards the end of this section, provides a diagrammatic overview of the direct path coefficients for the hypothesised model for this chapter.

As seen in table 7.1 there are significant correlations between the study variables. Emotion talk is significantly and positively correlated with all injustice dimensions: distributive ($r = .17, p < .01$), procedural ($r = .11, p < .05$), interpersonal ($r = .18, p < .01$) and informational ($r = .19, p < .01$). Cognition talk is positively associated with distributive ($r = .13, p < .05$) and informational injustice ($r = .13, p < .05$). Emotion talk is significantly and positively associated with the positive outcome of support ($r = .52, p < .01$). With regard to negative outcomes, emotion talk has a significant negative correlation with anger ($r = -.41, p < .01$) and a significant positive correlation with intrusive thought ($r = .16, p < .01$). Cognition talk is significantly and negatively correlated with positive reinterpretation ($r = -.13, p < .05$), and significantly positively correlated with support ($r = .57, p < .01$). With regard to negative outcomes, cognition

talk has significant negative correlations with both retaliatory intentions ($r = -.17$, $p < .01$) and anger ($r = -.20$, $p < .01$).

Research question 1 explored the unique effects of the four different injustice dimensions on emotion and cognition talk at a daily within-person level. Table 7.3 presents results of the HLM analysis.

Table 7.3. HLM Parameter Estimates for within-person model: antecedents of talk

	β	SE	T
Dependent Variable: Emotion Talk			
Distributive injustice	.12	.04	2.828*
Procedural injustice	.10	.04	2.588*
Interpersonal injustice	.10	.04	2.106*
Informational injustice	.07	.05	1.500
Dependent Variable: Cognition Talk			
Distributive injustice	.15	.06	2.444*
Procedural injustice	.05	.08	.677
Interpersonal injustice	.07	.05	1.494
Informational injustice	.08	.05	1.423

** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Results show that within-person, *emotion talk* at a daily level is significantly predicted by distributive ($\beta = .12$, $p < .05$), procedural ($\beta = .10$, $p < .05$) and interpersonal injustice ($\beta = .12$, $p < .05$). There was no significant association for informational injustice ($\beta = .07$, *ns*).

Results also show that within-person, *cognition talk* is significantly predicted by distributive ($\beta = .15$, $p < .05$) injustice only. There was no significant association

between cognitive talk and procedural ($\beta = .05$, *NS*), interpersonal injustice ($\beta = .07$, *NS*) or informational injustice ($\beta = .08$, *NS*).

Research question 2 explored the extent to which daily levels of emotion and cognition talk lead a victim to engage in *positive* outcomes – positive reinterpretation, support and optimism – in the context of injustice, at a daily within-person level. Table 7.4 presents results of the HLM analysis.

Table 7.4. HLM Parameter Estimates for within-person model: positive outcomes of talk

	β	<i>SE</i>	<i>T</i>
Dependent Variable: Positive reinterpretation			
Emotion talk	-.12	.07	-1.621
Cognition talk	-.10	.05	-2.305*
Dependent variable: Support			
Emotion talk	.79	.11	7.165**
Cognition talk	.66	.10	6.788**
Dependent variable: Optimism			
Emotion talk	.23	.09	2.614*
Cognition talk	.17	.06	2.728*

**p<0.01, *p<0.05

Results show that there was no significant association between daily levels of *emotion talk* and positive reinterpretation ($\beta = -.12$, *ns*). Daily levels of emotion talk, are however, significantly positively associated with the positive outcomes of feeling supported ($\beta = .79$, $p<.001$) and optimistic ($\beta = .23$, $p<.05$). Results show that there was a significant negative association between daily levels of *cognition talk* and positive reinterpretation ($\beta = -.10$, $p<.05$), and a positive association between daily levels of cognition talk and feeling supported ($\beta = .66$, $p<.001$) and optimistic ($\beta = .17$, $p<.05$).

Research question 3 explored the extent to which daily levels of emotion and cognition talk led a victim to engage in *negative* outcomes – retaliatory intentions, anger and intrusive thought – in the context of injustice, at a daily within-person level. Table 7.5 presents results of the HLM analysis.

Table 7.5. HLM Parameter Estimates for within-person model: negative outcomes of talk

	β	SE	T
Dependent Variable: Retaliatory intentions			
Emotion talk	-.12	.08	-1.584
Cognition talk	-.14	.05	-2.698*
Dependent variable: Anger			
Emotion talk	-.32	.07	-4.822**
Cognition talk	-.12	.05	-2.399*
Dependent variable: Intrusive Thought^a			
Emotion talk	.40	.10	3.961**
Cognition talk	.41	.10	3.960**

**p< 0.01, *p<0.05. ^a Measured and analysed as a lagged variable on subsequent days

Neuroticism was controlled for in each of these equations in HLM, and was non-significant with regards to retaliatory intentions and intrusive thought for both daily levels of emotion and cognitive talk. Neuroticism was significant with regards to anger, for both daily levels of emotion and cognitive talk, but this result did not change the final HLM results for either type of talk: the results were identical and significant with or without the presence of neuroticism.

Results show that there is no significant association between daily *emotion talk* and retaliatory intentions ($\beta = -.12$, *ns*). Daily levels of emotion talk, are however, significantly negatively associated with the negative outcome of anger ($\beta = -.32$,

$p < .001$). Results also show that daily levels of emotional talk predict intrusive thought on subsequent days ($\beta = .40$, $p < .001$). With regards to *cognition talk* results show that there are significant negative associations between daily cognition talk and retaliatory intentions ($\beta = -.14$, $p < .05$), as well as anger ($\beta = -.12$, $p < .05$). Results also show that daily levels of cognition talk predict intrusive thought on subsequent days ($\beta = .41$, $p < .001$).

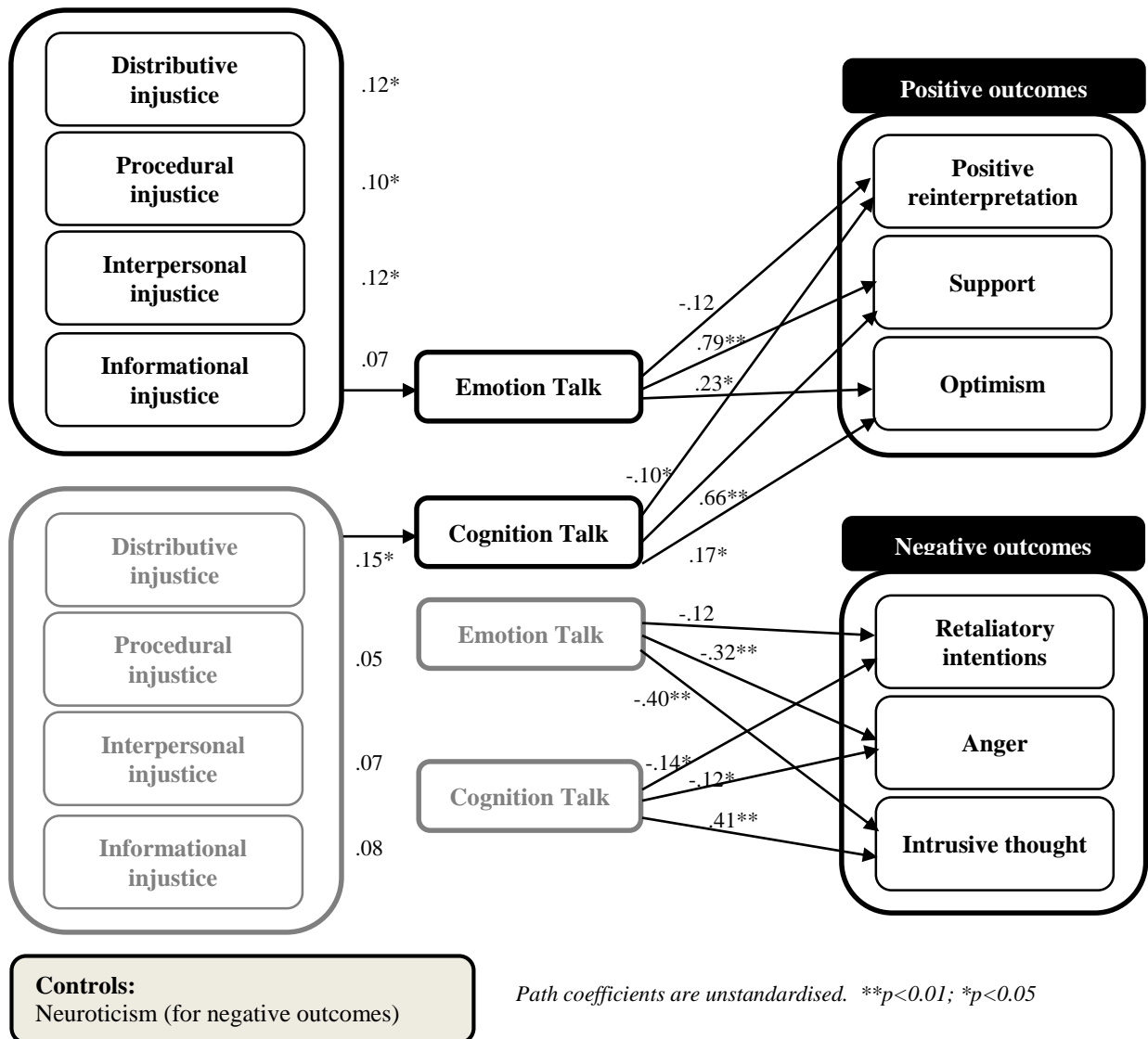


Figure 7.2. Conceptual model for investigation through a ten-day daily diary study, with path coefficients. (Shaded parts provide ease of clarity of path coefficients).

7.6 Discussion

To my knowledge, this study is the first to have explored the impact of victim recovery in the context of *daily* experiences of workplace unfairness. Despite growing theoretical interest in a victim's recovery process following their unfair treatment at work (Barclay & Saldhana, in press; Weiss & Rupp, 2011; Shapiro, 2001), very little is known about how this recovery process unfolds in 'real time', that is, at a daily level in the context of a victim's very own working environment. The present study took one step towards filling this void by presenting results from a ten-day daily diary study. In taking this approach I examined the daily impact of injustice on talk, and the subsequent influence of talk on victim centred positive and negative outcomes. There are three sets of results arising from the present study, and each will be discussed in turn: a) talk is more likely to lead to positive outcomes for a victim of injustice, b) daily levels of workplace injustice are antecedents to talk, c) victims of injustice are more likely to engage in emotion talk, initially.

Talk is more likely to lead to positive outcomes for a victim of workplace injustice

This study laid out exploratory research questions and defined recovery as the process through which an individual manages his/her experience of a workplace violation; it necessitates working towards a resolution. Though recovery is defined (and explored as such in chapter 6) as restoration in the positive sense for victims of injustice (positive outcomes), I chose in this chapter to explore whether recovery could also entail engagement in such outcomes that may be cognitively, emotionally and behaviourally 'harmful' to a victim. Perhaps the most illuminating finding of this study is that talk, as

a recovery mechanism, is more likely to lead to a positive impact on how victims of workplace injustice think, feel and behave, than a negative impact. In other words what my findings show are that talk is beneficial to victims of workplace injustice, particularly so at daily levels of experienced injustice. There is a marked difference in the pattern of how engagement in talk leads a victim to think, feel and engage in positive outcomes versus negative outcomes. Specifically, victims who talked (both emotion and cognition) reported feeling more support and optimism, after talking, and less anger. Though retaliation was not significantly associated with daily levels of emotion talk, the pattern from cognition talk reveals a negative association; in other words, the more cognition talk a victim engaged in at a daily level, the less likely s/he was to report retaliatory intentions. These findings are pertinent in demonstrating that at a daily level, talk operates as a recovery mechanism, and in such a fashion as to assist a victim with feeling and thinking in a positive way. The findings therefore support the trajectory of research within clinical and social psychology literatures which evidence the utility of talk in effecting recovery (Breuer & Freud, 1895; Scheff & Bushell, 1984; Greenberg, 2002; Kennedy-Moore & Watson, 1999; Rimé, 2009; Pennebaker et al., 2001). In sum, *it is good to talk*.

The one exception to this finding is the positive association between both types of talk and intrusive thought. Specifically, both emotion and cognitive talk led to unwarranted and involuntary thoughts about one's unjust experience, on subsequent days. A similar pattern was evident in the cross-sectional study presented in chapter 6 – namely that talk increased rumination (repetitive, intrusive thoughts about an event) rather than, as

predicted, decreasing it. Though intrusive thought can be debilitating given that it can deplete an individual's resources (Baumeister & Heatherton, 1996), on the flip side, and rather ironically, it is argued that repetitive thinking about an event is also a way out of continuous cycles of thinking (Martin & Tesser, 1989; Gross & John, 2003). Though I did not measure whether intrusion of thought led to future problem solving, nor the reverse, this repeated finding in my studies of the association between talk and increased, repetitive and involuntary thoughts – especially in the light of the positive outcomes delineated in the present study - might lead one to conclude that perhaps *thinking* about an injustice is the precursor to actually doing something about it. This merits further investigation.

Daily levels of injustice are antecedents to talk

In extending the results obtained via a cross-section survey design, the present study also confirms that workplace injustice is an antecedent of both emotion and cognition talk. These results reinforce those presented in chapter 5, which investigated overall injustice as a victim's global evaluation of unfairness. In breaking down injustice into its constituent components, my results showed that distributive injustice in particular triggered both types of talk at a daily level. In other words, concerns about the fairness of one's outcomes were salient in driving victims of injustice to engage in conversation with others. In line with the findings from the qualitative research presented in chapter 4, one might have expected a saliency of interpersonal injustice in driving both types of talk; indeed, speaking with victims of workplace violations, there was a trend in supervisors being implicated as the main perpetrators of injustice (Bies & Moag, 1986).

This is because, as Masterson, Lewis, Goldman and Taylor (2000) have reasoned, interactional injustice overall, is most likely to drive supervisor-referenced outcomes, such as citizenship behaviour directed at the supervisor. However, the prominence of distributive justice in driving talk, in the context of the present study, can be explained by existing organisational justice research. Specifically, scholars note that distributive justice is likely to exert greater influence on person-referenced (personal) outcomes, such as performance evaluation and pay satisfaction, compared to procedural justice, which has a great impact on system-referenced (organisational) outcomes (Greenberg, 1990; McFarlin & Sweeney, 1992; Colquitt et al., 2001). Ambrose et al. (2002) further demonstrate that concerns about distributive injustice drive participant efforts towards equity restoration. Recall that the contexts of the organisations from which I recruited the majority of participants (banking and university) was such that both were going through change in the form of greater assessments of performance in relation to new products, as well as upcoming performance assessments. The finding that distributive injustice was the only justice dimension that triggered both types of talk, and only cognition talk compared to other justice types, could well be a reflection of the specific context in which this data was collected.

Victims of injustice are more likely to engage in emotion talk initially

Results also showed that, overall, victims were more likely to engage in emotion talk following their unfair experiences, than in cognition talk. More specifically, in addition to concerns about outcomes, salient drivers of emotion talk on a daily level include concerns about the procedures used to determine one's outcomes and the level of respect

and sincerity received during interactions with authority figures. This finding has some resemblance to the outcomes of chapter 5, wherein significant results were found predominantly for emotional talk. This once again provides impetus to the theoretical argument that perhaps an emotionally fuelled situation, such as a workplace injustice (Bies & Tripp, 2002) triggers negative emotions that in turn lead to the release of emotion talk *initially*. This supports a trajectory of research within clinical psychology which, since the conception of the ‘talking cure’, advances the notion of emotional discharge as a natural response to one’s aggrieved psychological and mental state (Breuer & Freud, 1895), implying that one may not yet be ready for the cognitive work of such activities as reframing, re-evaluating and thinking about a solution to one’s experience (Martin & Tesser, 1989).

Overall, my results support the contention that daily experiences of workplace injustice are a driver of daily levels of both emotion and cognition focused talk in the workplace. Research to date has not captured the association between workplace injustice and talk, and certainly not on a daily basis. Indeed, in contributing to largely theoretical calls for research on recovery processes (Barclay & Saldhana, in press; Weiss & Rupp, 2011; Shapiro, 2001), this study provides empirical evidence that at a daily level, victims engage in one mechanism of recovery – talk – directly following workplace unfairness. In tandem with the empirical results of chapters 5 and 6, my results further support the integration of the field of organisational justice with talk.

7.6.1 Limitations

This study has some limitations which should be noted. One of the drawbacks of this study is that it assessed levels of participants' experience of injustice, talk and recovery afresh each day; in other words, each day asked participants about what they had experienced on *that* day. This provided some very novel and insightful findings into victim's daily experiences, which both extended and replicated chapters 5 and 6. However, one limitation of this approach is that it did not permit me to capture the unfolding nature of the interplay between injustice and talk as emanating from one event over subsequent days. In an ideal study all participants would have experienced the same unjust event on day 1, with the following days capturing their talk and outcomes as relating to that event. Obtaining such a sample is however immensely difficult. I had initially hoped to run this study with a sample of teachers, all at the same school, who were undergoing a significant change programme pertaining to their payment structure; this sample and context would have provided a rich source of data with each day following on from the change initiative measuring levels of felt injustice and the extent and type of talk engaged in, as well as the influence on ensuing outcomes. Unfortunately, this sample did not materialise due to delays in implementation of the initiative. However, the present study did provide ample scope for the novel findings that it reports. It construes injustice and talk as dynamic daily processes, and overcomes retrospective bias central to the studies conducted as part of chapters 5 and 6.

This study also lies open to the criticism of same-source bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), given that it relied on subjective accounts from participants. With regard to this,

however, are two noteworthy points. First, as with the previous studies outlined in chapters 4-6, the variables that I am studying cannot be measured in any other way than by relying on the individual experiencing the injustice. Perceiving injustice is a subjective experience and there are no third-party observers who would be able to give complete accounts of talk that followed an injustice. Second, this study did not rely on retrospective accounts of injustice and talk from weeks ago (as presented in chapters 5 and 6), but accumulated data in real-time, on a daily level, which works towards counteracting biases inherent in past recall.

The final limitation is that a new measure of talk was deployed, which has not been used in previous studies. However, the talk measure was supported by CFA analysis as presented above.

7.6.2 Suggestions for future research

Using a daily diary method to investigate the interplay between injustice and talk has enabled me to shed new light on the interplay between injustice and talk, generating a number of significant findings. I suggest that future research in this area continues to make use of this methodological technique, not least because both organisational justice and talk are conceived of as dynamic processes. Indeed, it is argued that organisational justice is not a static phenomenon, but rather, it changes over time (Ambrose & Cropanzano, 2003; Holtz & Harold, 2009) such that fluctuations in justice influence outcomes like daily satisfaction levels and turnover intentions (Loi, Yang, & Diefendorff, 2009; Hausknecht, Sturman, & Roberson, 2011). It has similarly been

posited that talk is a natural occurrence which emanates *immediately* following an emotional experience, and which continues to unfold over the course of days, weeks and in some cases, even months (Rimé, 2009). Future research should begin by tracking victims' unjust experiences on day 1, and linking these to their engagement in talk and proximal victim-centred outcomes over subsequent days. This would be the most ideal manner in which to conduct research, as it provides for a rich and lucid insight into the following questions: how does a victim's experience of injustice on day 1 relate to the choice of talk they engage in over the subsequent days? Does the nature of talk engaged in change day by day, and might this be a reflection of increasing or decreasing feelings about the unjust event? Do victim-centred outcomes fluctuate in light of such felt injustice? Answers to these questions are pertinent in providing a thorough theoretical insight into the unfolding interplay between injustice and talk.

The use of a daily diary method could be coupled with a laboratory experiment in order to test the causality of findings. For example, a researcher can control for the type of talk engaged in (emotion or cognition) by instructing participants to talk into a tape recorder about their emotions or cognitions only (see Murray & Segal, 1994 for a similar experimental set up) over a three-four day period. Daily measurements of the impact of each specific type of talk on consequences of interest could be examined to measure the effect of each type of talk.

Another avenue for future research is to explore individual difference variables more closely. What else might predict a victim's thinking, feeling and engagement in

outcomes following their talk? Core self-evaluations (CSEs) could act as one potential moderator. CSEs are a fundamental appraisal of one's worthiness (Judge, Erez, Bono & Thoresen, 2002), and it is argued that people who possess a high CSE will think more positively of themselves and display confidence in their abilities, with people scoring low on CSE lacking confidence. Might CSE have an impact on whether one engages in talk in the first instance? People high in CSE may be more likely to deal positively with workplace injustice, because they are less likely to be preoccupied with the distress emanating from an unjust encounter, compared to those low in CSE, and perhaps more focused instead on how to move forwards towards a positive resolution (Pearlin & Schooler, 1978). This merits further investigation as an antecedent to talk.

And finally, future research necessitates research on the listener, and their contribution to a victim's talk episode, as was alluded to in chapter 6. It was beyond the scope of this thesis to include this facet of interest in the present study. However, I firmly believe that the listener and his/her approach to the victim will impact both how a victim perceives an injustice as well as how they feel and choose to react thereafter. For example, a victim who is told by a listener that they are 'being naïve and being taken advantage of by their perpetrator' may well harbour greater retaliatory intentions than if they were told that 'this always happens in organisations, change your way of dealing with that person and move on'.

7.7 Conclusion

As the final empirical chapter comprising this thesis, the present exploratory study began by unpacking both organisational justice and talk into its constituent components in order to assess their impact on a victim's daily emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey in the context of workplace injustice. This chapter demonstrates findings that both replicate and extend empirical results from the previous chapters, doing so in a daily context of injustice. Daily levels of injustice are drivers of daily levels of talk; in turn, findings from this study show that engagement in talk leads victims to engage in more *positive* outcomes versus negative outcomes. A different pattern for the impact of each justice dimension on talk was discovered, which reinforced findings from chapter 5 that workplace injustice is a predictor of talk. The overarching conclusion from this chapter, however, is that *it is good to talk*. This study now leads us to synthesising results uncovered from this thesis in a general discussion that contextualises findings in the broader literatures of organisational justice and talk. It is to this we turn in chapter 8.

Chapter 8:

Discussion

8.1 Chapter Overview

The previous four chapters have presented empirical results regarding the utility of talk as a recovery mechanism for victims in the context of workplace injustice. Each chapter presented a different piece of the ‘puzzle’ in aiding an understanding of how talk as a phenomenon may be integrated into an organisational justice framework. This chapter seeks to synthesise these findings in order to present the theoretical and practical insights of this thesis. This chapter will begin with a brief summary of the findings of each of the empirical chapters, before turning to delineate the overall significance of the contribution of this thesis. Implications, limitations and future research will also be discussed.

8.2 Introduction

This thesis took as its starting point the receiver’s perspective³ in organisational justice research, by focusing on those at the receiving end of unfairness: namely, the *victims*. Seeking to put the much neglected victim experience back into the forefront of justice research, three empirical studies, across four chapters, have explored whether the phenomenon of talk exists in the context of workplace injustice and indeed, if it operates as a recovery mechanism assisting victims with “healing the wounds” of their injustice (Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009: 511). Three questions have guided this thesis:

³ Referred to as such by Scott, Colquitt & Paddock (2009)

Question 1: Does talk follow a victim's experience of workplace injustice? If so, what is the content of such talk?

Question 2: Does talk operate as a recovery mechanism? Specifically:

- What drives talk in the context of workplace injustice? In other words, what are its antecedents?
- Does talk operate as a victim-centred recovery mechanism as evidenced in clinical and social psychological literatures, assisting victims with overcoming the negative effects of workplace injustice? In other words, what are the consequences of talk?

Question 3: What is the cognitive, emotional and behavioural journey comprising a victim's experience following workplace injustice?

This discussion will proceed by providing a brief summary of each empirical chapter, before turning to present the overall significance of the findings, this thesis' limitations as well as ideas for future research.

8.3 Summary of findings of each empirical study

Chapter 4: Development of a new measure of talk in the context of workplace injustice

Chapter 4 provided the building blocks of the entire thesis. Using a blend of qualitative and quantitative data, and both inductive and deductive methodologies, it provided support for the presence of talk in the context of workplace injustice. The contribution of this chapter to the overall thesis is that, building on research which demonstrates the

prevalence of talk in clinical as well as every day social psychological environments, I was able to demonstrate, additionally, that victims of injustice do indeed talk following their experience of workplace unfairness. Exactly what victims talk about was made apparent by analysing specific episodes of talk; talk, in the context of injustice has both an *emotion* and a *cognition* component. Victims of fairness violations in the workplace talk about both how they feel as well as their thoughts about interpreting and finding a solution to their predicament.

Chapter 5: Antecedents of talking about workplace injustice

This chapter sought to confirm the prevalence of a talk phenomenon in a field setting, as well as answer the question of what triggers a victim's engagement in talk following their brush with injustice. The contribution of this chapter was two-fold. First, it corroborated results from chapter 4 in demonstrating via a sample of London bus drivers, for whom issues of fairness and unfairness were salient on a daily basis, that victims of workplace violations do talk about their unjust work experiences with significant others. Second, this chapter provided an insight into the antecedents of talk. The negative emotion of anger was found to be the key lynchpin (mediator) connecting a victim's experience of injustice with their engagement in talk. Anger was also the mediator connecting a victim's thwarted sense of justice needs – both relational needs and meaning needs – with their engagement in talk. Though results from the first time point of data evidenced no results of significance for cognition talk, the second time point of data (presented in appendix 8), demonstrated that anger as well as the relational

and meaning justice needs (all indirect mediated paths), triggered both emotion *and* cognition talk.

Chapter 6: Consequences of talking about workplace injustice

This chapter built on the previous one to explore the consequences of engaging in talk, focusing specifically on the extent to which talk can lead to recovery captured in five different victim-centred outcomes. The contribution of this chapter was two-fold. First, it demonstrated that a *symmetry* effect exists such that independently emotion and cognition talk led to outcomes that were reflective of each of these types of talk. For example, emotion talk rather than cognition talk led to victim engagement in retaliatory intentions, a response underscored by its strong negative emotional component. Cognition talk rather than emotion talk led to victim engagement in self-affirmation and a search for solutions, two types of outcomes underscored by their focus on thought processes. Second, this chapter demonstrated that an *asymmetry* effect exists when emotion and cognition talk interact, such that at higher levels of emotional intensity (evident in higher levels of emotion talk) the positive effects of cognition talk were cancelled out; in other words, the suggestion arising from the unexpected findings of this chapter are that perhaps the full effect of recovery is impeded until a victim is able to by-pass and fully let go of their negative feelings which otherwise emanate in greater levels of emotion talk. These results were replicated with the second time point of data (presented in appendix 9).

Chapter 7: Daily diary study of talk in the context of workplace injustice: an exploratory investigation

As the final empirical investigation, this chapter took as its starting point the notion of time in order to explore how daily levels of injustice impacted upon a victim's recovery. Breaking down injustice and talk into their constituent components in order to assess their individual impact on a victim's emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey, the contribution provided by this chapter was two-fold. First, in replicating results from the previous chapters, the daily diary investigation confirmed the presence of talk following a victim's daily injustice experience, with each justice dimension (distributive, procedural, informational and interpersonal) differentially impacting talk. Second, at the level of a daily context, this chapter provided overarching evidence that talk *does* lead to engagement in positive victim-centred outcomes, such as increased support and optimism, and lessened anger.

Having summarised findings from each empirical chapter, I will now turn to discussing the overall implications of these findings answering the question: so, what is the significance of the results of this thesis to the organisational justice field?

8.4 Overall significance and implications of findings

In summarising the overall significance and implications of the findings, there are four main contributions that the present thesis makes to the study of talk in the context of workplace injustice. These pertain to the following dimensions, and each will be discussed in turn: a) the need for a greater focus on a person-centric perspective, b) an insight into recovery, with talk as a 'tool' which can further a justice research agenda, c)

evidence that responses to injustice are more complicated than the ‘dark side’ trajectory of literature, and, overall, d) results of this thesis point to the notion that talk is *healing* rather than a *hindrance*.

A person-centric perspective: Victims of injustice are an important focus of study

The findings of the studies comprising this thesis have implications for a justice research agenda which is *person-centric* (Weiss & Rupp, 2011). Such an agenda appreciates the person at the centre of an injustice. The victim of workplace mistreatment is not relegated to an abstract notion of being an attitude or a property of a theory which has as its purpose the aim of uncovering how an individual can operate and behave in order to keep an organisation functioning optimally. Instead, it is the person – the victim – that is the focus of study. His or her *lived* experience, appreciated through his or her *own* eyes, is what is important; it is this that provides a gateway to a whole new research agenda which takes as its starting point the subjective existence of the person living through an injustice at work and attempting to recover from it.

This thesis has attempted to understand the person-centric and subjective experience by asking “...victims of injustice for input into the “puzzles we ought to pursue”...” (Shapiro, 2001: 240). One such puzzle pertains to recovery, and, in addition to a study by Barclay & Skarlicki (2009), which explored the utility of an expressive writing intervention in assisting victims of injustice with recovering from violations of fairness, this thesis marks only the second attempt in the justice literature to consider recovery through the eyes of the one who experiences injustice. Beginning my research with an

inductive methodological approach, the studies in this thesis have yielded a rich insight into the dynamics that shape a victim's journey post-injustice. From the empirical studies conducted, I have shown how a victim experiences an injustice and what recovery looks like to such an individual. The aftermath of an injustice is a period marked by a victim making sense of their experience, a journey that comprises a complex interplay of emotions, cognitions and behaviours.

It is through a person-centric (an employee) perspective that we have come to learn about an individual's experience of organisational injustice. A manager-centred perspective, although similarly focused on how employees react to injustice, is fixated on attempting to delineate methods of 'managing' and 'fixing' victims at the expense of truly appreciating how victims can and do 'work through' their experience. This thesis provides a fresh insight by demonstrating that victims are not just passive recipients in their recovery, but that they actively deal with and work through their experiences.

A focus on recovery: Talk is a 'tool' that can aid a justice research agenda

Building on theory and research outside of the immediate specificity of the justice realm, this thesis provides evidence of a 'tool' (Barclay et al., 2009) that can further an organisational justice agenda. This 'tool', imported from literature in clinical and social psychology, is a talk mechanism which can aid justice researchers with a lens through which to explore how an aggrieved employee is affected by workplace mistreatment and, in turn, how they might attempt to recover from it. A talk mechanism is one such

avenue that sheds greater light on a person-centric justice research agenda, and it brings to the organisational justice field the topic of recovery.

Indeed, it is interesting that in the context of organisational justice, we have a handful of studies that posit quite clearly the detrimental impact of injustice on an employee, from adverse emotional to problematic health outcomes (Tepper, 2001; Judge & Colquitt, 2004; Greenberg, 2006), but none go further in addressing the question: so, how can a victim recover?. Other organisational behaviour literatures have a notable focus on recovery, such as the trust literature. Defined as one's willingness to be vulnerable to another based on positive expectations of his/her behaviour (Mayer, Davis & Schoorman, 1995), trust has come to occupy an increasing presence within the justice literature. For example, trust is construed as an antecedent to justice (Brockner, Siegel, Daly, Tyler & Martin, 1997), as a mediator between organisational justice and work outcomes (Ayree, Budwhar & Chen, 2002) as well as an outcome of justice judgements (Colquitt & Rodell, 2011). Models of trust development argue that trust is rooted in cognitive and affective sources (Lewicki & Bunker, 1995; Lewis & Weigert, 1985), with the trust repair literature (Kim, Dirks & Cooper, 2009) arguing for the importance of dealing with the immediate negative aftermath of a trust violation, before attempting to repair relations between the trustee and trustor. This body of literature provides an example of what is missing within the justice realm. And indeed, given the proximity of these two constructs, justice and trust, it is both a surprise and a shame that justice scholars have paid only scant attention to the notion that when justice becomes

disrupted, it is important to also investigate how it may be repaired by employees whose recovery is paramount to enhancing our understanding of how injustice operates.

What have we learnt about recovery in the present thesis? The key take-home messages from the present thesis kick-start a focus on recovery and these are as follows. First, victims do not just switch off after an injustice occurs, they *talk* about it and they do so in the immediate aftermath (as the diary study showed, on the same day as a workplace violation is perceived). Second, in talking about their injustice, victims are both *thinking* about it (making sense of their experience) as well as *feeling* it (venting their frustration), and these two entities mirror the well-researched impact of injustice on an individual evidenced in the justice literature (i.e. Bies & Tripp, 1996). And finally, talk is part of a victim's journey post-injustice and is the link between injustice and emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions relevant to the subjective experience of a victim. In other words, talk leads to outcomes – victims do not just talk and leave it at that; rather, their talk is linked to how they feel, think and act.

These findings are only the tip of the iceberg in promoting an understanding of recovery; however, what this thesis does point to is the need for a greater integration of two hitherto unconnected literatures: organisational justice and talk. A closer collaboration will enhance our insights, advancing decades of literature which points to the deleterious impact of workplace injustice (see Colquitt et al., 2001).

Responses to injustice are complicated: The 'dark side' of injustice is too simplistic a notion of what employees do when treated unfairly

What this thesis additionally highlights is that the question 'what do employees do when they are treated unfairly?' cannot be answered in such a straightforward fashion as has been done by research which has dominated the justice literature for decades. This research denotes victim responses in principally negative terms, emphasising such reactions as revenge, retaliation, sabotage, theft and overall counterproductive work behaviour (CWB). It is a manager-centred perspective that punctuates such research, because when viewed through the eyes of a manager and an organisation, employee reactions to mistreatment need to be 'managed' or 'fixed'. An employee-centred perspective, as per the present thesis, paints a less gloomy picture of the victim, one in which their reactions to injustice are not altogether dysfunctional.

Though this thesis did not find supportive evidence linking talk with 'negative' outcomes such as retaliation and rumination, it does not deny the possibility that these reactions are part-and-parcel of the recovery process. However, and more importantly, what this thesis does show is that recovery as viewed through the eyes of victims also pertains to them searching for a *positive* way out of their unjust experience. This thesis provides evidence of talk leading to *lessened* anger and an *increased* sense of support and optimism in doing something positive about the future. The results also provide some partial support for talk having a positive impact on victims' levels of self-affirmation and a search for solutions (albeit at decreasing levels of emotional intensity).

Put simply, in addition to counterproductive responses, victims also talk following their unjust experience, and this talk can lead them to also engage in positive outcomes.

A word must also be mentioned about recent research in the justice sphere which focuses on forgiveness as an outcome of felt injustice. In departing from ‘dark side’ research, a surge of recent scholarly interest explores the conditions under which victims may forgive their perpetrator. Forgiveness is defined as the following: “a willingness to abandon one’s right to resentment, condemnation, and subtle revenge toward the offender who acts unjustly while fostering the undeserved qualities of compassion generosity or even love toward him/her” (Enright & the Human Development Study Group, 1991: 108), as well as “the set of motivational changes whereby one becomes decreasingly motivated to retaliate against the offending partner, decreasingly motivated to maintain estrangement from the offender, and increasingly motivated by conciliation and goodwill toward the offender despite the offender’s hurtful actions” (McCullough, Worthington & Rachal, 1997: 321-322). An early study by Aquino et al. (2001) found that victims were more likely to forgive if the procedural justice climate of the organisation was perceived as being high. Wenzel & Okimoto (2010) argue that forgiveness itself can increase a victim’s sense of justice by restoring their sense of power. More recently Bobocel (2013) demonstrated the importance of organisational climate once again, showing that a victim’s perception of overall justice facilitated forgiveness particularly amongst those employees with a strong other-orientation (i.e. those less focused on oneself in comparison to others).

Though providing thought-provoking insights into when and how victims may engage in such ‘constructive’ responses following injustice (Bobocel, 2013) as opposed to ‘destructive’ ones, much of this research is still in an embryonic stage. Barclay and Saldhana (in press) comment that this research considers forgiveness as a *decision* made by a victim, and that from an employee-perspective, forgiveness needs to be construed as a *process* that requires a victim to ‘work through’ their emotions and thoughts against the perpetrator. Greater research is required linking recovery with forgiveness, but it is a response that merits attention. Forgiveness is construed as a ‘constructive’ response following an individual’s experience of injustice, and because it denotes letting go of negative emotions and thoughts in order to embrace a more positive outlook, it is perhaps a fitting victim-centred response meriting study within a recovery context: indeed, in continuing the theme of the findings of the present thesis, we can ask to what extent talk might operate as a vehicle via which victims are able to forgive their perpetrators?

Overall, talk is healing rather than a hindrance

In continuing the spirit of the aforementioned notion of the positive impact of talk, results from this thesis also challenge talk as is construed in one branch of the organisational sciences. Robinson and Bennett (1995) studied workplace deviance, and in their typology of deviant behaviours they essentially construe talk as counter-productive, as an act of political deviance. In other words, talk is something ‘bad’ which, if engaged in by an employee, constitutes dysfunctional behaviour which must be managed by an organisation. I am not arguing that these scholars are incorrect in their

assertions; some of the examples of talk gathered as part of the interview stages of the present research, captured emotional accounts of talk which pertained to speaking ill of the perceived harm-doer and telling others about this. However, the notion of talk as deviant is but a simplistic one because it does not capture the richness of what it can actually offer a victim of injustice.

The results of this thesis support, as well as extend, clinical and social psychological literatures on talk. These literatures postulate a ‘talking cure’, that is, they construe talk with another in times of adversity as leading to beneficial outcomes for the talker. They specifically argue for this when talk about one’s emotions is coupled with attempts to mentally process an event (Scheff, in press). Such benefits are of an emotional (reduced anger), well-being (reduced distress) and health kind (improved physical and mental health) (Pennebaker, 1990; Greenberg, 2002; Nils & Rimé, 2008). The findings from this thesis concur with these literatures in that talk is *good*. Talk is part-and-parcel of a victim’s recovery process; it is the mechanism via which a victim manages his/her unjust experience. The findings from study 3 (Chapter 7) in particular demonstrate that both emotion and cognition talk lead to positive emotional and behavioural outcomes. Additionally, findings from study 2 (chapter 6), although requiring further development, suggest that emotion and cognition talk combined can lead to positive outcomes *when* the emotional intensity of a talk encounter subsides.

In extending findings from both clinical and social psychology literatures, this thesis provides the added dimension of context. The predominant focus of the clinical

literature is on psychological distress (i.e. losing a loved one), with social psychological studies looking at everyday life experiences (i.e. terror attacks, giving birth). Results from the present studies provide impetus to the notion of talk as beneficial in the context of the workplace. In other words, talk can operate as a recovery mechanism under conditions of workplace injustice, which is a type of encounter that triggers an emotionally intense response and fuels mental work in deliberating the extent of unfairness caused (Bies & Tripp, 2002; Barclay et al., 2009). In the spirit of the title of this thesis, findings from the studies conducted show that talk is indeed *healing* rather than a *hindrance*.

It was the theoretical aim of this thesis to bring a novel perspective to the study of victims of workplace injustice by integrating talk into the justice paradigm. Empirical findings from the studies conducted provide support for the integration of these two hitherto unconnected areas of research. It is the contention of this thesis that a closer collaboration between these two literatures would further a justice research agenda in invaluable ways.

Three cautionary notes

Before turning to the practical implications, limitations and future research agenda of the present thesis, a few words of caution need to be extended. This thesis has argued that talking can have a positive impact on a victim's recovery following their experience of workplace unfairness. First, in making such an assertion, this thesis does *not* exonerate the perpetrators of injustice. I am not suggesting that research focus

exclusively on *what victims can do about injustice* at the expense of attempts to understand how injustice can be mitigated in the first instance. A focus on recovery is but one of many areas of research that informs an organisational justice research agenda.

Second, this thesis does not absolve the responsibility of organisations and managers to act fairly. Again, I am not asserting that as justice researchers we refrain from research attempting to understand and promote fair workplace principles with which we can educate managers and their organisations. However, a focus on responses, such as talk, that those at the receiving end of an injustice can (and do!) engage in, broadens our horizons, providing us with ever-increasing knowledge and insight into our purpose as scholars to understand the deep-seated dynamics of organisational life.

Finally, it would be naïve to suggest that a talk mechanism is the ultimate answer to a victim's predicament post-injustice. This thesis provides a first-step in appreciating that talk can 'help'; talk is a natural occurrence following injustice, and, as has been evidenced, it can lead to positive victim-centred outcomes. However, one can quite rightly ask: *will talk solve a victim's problem entirely? Surely action is needed too, a change on the part of the victim him/herself and/or the organisation?* Talk may well solve a victim's predicament; for example, if all a victim needs to do is let off steam about that 'one same manager who has annoyed them again with extra work', then, a quick conversation with one's partner, friend or colleague may be the solution. However, if one's injustice centres on an unbearable and intolerant manager/organisation, or an issue pertaining to a serious act of bullying or harassment,

then talk may be just a temporary solution, providing interim comfort; the real solution may be to exit an organisation or consult the personnel department about raising a formal complaint. Neither a victim nor an organisation should construe talk as *the* answer.

8.5 Practical implications

This thesis suggests that talking can have a positive impact on a victim's recovery following workplace injustice. Perhaps the most practical benefit of a talk mechanism is the ease with which it can, and does, take place and the fact that talk is part and parcel of human existence (Dhensa, 2011). Instigating a talk mechanism does not require investment in costly resources, not for the victim nor an organisation. However, before turning to review how talk can be of practical use, it is important to assert that any implementation of 'talk as a cure' needs to be delicately handled. A 'talk cure' should not be set up as a matter of policy or rule governing an organisation; this would be misleading. For one, this would exonerate perpetrators, management and the organisation of responsibility in addressing an act of injustice, since such a policy will communicate the message that *'it doesn't matter what injustice anyone inflicts, an individual can cure themselves via talk'*. Second, without further research on exactly how and when talk functions in proffering benefits, this would create a false and wholly incorrect notion of how can talk can be instrumental in helping individuals recover.

Indeed, one of the first hurdles to overcome in considering the merits of talk is in creating a shared understanding of what talk is. Laypersons' perceptions of talk are

often synonymous with ‘bitching’ and ‘letting off steam’ (Morrill, 1992). In fact, when sharing the aims of my thesis with my interview participants (chapter 4), the majority of them commented on the fact that they instantly understood the importance of talk as employees needing to ‘vent’ and ‘get things off their chests’. This thinking is not incorrect. However, it reinforces a somewhat stereotypical notion of talk, construing it as ‘gossip talk’ and by doing so, belying the real merits of a talk mechanism. One of the first tasks to engage in, even before taking the ideas of this thesis to the workplace, is to carry out future research that provides confidence in *when* and *how* talk works. This thesis provides a starting point, but further research can benefit by assisting scholars with counteracting colloquialisms of a talk cure by cementing the exact circumstances under which this mechanism really can ‘cure’.

Having said this, it is possible to envision the message that *opening up* rather than *bottling up* is a positive move at an employee, managerial and organisational level. At an employee level, a message to be conveyed is that talk is good as it can help in emotional, psychological and health-related ways. Notwithstanding individual differences in personality, talk is likely to be one of the first things that individuals engage in when experiencing unfairness. Letting employees know that talk with significant others can help in overcoming one’s felt negative emotions as well as making sense out of an experience, can assist victims with managing some of the early adversity following injustice. A message inherent in communicating the utility of talk to employees is one that centres on promoting a sense of positive psychology (Seligman, 1998; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As Fredrickson et al. (2003) demonstrate in

the context of the terror attacks on the United States, though adversity can deplete an individual's resources, it is not unfathomable that one can feel a sense of hope and optimism in the future. In the same vein, though workplace injustice can inflict negativity upon its victims, in line with the sentiments of positive psychology, individuals can and should be encouraged to draw on their strength in order to pursue recovery. In other words, a negative experience can give rise to a renewed sense of growth.

In terms of managers, managerial training on topics such as 'effective people management' could include the message that it is paramount to create a relationship with employees which permits sharing frustrations, concerns and any felt injustice. Colquitt et al. (2001) suggest that a healthy and productive employee-employer relationship is built on recognising when things might not be going so well, such as when perceptions of unfairness arise. One such managerial intervention may include an 'open-door policy' which encourages employees to talk whenever they are feeling aggrieved. Another intervention is attempting to drive talk into the cultural fabric of an organisation. This can be achieved by integrating the notion of engaging in continuous dialogue with employees, into an organisation's competency framework aimed at managers. Competency frameworks provide guidance about excellent performance in organisations. Examples of competencies include 'working with others', 'thinking flexibly' and 'managing staff', with a rating scale delineating how well an employee is performing. One criterion that could be built into such a framework for managers, under 'staff management', might include examples of excellence such as: continuously

maintaining open dialogue with employees, listening to employees, ‘being there’ for employees when they need to talk. In this way, talk becomes culturally integrated into how managers are appraised and assessed.

At an organisation level, the merits of a talk mechanism may require a cultural shift. Talk is the foundation upon which organisations operate, it is the way in which knowledge is shared and activities communicated (Morgan, 1997). Talk as ‘recovery’ may be an entirely new conception, requiring the instigation of a climate that supports and perpetuates the facilitation of its benefits. Many forgiveness researchers refer to the importance of creating a climate which facilitates pro-social responses to conflict (Aquino et al., 2001; Fehr & Gelfand, 2012). In a similar vein, through such acts as endorsing talk at an employee and managerial level, an organisation can begin to lay the foundations of the benefits to be attained by conversation. Additionally, a talk cure may well be introduced more formally as a counselling intervention, which employees are referred to. This is likely to occur under the most exceptional and serious of circumstances, but the availability of a professional with whom to work through one’s emotions and thoughts, can act as one step on an employees’ road to recovery.

8.6 Limitations

Although each study comprising this thesis endeavoured to keep methodological and sinterpretative weaknesses to a minimum, this thesis has limitations which should be noted. The main limitations for this this thesis include: a) methodological challenges which limit inferences about causality, b) the presence of common method bias, c) the

use of same-source data, d) the small sample sizes of study 2 and study 3, and, e) the current lack of understanding about the extent to which talk can help with recovery. These will be discussed in turn.

Methodological challenges limiting inference of causality

First, given the research design of each of the three empirical studies, this thesis cannot make assertions about the causality of findings. Causality refers to cause and effect wherein the relationship between one set of variables is deemed as being determined by another set of variables; in other words, *a* is caused by *b*. Though it is tempting to infer that there is a causal association between injustice and talk, and in turn, talk and victim-centred outcomes, we must caution against this. Results from the survey studies in particular were gathered from methods which were cross-sectional and one-time point in nature, drawing on self-report data. The daily-diary study is perhaps less vulnerable given its design of repeated measurements over a ten day period, and the fact that it allows effects to be ordered in time such that data can be used to test and reject causal explanations (Iida, Shrout, Laurenceau & Bolger, 2012); it is still, however, correlational in nature. Such correlational data do not lend themselves to inferences of causality.

The presence of common method bias

The methodologies deployed in this thesis can be argued as being open to common method bias, particularly same-time same-source bias (Podsakoff et al., 2003), wherein the variance uncovered can be argued as attributable to the measurement procedure

rather than the constructs of interest. Such biases can limit the generalisability of findings. It must be noted, however, that steps were taken to mitigate against this problem, as well as that of causality, thereby enhancing the reliability and validity of the data collected. For example, control variables (gender, tenure and neuroticism) were employed in order to avoid unduly influencing results. Questions in surveys were counterbalanced to prevent influencing a respondent's interpretation and response to a measure based on its relation to other measures. All respondents chosen to take part in this study, whether for interviews, surveys or the diary study, were selected to reflect the sample of interest – namely, individuals working in organisations and for whom issues of fairness and unfairness would be a central and daily feature of working life. Indeed, one of the strengths of this thesis is that it did not rely on the same sample to draw conclusions across studies: for each study, a different sample was utilised, providing evidence of replication, as well as greater confidence in the external validity of the findings generated. And finally, especially for study 2 (as presented in chapters 5 and 6), repeated cross-section surveys were conducted, with the results emanating from the first time point, replicated at the second.

The use of same-source data

Related to the above point is the notion that each of the studies conducted relied on self-report data. The problems inherent with relying on such data are clear. First, such data can lead to common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Second, it can lead employees to essentially fake their responses or answer in socially desirable ways (Locke, McClellan & Knight, 1996). Third, participants may not be skilful enough to

respond to questions which require introspection; in the present studies, for example, this may have encompassed questions relating to one's self-esteem and self-worth. All in all, these problems can have a bearing on the authenticity of the ultimate findings. As a researcher, I recognise each of these problems, however, it was important to find a 'trade-off' between gathering robust data in light of the research question being asked whilst at the same time attempting to reduce such biases as much as was feasible. The research questions asked across each of the studies in this thesis required gathering data on a victim's experience of workplace injustice, talk and its outcomes. It can be argued that the individuals best placed to answer such questions are victims of workplace injustice themselves; hence, a reliance on self-report data was necessary. Additionally, given that the experience of injustice, talk and their collective impact on outcomes occurs in close proximity (as evidenced in the daily diary study wherein daily experiences of injustice impact upon daily levels of talk and specific victim-centred outcomes), temporal separation between predictor and criterion variables might not have been an ideal study design. In addition to this reasoning, various methods were put in place to circumvent such biases, such as clarifying exactly what each question sought to capture, counter-balancing the order of questions and using relevant control variables, as outlined above.

Small sample sizes of study 2 and study 3

A further potentially limiting factor of the thesis is the sample sizes deployed for studies 2 and 3. For study 2 (repeated cross-section survey) this was $N=166$, and for study 3 (daily diary study) this was $N=31$.

With regards to study 2, chapter 5 drew on structured equation modelling (SEM) as its analytic tool. A general rule of thumb in SEM is that the sample size should be no less than 200, or approximately inclusive of 10-20 participants per parameter estimated (Kline, 2005; Lei & Wu, 2007). However, beyond this, there is no actual consensus on sample size, except to suggest that if there is missing or non-normally distributed data, then ‘larger’ samples are required: this was not the case for study 2. Additionally, researchers argue that sample size has only a small effect on model fit, with the reliability of observed measures and the number of indicators per factor being greater determinants of fit (Jackson, 2003). Although the slightly small sample size necessitates interpreting results with caution, given that the measurement model yielded excellent fit statistics (thereby providing impetus to the reliability of observed measures), there was no missing data and results from study 2 were replicated against a second time point, we can take some confidence in the findings.

With regards to study 3, the daily diary study, once again there is no agreed upon consensus as to an ideal sample size. Diary studies represent a cluster-sampling, with individuals sampled within daily responses (Mok, 1995). Sample size is asserted as dependent upon whether a researcher wants a large sample or a large number of days: it is one’s research question that is the determinant of sample size. A predominant focus on examining relationships between daily level variables (as was the case in study 3) necessitates a larger number of days, rather than persons. The reverse is true if a researcher is more interested in examining person-level predictors, especially if they concurrently examine fluctuations over days (Ohly, Sonnentag, Niessen & Zapf, 2010).

In following this principle, the focus of study 3 was on repeat observations over ten days in order to gain greater understanding of the antecedents and consequences of the impact of injustice and talk in victim-centred outcomes at a daily level. Nevertheless, Scherbaum & Ferreter (2009) argue that a sample size lower than 30 can lead to biased results. Indeed, most studies in management journals sample between 50-100 (Ohly et al., 2010). At $N=31$, study 3 is just above the cut-off limit and susceptible to criticism. However, study 3 was pitched as an exploratory investigation and it was able to find significant results with regards to the research questions. It merits replication using a much larger sample size in the future.

Current lack of understanding about the extent to which talk can help with recovery

And finally, because this thesis is one of the first investigations of its kind, there remain unanswered questions about the full utility of a talk mechanism. One can ask: will talk *always* be helpful for victims? When might it be ineffective? Does the power of talk as a recovery ‘tool’ diminish with certain types of injustice, or perhaps repeated instances of unfairness? These questions were beyond the scope of the present thesis which sought to provide a first-step investigation of this phenomenon. In this vein, there remain perhaps more unanswered than answered questions about the full impact of a talk mechanism. These are questions that provide a launch pad for future research, and it is to this we now turn.

8.7 Suggestions for future research

This thesis is one of the first in providing empirical evidence for the positive role that a talk mechanism can play for victims in the context of their workplace injustice experience. As a nascent area of enquiry, however, there is still much to improve on and learn in this field. Specifically, there are six directions future research can take: a) demonstrating causality of findings arising in the present thesis, b) investigating a talk phenomenon in greater detail, c) accounting for the role played by a significant other with whom talk is initiated, d) validating further the newly created measure of talk, e) integrating a manager and victim-centred perspective, and, f) understanding the impact of recovery on managers, in addition to victims.

Towards a greater understanding of causality of findings: how can we provide greater confidence in the association between injustice and talk, and talk and recovery outcomes?

The nature of studies comprising the present thesis leaves unanswered questions about the causality of findings. There are a number of avenues in this regard, for future research. First, evidence should be sought confirming the respective benefits of each type of talk. This may be best achieved in an experimental setting, such that participants are asked to engage in one type of talk only (randomly either emotion or cognition), perhaps over repeated intervals, with subsequent measures exploring their recovery: for example, their feelings, well-being and behavioural intentions. In order to reduce retrospective bias inherent in asking participants to recall a workplace injustice episode, a condition may be set up to initiate injustice in the experiment, such as using vignettes

and role-playing exercises. As part of such an experiment, a researcher may also want to explore whether the combined effects of talking about emotions and cognitions on recovery is superior compared to just one of these conditions alone.

Second, taking the ideas of this thesis back into a field setting, it would be ideal to explore the effects of talk on recovery over time. This approach would be contingent on finding the right sample, wherein injustice can be measured at time 1 (as opposed to asking individuals to recall a workplace injustice personal to them), with ensuing talk patterns and facets of recovery measured at one or two more intervals, separated by one-three months. Such an injustice context might be one in which an organisation has announced a pay cut or is planning a merger. In order to rule out limitations with the correlational nature of findings and to solve inference problems, one methodological aspect that a researcher could focus on is attaining dual source data; such data would be gathered from employees and their line managers. Though dependent on the nature of the research question being asked, an example of supervisor data which could be ascertained includes such variables as citizenship behaviour, production deviance and task performance. Such data would provide added layers of validity over and beyond data gathered in a self-report fashion from employees.

In keeping with the merits of dual source data, if it is possible, data from significant other(s) with whom victims speak to, should be attained to add greater layers of depth to the study. A design could be set up such that each participant taking part in a research study is asked to distribute relevant surveys to one or two people they talk to (or provide

their contact details for the researcher to send a survey directly to). Not only will this validate the nature of the conversation taking place but it will provide insights, in a real field-setting, of how significant others' responses may shape a victim's recovery process post-injustice (as relating to the future research area below).

Towards a greater understanding of the talk phenomenon: do victims of injustice engage in both types of talk, emotion and cognition?

One of the first tasks comprising this thesis, and as outlined in chapter 4, was to uncover the constituent components of talk. Subsequent chapters were built on these findings which delineated two types of talk, emotion and cognition. Throughout the empirical investigations the independent as well as moderated effects of both of these types of talk were investigated. But there remain a plethora of unanswered questions: to what extent does one versus both types of talk occur? Can victims of injustice continuously engage in emotion talk, and never really turn to cognition talk? Is it possible for a victim to circumvent emotion talk altogether and jump straight into thinking about how to move on, and finding a solution to their predicament (in other words, engage in cognition talk)?

These questions beg for greater exploration of the construct of talk in the context of workplace unfairness. The most fruitful method of uncovering answers to these questions is perhaps a daily diary investigation wherein those experiencing injustice are asked to track what they talk about. This is similar to the investigation carried out in chapter 7 of the present thesis, however, the major difference would be in tracking

fluctuations in the type of talk engaged in over time; chapter 7 was focused on repeated daily levels of analysis. Such an investigation might also track more closely individual difference variables to analyse if these can shed light on explanations linking the type of talk engaged in and recovery. For example, might high or low self-esteem levels impact the degree to which a victim is impacted by an injustice (Brockner, 1988) and their subsequent reaction of continuing to ponder on frustrated feelings versus thoughts about moving on?

An additional construct worthy of study is affect regulation, defined as “the process of initiating, maintaining, modulating, or changing the occurrence, intensity, or duration of... feeling states” (Eisenberg, Fabes, Guthrie & Reiser, 2000: 137). It is the extent to which an individual can deliberately regulate their own affective state, and is performed with the aim of improving or maintaining one’s positive affect - for example, thinking about happy thoughts in order to improve feelings of negativity (Parrot, 1993). Researchers report links between intrapersonal affect regulation and well-being such that the regulation of one’s own affect is an indicator of depression and life satisfaction (Gross, 2002; Nolen-Hoeksema & Morrow, 1993). One might argue that a victim’s ability to regulate their own affective state following their experience of injustice might have consequential effects for the type of talk they engage in. For example, might it be the case that a lack of regulation will lead victims to engage in spirals of emotion talk, such that they are caught in the midst of narrating their frustrations about their unpleasant experience and unable to improve this state? The construct of affect regulation provides a fascinating area of exploration and one that lends itself to a natural

coupling with the sentiments of positive psychology, as alluded to above ('practical implications'), since it explores conditions under which individuals are able to strive (or not) in the context of adversity.

Towards a greater understanding of the 'significant other': how do listener responses impact talk and subsequent victim-centred outcomes?

Perhaps one of the key questions left unanswered by this thesis is, what is the role played by the listener? Research makes it clear that talk is initiated with a 'significant other' (Nils & Rimé, 2012), and indeed results from the inductive research in chapter 4 highlighted that such significant others were family members (partners, parents, siblings), as well as individuals at work (colleagues, trade union officials, management). It was beyond the scope of this thesis to explore this facet of research, but it is a crucial one given that it can shed greater light on how talk impacts upon recovery. For example, and rather intuitively, one can imagine a scenario where a significant other may 'fuel the fire', by perpetuating the frustration felt by a victim; they might also challenge the victim's assessment of a situation, disagreeing that an act of injustice occurred.

Very little is known, however, about how responses received by others can shape a recipient's recovery process. There are a few exceptions to this. Early insights by Wetzler, Zeelenberg & Pieters (2007) posited that the responses that individuals desire when they share their emotions following a negative situation are emotionally congruent ones. For example, if a recipient of talk is angry, they prefer a significant other to

respond in ways that confirm this outlet of anger; if they express regret, they prefer a significant other to respond by de-dramatising the situation or giving advice. In sum, the scholars agree that in order for talk to be beneficial for a recipient (such that it improves their self-evaluation), the response obtained need to be congruent with the emotion shared. Experimental research by Nils & Rimé (2012) notes a discernible difference between listener responses that are socio-affective in nature (i.e. those that express emotional support, by listening and being empathetic) and those that are socio-cognitive (i.e. those that encouraged positive reframing of an incident). Whilst socio-affective responses led to participants feeling less lonely, it was the socio-cognitive condition which led to emotional recovery, defined as a reduction in negative feelings about an adverse situation.

Put simply, talk is a *social* act, a social interaction initiated with another whose input into a conversation is likely to impact both *how* a recipient feels, *what* they might think and the *behaviours* they may engage in. There is immense scope for research in this area, with studies potentially exploring such avenues as the following: what is the impact of different significant other responses on whether the victim engages in emotion versus cognition talk? What is the relationship between a significant others' response and ensuing victim reactions? For example, does 'fuelling the fire' lead to greater retaliatory responses?

Related to this, is a deeper consideration of *who* is spoken to and the impact of the type of significant other on a victim's recovery. My research in this thesis has shown that

victims of injustice speak to a range of others, from colleagues to family and friends and even professional personnel, such as lawyers and counsellors. This begs the question: to what extent does *who* a victim speaks to impact upon their ensuing recovery process? One might imagine that a conversation with a trusted and ‘personally’ known contact, such as a friend, partner or relative, might be more emotionally laden given that a victim may not attempt to hide their feelings from such individuals. Alternatively, a conversation with a manager or a solicitor might take the form of being less emotional, and more focused on finding solutions to one’s predicament. The source of the significant other is important since it may illuminate a number of insights about a victim’s recovery journey, providing answers to such questions as: who is the first person one speaks to and is this indicative of the type of talk that comes first? Are multiple others spoken to and if so, is there a pattern informing the order of significant others sought? Is there a time gap between the source of a significant other who is sought (for example, are personal trusted contacts spoken to first, before lawyers?) and again, is this indicative of the unfolding nature of talk? Is it helpful or not to talk with a range of others?

Towards a greater validation of the talk measure: how can the reliability and validity of the talk measure be improved?

In order to explore the phenomenon of talk, a new measure was created, as outlined in chapter 4. The construction of this measure followed a rigorous process, with inductive research informing its content and subsequent quantitative methodologies, including item-creation and confirmatory factor analysis, confirming both reliability and validity.

In order to improve the robustness of this measure, a number of further steps towards greater validation can be taken. This involves specifying the nomological network such that the measure is investigated in how it relates to other similar constructs. One such test of this is *convergent* validity, which refers to the extent to which alternative measures of a construct of interest share variance (Schwab, 1980). In other words, it is the degree to which two or more measures of constructs that are related, are empirically related. Though, to my knowledge, there is not a similar measure of talk in the context of workplace injustice, such a validation exercise may, for example, be conducted with the talk subset of items comprising Ways of Coping Scale (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985) and COPE (Carver et al., 1989). Both of these similarly explore the notion of dealing with adverse contexts, albeit outside a work context.

A second test of the nomological network is a test of *divergent* validity, which refers to the notion that a measure does not correlate too highly with measures from which it is actually meant to differ (Campbell, 1960). In other words, it is the degree to which two or more measures which are unrelated, are different. Such a validation exercise might be carried out with other dimensions of the Ways of Coping Scale (Folkman & Lazarus, 1985) and COPE (Carver et al., 1989), which pertain to different ways in which individuals seek to manage adverse events.

Towards an integration of a manager and victim-centred perspective: how can a justice agenda evolve to amalgamate both the victim and the manager?

Throughout this thesis reference has been made to two different perspectives for the study of dealing with the prevalence of injustice at work. The first is the *manager-centred* perspective which is the predominant focus of current research. It advocates ‘fixing’ and ‘remedying’ injustice, and views employees as malcontent individuals whose responses to unfairness can, and must, be managed. Viewing issues of unfairness through the eyes and interests of an organisation and its management, this perspective does little to assist scholars with understanding or appreciating what an employee goes through in the aftermath of an injustice, and why. In fact, employees are relegated to the role of passive recipients who might feel an injustice, but who are deemed unable to actually deal with it – that is the task of a manager or an organisation. To the extent that this perspective is singularly advanced, it relegates injustice to the dysfunctional output of employees’ personalities.

The second is an *employee-centred* perspective, studies on which are steadily making an appearance in justice research (Barclay & Saldhana, in press; Barclay & Skarlicki, 2009; Weiss & Rupp, 2011; Dhensa, 2011). Through this perspective, the person at the receiving end of an injustice is the prime focus of study, and it is his/her subjective and real lived experience in an organisational structure that becomes the lens through which unfairness is perceived. Management of an organisation are often the culprits of injustice, as their impact on a victim’s emotional, cognitive and behavioural journey is traced towards some notion of recovery. To the extent that this perspective is singularly

advanced, it can be argued that management and victims are seen in an ‘*us versus them*’ type of relationship.

No one perspective is more or less correct versus the other; both offer very different prisms through which to address injustice at work. Both perspectives might be better thought of as yielding different, but complimentary insights into injustice and its aftermath; whereas one focuses on how the *environment* in which an employee works can be better tailored to prevent injustice, the other reminds us of the importance of addressing the *human* impact of unfairness and how victims are more than passive agents in their own recovery. A future research agenda would do well to bide these two perspectives together, since a unification of both would provide robust theoretical and practical insights into the study of injustice in its entirety as a topic of investigation. If scholars from both perspectives work more closely together, the justice field would be in a privileged position of understanding how recovery from injustice functions both from the perspective of a victim as well as that of their working environment. Scholars from both camps should join forces and enrich each other’s research so that we may be in a better position to offer valuable concrete and practical advice to organisations and employees about why it is that a victim acts the way he or she does, and how both they, and their management, might be instrumental in enhancing recovery.

Towards an understanding of the impact of recovery on managers

In contrast to the receiver’s perspective which was the focus of the present thesis, future research would do well to take into account recovery from the perspective of the *actor*;

in other words, the manager. From data gathered in the studies comprising this thesis, management were often the culprits of unfairness. However, there is an alternative perspective here. Managers are often the 'bearers of bad news', having to enact injustice on behalf of the organisation, such as orchestrating a layoff process in times of economic hardship. Such a situation may place an emotional and psychological toll on managers themselves, given that the act of having to deliver an unfavourable message may not reconcile with their own notions of ethics and fairness. Indeed, Folger & Skarlicki (1998) discuss the term 'managerial distancing' to represent the terse and abrupt manner in which managers often lay off employees as a strategy to protect against their own feelings of discomfort.

In sum, the enactment of injustice on behalf of their organisation may in turn result in a situation of unfairness for managers themselves. In adding to the scant literature on the impact of injustice on managers, future research might want to address recovery from the perspective of the manager. Specifically, to what extent might talk help a manager offset the emotional and psychological burden of being caught between feeling violations of fairness themselves (i.e. what I am being asked to do by the company is not fair), yet having to enact an unfavourable decision, in order to tow the company line, against employees who in turn perceive the managers actions as unjust (i.e. a manager must layoff specific employees/tell employees they are to expect a pay cut)?

8.8 Conclusion

This thesis has taken a first-step in advancing the notion of victim-centred recovery by heeding calls to explore workplace injustice through the eyes of the person experiencing it. It has sought to fill a void in the justice literature which has focused largely on what an organisation or its management can do to fix and remedy an act of injustice, created often by them. In filling this void, this thesis has been part of a paradigm shift that seeks to put the subjective and lived victim experience at the forefront of a justice research agenda. Moving away from an extensive body of research which delineates rather simply that reactions to injustice are often of a negative kind (‘dark side of justice’), three separate studies comprising this thesis demonstrate that in effect victims can, and do, strive towards a sense of recovery from the often deleterious effects of fairness violations.

Adopting a newly created notion of recovery in the justice literature (Barclay & Saldhana, in press), I introduced the phenomenon of talk from clinical and social psychological literatures. Recovery was construed as a victim’s goal, with talk as the journey towards that goal. A host of novel findings indicate the prevalence of a type of talk that embodies an emotion and cognition component, with anger and justice needs as the trigger for talk, and outcomes such as self-efficacy, a search for solutions, increased support and optimism, and lessened anger, all representing consequences of talk relevant for victims. Talk has the power to *heal* by assisting victims emotionally, cognitively and behaviourally in the aftermath of their experience.

It is hoped that findings from this thesis can keep dialogue within the realm of organisational justice relevant, exciting and value-adding, paving the way for the integration of this field with the phenomenon of talk. A plethora of future research is required to unravel many unanswered questions; however, the present research embodies a number of value-added insights which not only have demonstrable potential to further a justice research agenda, but, can also provide concrete, practical advice to organisations and its management about what the aftermath of an injustice does to those at its receiving end and how recovery can operate within this same context. This thesis is a starting point for advancing our theoretical knowledge about the subjective impact of workplace injustice. Talking about one's unjust experience is not posited as *the* answer to a victim's injustice predicament, but, as the three studies within this thesis evidence, conversation is the naturally occurring glue that binds people together during times of workplace adversity; and, at such times, *it's good to talk*.

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Appendix 1: Interview Topic Guide (study 1)

Overview

- Thank interviewee for agreeing to talk
- Introduce research
 - Exploration of unfair workplace experiences, specifically how this affects you and your life in general
 - Information is guaranteed for confidentiality and anonymity
- Remind them of tape recording interview (aide memoire)

Background details

- Age, tenure, educational level, role/position, (note gender, confirm ethnicity)

The meaning of workplace unfairness

- What does workplace unfairness mean to you?

Recollection and description of an unfair workplace incident

- Think back over the last 6 months as an employee of X, to recall an incident where an unfair workplace experience has affected you and your life generally. If you can't recall an unfair workplace experience over the last 6 months, think about the last time you experienced an unfair workplace experience in your organisation.
- *Probe: OJ type/s*

Impact of unfair workplace experience

- What was the impact of this unfair workplace incident on you?
- How long did this impact last?
- *Probe: think, feel, health, "residue"*

Reactions to unfair workplace experience

- What was your first reaction, and when was this?
- Why was this your first reaction?
- How else did you react, specifically in attempts to mitigate the sense of unfairness?
- *Probe: emotional, behavioural, cognitive and health reactions, intensity, duration, others involved*

Talk as a reaction to workplace unfairness

- *Focus of this question will depend on whether they have brought talk up before this point*
- Tell me more about the talk that you engaged in **or** Did you talk to someone following the incident?
 - Why did you talk?
 - Who did you speak to and why? How soon after experience? Frequency?
 - Did you speak to anyone else and if so, why? How soon after? Frequency?
 - What did you talk about (*with each person*)?
 - How did you feel while talking? What did you think about?

Benefits of talk

- Was the conversation helpful?
- How did it make you feel afterwards?
- *Probe: health, emotions, cognitions*

Consequences of not talking

- What do you think might be the consequences for you, of not talking following the workplace unfairness you describe?

Role of listener/recipient

- What role did the listener(s)/recipient(s) play during your conversations?
- What did s/he say?
- Did the listener/recipient influence you in any way?

Hypotheses testing:

- From what you are saying, it seems.....am I right here?
- In your opinion, do you think it's typical that people talk after experiencing unfair work experiences?
- What else have you done other than talk? When and why?

Appendix 2: Example interview transcription (study 1)

Can you think of a time when you experienced workplace unfairness?

There have probably been a number of incidents.

One happened this year just before I left the company. I was on holiday and came back to be told my job had been given to somebody else. I used to be an Accounting Services manager looking after 3 different teams and I came back from holiday to find out that another part of my department had been given to somebody else and I'd been moved sideways-I was told that but if anything it was a backwards move.

And you had no inkling that changes were imminent?

No I just got back and was told that's what's happening. It'd already happened when I was away. That was the second time that part of my role had been given to this same person, without any discussion.

(...)

If you were to describe the impact of that perception of unfairness on you, how would you describe that?

Very upsetting actually. Quite devastating that your role, your opinion, your value is nothing, is worthless because whatever's gonna happen is gonna happen, and you have no say in it. When you raise objections to it or ask reasons why, you're made to feel like you're causing the problem, rather than anyone actually being willing to discuss it.

What happened after I did try and discuss it was lots of lies were told and that came to a head by me going to the Head of the whole department and saying this is what actually was said, you know, how's it become this? It was all glossed over as a misunderstanding.

Talk me through the sequence of events (...), from finding out about your role being handed over, feeling upset and then deciding to do something about it? The actions that you took – felt, thought...

It was about 10 o'clock on the Monday when I got to work, I was called into an office and I was told, well we've made a decision, somebody else has left. I was initially promised that that person's responsibility would be incorporated into my job because there wasn't really two roles there so I was just going to do that work, which for me then became progression and that was what I was promised and that was going to be my progression. What actually happened was I came back, was called into a meeting at 10 and was told what we're gonna do is give this part of your job to a certain person and you're going to take over the responsibility of the person's role that's left and keep part of your job. This isn't what I was told was gonna happen, this is the complete opposite of what I was told was going to happen and I don't see it as progression.

And you actually said that?

Oh yes, to my boss at the time. He basically turned around and said oh no you're just being stupid, and I said well it's not progression. And then he started talking about salary and it turned out that the person who'd taken on my responsibility had been given quite a big pay rise, and I was going to get a thousand pounds a year. And I was like, how can that be promotion if it's only a thousand pounds a year. How is that a promotion? It's a job that I'd always done and in fact, I did before, with other responsibilities. So I feel that this is actually, if anything, demotion. I was basically told I was being stupid and unreasonable.

So I went home and thought about it over-night, and I thought, no, I'm really not happy about this. I spoke to a few friends and my Partner at the time and – I didn't sleep at all that night, I was really upset about, I thought this is not on, how can it happen, as I said, it was the second time it had happened. And I'd always had good reviews, and my appraisal was good, and I'd always been, since I started at the company, I'd had steady promotions. And the person that they gave my responsibilities to had been off long-term sick almost constantly for 2 years. And nobody in the whole company could make any sense of it apart from my boss. It didn't work and there were lots of complaints about him.

You said you felt upset, worthless, and didn't sleep – do you think that those feelings etc, made worse by this being the second time this has happened?

Definitely. I think the first time it was bad, but the second time you just go through it all again, and you think, well I wasn't being unreasonable last time. It's almost like it's premeditated to try and actually bring you down, it's almost like it's a planned, the feeling is like it's planned, against you.

And why do you think that?

Just because of the way it was done and it wasn't handled professionally. When I questioned it, it was kinda turned around onto me that I was being unreasonable, when I think something like that is quite fair to ask why and what thought processes had gone into changing these things. (...) the only response I was eventually given was that if you don't want to move then we won't move anyone. I have my only theory as to why this has been done and it's been backed up subsequently.

I actually took some external advice and I was thinking of a constructive dismissal claim. After the initial first night and going back to speak to my boss the next day, after that I took some advice from an external solicitor.

**Appendix 3: Promotional material used in study 2: poster displayed in bus depots
and an A5 paper attached to drivers' payslips**

Client name hidden for
confidentiality



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

You will soon receive an
Employee Feedback Questionnaire
attached to your payslip

This is your opportunity to confidentially
share how you feel and think about your work



Appendix 3.1. Promotional material used in study 2: poster displayed in bus depots

Client name hidden for
confidentiality



Dear (Client name) Staff Member,

My name is Rashpal Dhensa-Kahlon and I am a PhD Student at the London School of Economics. I am writing to say "hello", as I will be carrying out a staff feedback questionnaire.

This **confidential** questionnaire is your opportunity to share how you feel about your work. It will also help me with my final year research project.

You will be receiving two questionnaires attached to your payslip, and each will take no more than 10 minutes to complete. You will receive both questionnaires separately, over a few weeks. After you complete both questionnaires, I will match your responses in order to get a deeper understanding of your feedback.









Please note that your responses are completely confidential. I guarantee that your depot and company will not get any data on your specific feedback, so your individual responses cannot be identified. No one will see your specific responses other than me. I am not interested in "who said what?". The only information that will be shared with your depot and company will be averages, such as "50% of employees commented that...". I will share a list of the good things at your depot, as well as where you think improvements can be made.

The questionnaire has received full backing from your GM and depot. I hope that you will take part. Your thoughts and opinions will provide valuable feedback.

Thank you, Rashpal

Appendix 3.2. Promotional material used in study 2: an A5 paper attached to drivers' payslips

**Appendix 4: Recruitment of diary participants and example of a daily reminder
(study 3)**



























Send        Options... HTML 

- This message hasn't been sent.

To...

Cc...

Subject: Daily Diary Survey for LSE Research - Please Read and Acknowledge

Tahoma  10                         

Many thanks for agreeing to take part in a diary study for my PhD research. This email very briefly explains what you are required to do and when.

The study aims to capture how people deal with unfairness at work, on a daily basis. People often comment on finding the experience of completing a daily diary as therapeutic, so I hope you will enjoy it!

You will receive a **pre-survey** in the next day or two. This short survey captures data which I believe may influence how people experience unfairness at work. **Please complete this asap, before the start of next week.**

The actual **ten-day survey** starts next week, from Monday (10th March). You will receive the same survey from Monday - Friday next week, and Monday - Friday the week after (w/c 17th March). The survey will take between 7-10 minutes to complete each day. You will be sent an email to the address above at a specified time each day. (In the pre-survey I ask about your daily work hours so I can make sure you receive the email at the same time at the end of the day).

And a few essential details:

- Please be as honest as you can in your responses. I guarantee complete confidentiality, and will only use the data for research purposes.
- Please answer the survey at roughly the same time each day.
- You will receive a £10 Amazon gift voucher for your participation, which I will email to you once the survey is closed. Please note that this means that you are required to complete the survey every day for ten days in order to receive the gift !!!

Please do let me know if you have any questions by return email. Thanks again, I appreciate your time and input.

Rashpal

Rashpal K. Dhensa-Kahlon
PhD Candidate, Employment Relations & Organisational Behaviour
 London School of Economics & Political Science
<http://www2.lse.ac.uk/management/research/phd-students/rdhensa.aspx>

Appendix 4.1. Promotional material used in study 3: recruitment of diary participants

This is your **DAY 2** survey. Please remember to complete this survey about your experiences at work TODAY.

Please complete this survey at the end of your day TODAY. Try to complete it at roughly the same time as yesterday.

Follow this link to the Survey:

[Take the Survey](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

https://lse.qualtrics.com/WRQualtricsSurveyEngine/?Q_SS=7Wj3pokIWdtiSSF_9NuELUTKA6K1SIL&_ =1

You will receive another link for Day 3's survey tomorrow at the same time.

Please get in touch if you have any questions.

Many thanks,

Rashpal

r.k.dhensa-kahlon@lse.ac.uk

07950 206839

Appendix 4.2. Promotional material used in study 3: example of daily reminder email sent to participants

Appendix 5: Scales alluding to voice (study 1: chapter 4)

Rusbult et al (1988)

First measure of Voice:

I would go to my immediate supervisor to discuss the problem

I would ask my co-workers for advice about what to do

I would talk to the office manager about how I felt about the situation

I would try to solve the problem by suggesting changes in the way work was supervised in the office

Second measure of Voice:

When I think of an idea that will benefit my company I make a determined effort to implement it

I have at least once contacted an outside agency (e.g., union) to get help in changing work conditions here

I sometimes discuss problems at work with my employee

When things are seriously wrong and the company won't act, I am willing to "blow the whistle"

I have made several attempts to change working conditions here

LePine & Van Dyne (1998)

This particular co-worker...

1. develops and makes recommendations concerning issues that affect this work group
2. speaks up and encourages other in this group to get involved in issues that affect the group
3. communicates his/her opinions about work issues to others in this group even if his/her opinion is different and others in the group disagree with him/her
4. keeps well informed about issues where his/her opinion might be useful to this work group
5. gets involved in issues that affect the quality of work life here in this group
6. speaks up in this group with ideas for new projects or changes in procedures

Burris (2011)

Challenging Voice:

1. I challenge my District Manager to deal with problems around here.
2. I give suggestions to my District Manager about how to make this restaurant better, even if others disagree.
3. I speak up to my District Manager with ideas to address employees' needs and concerns.

Supportive Voice:

1. I keep well-informed about issues where my opinion might be useful.
2. I get involved in issues that affect the quality of work-life here.
3. I speak up and encourage others to get involved in issues that affect [this organization].

Beehr, King & King (1990)

Non-work related things

We discuss things that are happening in our personal lives.

We talk about off-the-job interests that we have in common.

We share personal information about our backgrounds and families.
We talk about off-the-job social events.

Bad things

We talk about how we dislike some parts of our work.
We talk about the bad things about our work.
We talk about problems in working with doctors.
We talk about how this hospital is a lousy place to work.

Good things

We talk about the good things about our work.
We share interesting ideas about nursing care.
We talk about how this hospital is a good place to work.
We talk about the rewarding things about being a nurse.

Folkman & Lazarus (1985) (Ways of Coping Questionnaire: reproduced from University of Maryland webpage).

Confrontative coping

Stood my ground and fought for what I wanted
Tried to get the person responsible to change his or her mind.
I expressed anger to the person(s) who caused the problem
I let my feelings out somehow.
Took a big chance or did something very risky.
I did something which I didn't think would work, but at least I was doing something.

Distancing

Made light of the situation; refused to get too serious about it
Went on as if nothing had happened
Didn't let it get to me; refused to think too much about it
Tried to forget the whole thing
Looked for the silver lining, so to speak; tried to look on the bright side of things
Went along with fate; sometimes I just have bad luck

Self-controlling

I tried to keep my feelings to myself
Kept others from knowing how bad things were
Tried not to burn my bridges, but leave things open somewhat
I tried not to act too hastily or follow my first hunch
I tried to keep my feelings from interfering with other things too much
I thought about how a person I admire would handle this situation and used that as a model
I tried to see things from the other person's point of view

Seeking social support

Talked to someone to find out more about the situation
Talked to someone who could do something concrete about the problem
I asked a relative or friend I respected for advice
Talked to someone about how I was feeling
Accepted sympathy and understanding from someone
I got professional help

Accepting responsibility

Criticized or lectured myself

Realized I brought the problem on myself

I made a promise to myself that things would be different next time

I apologized or did something to make up

Escape-avoidance

Wished that the situation would go away or somehow be over with

Hoped a miracle would happen

Had fantasies or wishes about how things might turn out

Tried to make myself feel better by eating, drinking, smoking, using drugs or medication, etc

Avoided being with people in general

Refused to believe that it had happened

Took it out on other people

Slept more than usual.

Planful problem-solving

I knew what had to be done, so I doubled my efforts to make things work

I made a plan of action and followed it

Just concentrated on what I had to do next – the next step

Changed something so things would turn out all right.

Drew on my past experiences; I was in a similar situation before

Came up with a couple of different solutions to the problem.

Positive reappraisal

Changed or grew as a person in a good way

I came out of the experience better than when I went in

Found new faith

Rediscovered what is important in life

I prayed

I changed something about myself

I was inspired to do something creative

Carver et al (1989) COPE Inventory

1. I try to grow as a person as a result of the experience.
2. I turn to work or other substitute activities to take my mind off things.
3. I get upset and let my emotions out.
4. I try to get advice from someone about what to do.
5. I concentrate my efforts on doing something about it.
6. I say to myself "this isn't real."
7. I put my trust in God.
8. I laugh about the situation.
9. I admit to myself that I can't deal with it, and quit trying.
10. I restrain myself from doing anything too quickly.
11. I discuss my feelings with someone.
12. I use alcohol or drugs to make myself feel better.
13. I get used to the idea that it happened.

14. I talk to someone to find out more about the situation.
15. I keep myself from getting distracted by other thoughts or activities.
16. I daydream about things other than this.
17. I get upset, and am really aware of it.
18. I seek God's help.
19. I make a plan of action.
20. I make jokes about it.
21. I accept that this has happened and that it can't be changed.
22. I hold off doing anything about it until the situation permits.
23. I try to get emotional support from friends or relatives.
24. I just give up trying to reach my goal.
25. I take additional action to try to get rid of the problem.
26. I try to lose myself for a while by drinking alcohol or taking drugs.
27. I refuse to believe that it has happened.
28. I let my feelings out.
29. I try to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive.
30. I talk to someone who could do something concrete about the problem.
31. I sleep more than usual.
32. I try to come up with a strategy about what to do.
33. I focus on dealing with this problem, and if necessary let other things slide a little.
34. I get sympathy and understanding from someone.
35. I drink alcohol or take drugs, in order to think about it less.
36. I kid around about it.
37. I give up the attempt to get what I want.
38. I look for something good in what is happening.
39. I think about how I might best handle the problem.
40. I pretend that it hasn't really happened.
41. I make sure not to make matters worse by acting too soon.
42. I try hard to prevent other things from interfering with my efforts at dealing with this.
43. I go to movies or watch TV, to think about it less.
44. I accept the reality of the fact that it happened.
45. I ask people who have had similar experiences what they did.
46. I feel a lot of emotional distress and I find myself expressing those feelings a lot.
47. I take direct action to get around the problem.
48. I try to find comfort in my religion.
49. I force myself to wait for the right time to do something.
50. I make fun of the situation.
51. I reduce the amount of effort I'm putting into solving the problem.
52. I talk to someone about how I feel.
53. I use alcohol or drugs to help me get through it.
54. I learn to live with it.
55. I put aside other activities in order to concentrate on this.
56. I think hard about what steps to take.
57. I act as though it hasn't even happened.
58. I do what has to be done, one step at a time.
59. I learn something from the experience.
60. I pray more than usual.

Key:

Positive reinterpretation and growth: 1, 29, 38, 59
Mental disengagement: 2, 16, 31, 43
Focus on and venting of emotions: 3, 17, 28, 46
Use of instrumental social support: 4, 14, 30, 45
Active coping: 5, 25, 47, 58
Denial: 6, 27, 40, 57
Religious coping: 7, 18, 48, 60
Humor: 8, 20, 36, 50
Behavioral disengagement: 9, 24, 37, 51
Restraint: 10, 22, 41, 49
Use of emotional social support: 11, 23, 34, 52
Substance use: 12, 26, 35, 53
Acceptance: 13, 21, 44, 54
Suppression of competing activities: 15, 33, 42, 55
Planning: 19, 32, 39, 56

Appendix 6: Coding process between coder 1 and coder 2 (study 1, chapter 4)

Appendix 6. Table 1. Coding process between coder 1 and 2: coding attempt 1 (10% data)

CODER 1

Category Name	Category Definition	Examples of verbatim talk episodes
Negative emotion	<i>Definition: Releasing strong negative emotions from an experience that made the individual angry. Shared with husband wife/ partner/ friend/ colleague-friend. Talk about the situation experienced, the actors involved, condemning what has taken place. Not seeking advice or a solution or resolution to the situation experienced.</i>	<p>TE2. “(Why did you talk to people?) I don’t know why because I wasn’t really listening to what they had to say anyway (laughs). I think it was just venting, just getting it out, getting the frustration out. I think it was more getting the frustrations and anger out than it was seeking a resolution or advice”</p> <p>TE12. “I talked to my boyfriend about it, I was outraged that people could think this about me, I said this is what they think about me, the girls, but I thought they’d think differently”</p>
Spreading gossip	<i>Victim puts out their side of the story, even if it’s confidential information, telling others about how bad the perpetrator and the organisation is.</i>	<p>TE32. “Having criticized the service for being very passive aggressive environment...I’m very much that breed myself. Being snide and sending that communication to friends. I kept up with friends a lot and to a degree, like-minded colleagues. I’m fairly well connected in the organization and I have to admit that I probably spread bad vibes around quite a bit – proper revenge (laughs)”</p> <p>TE50. “...I didn’t tell them this as a victim but I’d say <i>oh there’s been a big understanding with my boss and I’m quite angry about it</i> to the more I was not heard the more I was saying to others <i>and did you know they cancelled my pay rise and did you know they screwed this up</i> – and all these people I was starting to tell, I mean lots of people knew about it, that is when the Chief Executive saw me cos he wanted me to not talk anymore”</p>

Seeking Validation & Advice	<i>Talking to others to figure out what to do next? Involves asking questions, seeking validation of one's own viewpoint and ideas.</i>	<p>TE81. “Another friend/housemate, invited her good friend, an employment lawyer, over to our house one evening just to talk things over with me. That was also extremely helpful and I forgot to mention this guy on the previous page. Several times I called him for advice when I couldn't get through to Citizens Advice Bureau or my union. On several occasions we arranged to speak on the phone in order for me to update him on the situation. He, like the union, also suggested I back down, and although I definitely listened to his advice, I decided that he wasn't fully taking into account the very personal unfairness of the situation, which only me and my employer were aware of.”</p> <p>TE75. “So I'm in another job, he's got a certain pot of money to share amongst his people and I'm not in his team anymore so I've hit 110% of my target and I only get 15% of my bonus, the lowest bonus I've had in 12 years when I was a Junior Manager cos he just thinks well I'll take that money that was hers. He gets a pot based on what everybody's achieved and it's my bonus pot and he gives it to somebody else and nobody stopped him. That was when I wrote-I got a lawyer, I thought this is, this is-that's when I started to think is this cock up now or is this conspiracy?”</p>
Asking others if wrong/right	<i>Seeking to validate one's own sense of self, but checking in with others as to the viability of how one (a victim) feels, or plans to act.</i>	<p>TE64. “Actually I think she can, she could offer a different perspective just by the questions she asks sometimes.”</p> <p>TE61. “Another person was my sister, my sister generally asks good questions, she's never the one whose going to be like ah you're right, it's horrible, she's always going to try to have</p>

		another, try to have the perspective of the other person or like try to have a contrary perspective to mine and I like that because it helps me to de-dramatise the thing you know...
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CODER 2

Category Name	Category Definition	Examples of verbatim talk episodes
Venting Liberally	<i>A cathartic release of the frustration that a victim experienced from a workplace injustice.</i>	<p>TE19. “(Can you give me an example of how those conversations might have gone?) “Venting. Venting. I suppose somehow one acknowledges that it makes no material difference, but somehow it is better to do these things. To moan, I guess there’s something cathartic to moaning. And some of them knew me particularly well for longer periods of time...”</p> <p>TE30. “I talked to my boyfriend about it, I was outraged that people could think this about me, I said this is what they think about me, the girls, but I thought they’d think differently”</p>
Condemning Perpetrator	<i>Saying bad things about the perpetrator. Taking a tone of moral condemnation to let loose how bad this person made the victim feel. Includes use of metaphors and expletives.</i>	<p>TE102. “Told people exactly what happened with regard to him calling me into his office and waving the email he received from his Manager – he got aggressive, banging on his desk...I wanted colleagues to know as there had been a number of such incidents and I wanted as many people to be aware of these as possible”</p> <p>T111. “It’s so inefficient, but I know the company’s inefficient, cos now I’m also a lot older and I’m more philosophical about it, and I usually call it to everyone...it’s a fucking shit-hole I</p>

		used to say to my colleagues, cos every time something goes wrong that's my take on it..."
Seeking Input from Others/Explanations	<i>Asking others questions in order to attain accuracy about a situation and more information. This is to understand the injustice occurrence in more detail, perhaps to do something about it.</i>	<p>TE33. "I went to my manager, who I had an exceptionally good relationship with, and asked if it had been considered that I had a poor job of setting up the team. I was told that I had done an outstanding job. I then asked why the job description had been formulated so that I couldn't apply and was told that it hadn't been done intentionally to exclude me but had been designed to accommodate the current job holder (a colleague who was much older and had been there longer than I had)."</p> <p>TE74. "I was still angry even after 6 months and I was asking why they never even explained to me the reasons I hadn't been considered for the position. I said that I had been invited to participate in the process by the global head of the function (Global CIO) so therefore I thought I had the skills and seniority to fill out the role. My boss told me that it had been a mistake, that the CIO said that without thinking and that I didn't have the skills or expertise to fill out the role. I also asked if I didn't have the potential, why I have been sent to a leadership program. And he kept quiet. Finally he said that sometimes companies give wrong signs to employees, which I never fully understand what he meant."</p>
Seeking Constructive Solution	<i>Ultimately, this is about action, doing something to change one's situation. So rather than venting frustration, a victim talks to someone, bounces ideas off another person – all in order to move on from the injustice episode.</i>	TE5. "In my conversation to my more senior colleague which was the most useful in terms of which actions to take, we were very 'action-oriented' in the sense that we talked clearly about what I have to do now. So he offered me a very good solution, and it helped that he knew all the people involved without me having to say any names; it was also important that I could trust

		<p>him and know that he wouldn't gossip about this or damage my reputation by telling other co-workers as I didn't want to be the complaining type. So I remember it being a casual conversation, we just accidentally met and started talking about how we were, etc., and then I mentioned, very generally that I wasn't very happy at work right now, etc., and he quickly understood anyway.”</p> <p>TE7. “I felt I needed to talk to him because I felt maybe he doesn’t know that actually what’s – because we were in a kind of French graduate programme and I thought it was-he just seemed to be considering me as mainly like internal as if I’d never worked before so I thought maybe he doesn’t really understand the nature of the programme so maybe I just need to talk with him and say look I’ve done, erm, more sophisticated things in the past and I’m able to do them, and I’m able to you know participate and contribute at a higher level let’s say, and so erm, and so I talked with him, like in a formal manner and his reaction was like no you’re here to do this job, so you’re here like to just basically do (laughs) graphs and I don’t want you to do anything else so he was like, super, he was not really negotiating like there was no like (pause)”</p>
<p>Asking Questions</p> <p>.</p>	<p><i>The victim asks questions in order to get some reassurance and/or clarity about their injustice experience</i></p>	<p>TE41. “So then I sort of felt that ok now it’s time to ask her what’s the problem so I approached her. I was <i>very</i> nervous and-because I hate all this stupid stuff at work where you can’t do your things you just have to waste your time on sorting out this personal whatever-so I approached her and said okay, I have noticed I am very sorry, but I have noticed that you know, have I done something wrong, you know to pitch it (laughs) I know I haven’t done something wrong but in order to make her</p>

		<p>comfortable or whatever-because I really <i>didn't want this and it was so bad</i> I mean I'm like, I kept-I was so frustrated during this period of time actually, it couldn't get off my mind, I couldn't concentrate and stuff so I'm like what is-what happened, why, did I do something wrong, did I insult you and I haven't realized?"</p> <p>TE53. "I asked for advice of what I should do to both supervisor and colleague and they suggested I face the situation head on and discuss it with the boss..".</p>
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Appendix 6. Table 2. Coding process between coder 1 and 2: coding attempt 2 (10% data)

CODER 1

Category Name	Category Definition	Examples of verbatim talk episodes	
		CODER 1	CODER 2
Venting	<i>The cathartic release of outward-focused negative emotions.</i>	<p>TE46. “I’ll go home and I’ll say to my wife <i>you wouldn’t believe what so and so did today?</i>” Even to the point of telling her about the phone hanging up episode”</p> <p>TE13. “I’m not intimidated by rank. I’ve been for coffee and lunch with lots of influential people, and you talk socially about what you like, what you’re doing and I don’t have a professional veneer, I said <i>I’m working for the bastard Fawltly downstairs</i>”</p>	<p>TE99. “Talking to my boyfriend, I would go into great detail to describe what I did and how my boss reacted, the things he said to me, how hurtful he was, that I was angry and frustrated, I would tell them I hate my job and that I wish I could quit, I would explain why I thought this was unfair to me and I would describe the other girls who acted differently</p> <p>“Well apart from the anger, I let loose (in conversation to friends). Well I would tell them that it’s totally unacceptable, pissed off and thinking of leaving la la la , and some threatening. Probably verbally aggressive, you know like very upset about it.”</p>
Gossip	<i>Saying bad things about the perpetrator who is held responsible for one’s experience of injustice. Using metaphors and expletives.</i>	TE143. “...I didn’t tell them this as a victim but I’d say oh there’s been a big understanding with my boss and I’m quite angry about it to the more I was not heard the more I was saying to others and did you know they cancelled my pay rise and did you know they screwed this up – and all these people I was starting to tell, I	TE13. “I’m not intimidated by rank. I’ve been for coffee and lunch with lots of influential people, and you talk socially about what you like, what you’re doing and I don’t have a professional veneer, I said <i>I’m working for the bastard Fawltly downstairs</i> ”

		<p>mean lots of people knew about it, that is when the Chief Executive saw me cos he wanted me to not talk anymore”</p> <p>TE180. “I explained that this senior manager had evaluated me unfairly, changing the final outcome of my evaluation significantly. I remember talking about the senior manager with contempt and making personal attacks to his physical appearance (he was fat)”</p>	<p>TE176. “This bitch just made me cry, who does she think she is? I have done a good job working hard and she is the useless one and she should not be shouting at me, and on top of that she wanted to close the door. She said she is going to get me fired soon, stupid bitch”</p>
Sense-making	<p><i>Asking questions, seeking input from others in order to process an experience (making sense of it) and attempting to arrive at a validation of one’s unjust experience.</i></p>	<p>TE150. “I think conversations are massively important because it’s the only time you’re going to get a different point of view, and it’s massively important. One of my ex-bosses was really good at reading people and he worked people out – and he would constantly tell me “X you need to see this from somebody else’s point of view.”</p> <p>TE151. “Directly afterwards I was still very upset and talked to my two colleagues in the kitchen. I needed to hear from other people that it wasn’t me but him.”</p>	<p>TE162. “Not in the same team but the same department and actually some of them were really good friends of mine. And they said well I think it’s really unfair the way this person has been treating you. We’d go for a drink. And they would say, they would themselves start going on about this person because he had a bit of a bad reputation anyway. But people would say it’s really unfair the way he treats you, and I’d say yeah you’re probably right.”</p> <p>TE134. “I spoke to a couple of colleagues, without names, but I guess they figured it out, I was asking like do you think I’m being rude? in general to people like have you noticed that I’m trying to, I suppress people when I speak? And they said well I dunno, why are you asking?”</p>

Active Solutions	<i>Actively searching for a solution, a way out, a way to move on, away from one's predicament of experienced injustice.</i>	<p>TE179. “So, it was really short, actually it was like okay I understand you, I understand how you feel, I’m not pleased either because this new guy is changing everything and he was also affected by this situation in a negative way – also because I think he, at some point he hoped that he would become the new Chief Economist, so he was also frustrated (laughs) but he was like there’s nothing we can do, at least for the next 3 months so he was also like we can’t do anything, I can’t help you”</p> <p>TE115. “I then went – and I didn’t even tell anybody that I wasn’t happy about it – I just went and spoke to people and said I’m in the market, what have you got, I’m looking for a job?”</p>	<p>T113. “The only advice which I considered was after I spoke to the Employment Law Specialist and they said don’t go back today, cos it’s wrong what they’re doing, which is basically what everybody else had been telling me, he was a Legal Specialist – the way they did it wasn’t based on emotion but on the fact that this was discrimination.”</p> <p>TE125. “And it was resolved in quite a human way, which was, he then rang me back in the afternoon and said I apologise, I shouldn’t have talked like that, it was wrong, but we need to...and I said, we talked a little bit about it and I said we need to agree how we handle this.”</p>

Appendix 6. Table 3. Coding process between coder 1 and 2: Final coding categories agreed upon (10% data)

CODER 1 and 2 EXAMPLES

Category Name	Category Definition	Examples of verbatim talk episodes
Emotion focused talk	Talk that represents the release of strong negative emotions. This form of talk is often described as the antithesis of “bottling it up” because it refers to “letting it all out”. Emanating from an unjust experience, this talk embodies outward-focused emotions, which may also include references to the perpetrator.	<p>TE1. “I really just felt that nobody was listening to me and that was what was so, initially I was so angry about it, they all thought that when I complained they all thought I wanted compensation and I said right from the very start I said this is wrong and they said well we can give you a pay rise. I thought why would I want a pay rise (laughing) I want you to recognize that this is not what you do you cannot make a decision like this, all your procedures say something differently and then morally you do not two weeks after Christmas holidays, two weeks after somebody has a car crash when all you know is that they’ve had a car crash and a bit of whiplash you don’t even know how badly ill they are - is that you just decide to throw them away you don’t do that is wrong...”</p> <p>TE86. “I actually told him in one meeting that I’d lost all respect for him. I used to respect him but I can’t now – he didn’t handle this properly and I told him it was wrong what he’d done”</p>

<p>Cognition focused talk</p>	<p>Talk that represents acquiring knowledge, asking for advice, gaining perspective and seeking solutions in order to actively work towards resolving one's problem/situation to determine a way forward.</p>	<p>TE61. “We talked about where she is when, how she lies when I ask where is our senior manager. We discussed what strategy or technique I should use to not let her see me coming. The senior manager actively helped her and consciously harmed my efforts by exposing my intentions to everybody while concealing her intentions so as nobody can prepare a defense strategy.”</p> <p>TE113. “My boyfriend at that time was living in Hong Kong and he works in the bank as well and he was dealing with something similar, like he had a very difficult boss, so he was trying to offer solutions and he was like maybe you shouldn't like worry, do nothing, and it was actually quite in favour of this solution, he was like just enjoy London.”</p>
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**Appendix 7: Packet of information provided to coders: instructions, codebook
with examples and recording sheet (study 1, chapter 4)**

Instructions for completion of Coding Task

Instructions for Categorisation of Talk for Rashpal's PhD Thesis

Please read all instructions before beginning

Background of the Research

For my PhD thesis, I have collected critical incidents of the content of talk following workplace injustice. I have collected this data from a sample of working students, as well as working professionals. All respondents were asked to describe an experience of workplace unfairness, followed by what they talked about straight after this experience. These incidents were then coded by raters who independently determined, and then agreed upon two types of talk. No one has systematically examined talk emanating from an injustice experience at work before nor developed a scale to such an effect.

Main Objective

You will be working with the 180 talk episodes. The main objective for you is to sort these talk episodes (items) into two categories of talk. The first category is *emotion* focused talk, and the second category is *cognition* focused talk. You will sort each of the 180 talk episodes into one of these two categories based on the content of each statement. If you are familiar with any theories or models of Talk in the workplace, please disregard this knowledge. Instead, try to interpret content patterns present in the reported talk episodes.

The Sorting Exercise: An Overview

1. Open the Excel file called "180 talk statements". You will find a list of 180 talk episodes. Each talk episode is numerically labelled. For example, #161 talk episode refers to the following:

TE161. "Some of them who were more trustworthy-sort of knew me better-I did value the advice that was given, I can see it in your eyes you're going to resign don't do it, it'll be gone in a few months! That did stabilize me a little."

2. Remember that you are sorting the talk episodes into one of two categories: *emotion* or *cognition* focused talk. These definitions are provided on the side of the spreadsheet.
3. If at any point you get stuck or are confused, then please do not hesitate to call me or come and see me in office NAB 3.09. (Number: *****839).

Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Read each talk episode in turn. Think about the following questions in order to code the talk episode as *emotion* or *cognition* focused talk:
 - a. What is the function of talk?
 - b. What is the the talker doing through their talk?
2. Emotion focused talk is represented as **1**. Cognition focused talk is represented as **2**. Once you have decided which category a talk episode belong to, in the third column entitled "Talk Category" place a **1** or **2**.

3. Column 4 is entitled “Not sure”. If you can’t categorise a particular talk episode, put an **X** in this column.
4. Please do not forget to save your spreadsheet as you work! Please email back to me once you have completed the activity.

Thank you!
Rashpal

Appendix 7. Table 1. Types of talk with examples from the 180 talk episodes collected

Key: TE = talk episode number.

Talk Category	Example talk episode
<p>Emotion focused talk</p> <p>Talk that represents the release of strong negative emotions. This form of talk is often described as the antithesis of “bottling it up” because it refers to “letting it all out”. This talk embodies outward-focused emotions, which may also include references to the perpetrator.</p>	<p>TE26. “Burst into tears, recalled the incident, sat down and said I thought it was unfair as it was in front of everyone else on the ward”</p> <p>TE72. “It helped me calm down, initially I was quite flustered, quite upset talking to her about it, and she’d ask questions to talk through it. And she well – she was quite angry as well, she just couldn’t believe it, she was like, this is utter rubbish, how can they do this?”</p> <p>TE110. “I talked to a friend in another division who – there weren’t very many people who I was friends with at this stage because you’re the leader – but we went out for a coffee and I said “I’m really pissed off with this”.</p>
<p>Cognition focused talk</p> <p>Talk that represents acquiring knowledge, asking for advice, gaining perspective and seeking solutions in order to actively work towards resolving one’s problem/situation to determine a way forward.</p>	<p>TE130. “I relayed the events as they happened, minute by minute, but also my reaction and thoughts as things unfolded. My approach to speaking to my colleague, friend and trade union activist contact who was there to give me advice, were very similar. In terms of information, they matched, I maybe gave less of my emotional response...it was everything to really put the situation across, to the point where they could empathise with me and give advice.”</p> <p>TE171. “with the other like, the guy who studied with me, with him yeah we talked, and with him so we were both trying to think about solutions what should we do to get out, how should we deal with this problem, more like strategy coordination although none of us could solve the problem without talking to someone else.”</p> <p>“Yeah actually the chap I work for, Andy, who was-when I was promoted it was to the same level as him- so prior to my promotion he was a level above me and he was actually very helpful and he advised me to- he was the one who told me to just cut out, go out the picture and just go straight to James. So he was quite helpful.”</p>

Example of Excel sheet of talk episodes and recording columns:

File Home Insert Page Layout Formulas Data Review View Add-Ins									
<div> <div>Cut Copy Paste Format Painter</div> <div> <div>Times New Roman 12</div> <div>A A</div> <div>B I U</div> <div>Font</div> </div> <div> <div>Wrap Text</div> <div>Alignment</div> <div>Merge & Center</div> </div> <div> <div>General</div> <div>Number</div> </div> <div> <div>Conditional Formatting</div> <div>Format as Table</div> <div>Cell Styles</div> </div> <div> <div>Insert</div> <div>Delete</div> <div>Format</div> </div> <div> <div>Σ Au</div> <div>Fill</div> <div>Cl</div> </div> </div>									
D6 fx									
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
1	#	Talk episode	Category	Not sure					
1	1	"I really just felt that nobody was listening to me and that was what was so, initially I was so angry about it, they all thought that when I complained they all thought I wanted compensation and I said right from the very start I said this is wrong and they said well we can give you a pay rise. I thought why would I want a pay rise (laughing) I want you to recognize that this is not what you do you cannot make a decision like this, all your procedures say something differently and then morally you do not two weeks after Christmas holidays, two weeks after somebody has a car crash when all you know is that they've had a car crash and a bit of whiplash you don't even know how badly ill they are - is that you just decide to throw them away you don't do that is wrong..."			Emotion focused talk = 1 Cognition focused talk = 2 Not sure = X				
2	2	"(Why did you talk to people?) I don't know why because I wasn't really listening to what they had to say anyway (laughs). I think it was just venting, just getting it out, getting the frustration out. I think it was more getting the frustrations and anger out than it was seeking a resolution or advice"							
3	3	"When I'm sitting with my colleagues and I realize they have the same position and we start reinforcing each other and saying (mimics voice) <i>oh yes our life is so difficult and he's getting it for free he's such a bastard</i> " and we felt so happy and united, it was pretty much facing an enemy"							
4	4	"I've since raised it with a band 7 nurse and just said that I think it's quite mean that I'm working every single day of Christmas but I didn't do it in an angry tone, I didn't do it in a way that I wanted them to change the rota, I just thought I'd let them know that actually I'm not that happy, I didn't really think that it was fair, so that they know"							
5	5	"In my conversation to my more senior colleague which was the most useful in terms of							
Sheet1 Sheet2 Sheet3									
Ready									

Appendix 7.1. Example of Excel sheet of talk episodes and recording columns

Appendix 8: Supplementary results from the second time point survey (for chapter 5 results)

The results below are from the second time point repeated survey, conducted six weeks after the first time point survey (with London bus drivers). The sample is the same as outlined in chapter 5. The full hypothesised model (as presented in chapter 5) was replicated at this second time point. The tables below present all analyses: descriptive statistics, model fit indices, direct and indirect regression paths, as well as interaction results.

Appendix 8. Table 1. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a

	Variable	Mean.	SD.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	Gender (1=male, 2=female)	1.08	.26										
2	Tenure (years)	7.94	7.33	-.01									
3	Neuroticism	2.38	.94	.02	.11								
4	Overall injustice	2.68	.47	-.17*	.03	.34**	(.85)						
5	Anger	2.15	1.14	-.11	.01	.46**	.42**	(.90)					
6	Relational need (OBSE)	3.37	.74	.16*	-.06	-.41**	-.52**	-.52**	(.89)				
7	Meaning need	3.40	.96	.08	-.01	-.24**	-.49**	-.49**	.63**	(.91)			
8	Emotional talk ^b	2.80	1.23	.01	.13	.33**	.14	.42**	-.17*	-.15*	(.80)		
9	Cognition talk ^b	3.48	1.41	-.05	.01	.08	.15*	.22**	.02	.01	.55**	(.87)	
10	Generalised self-efficacy	3.88	.77	.12	-.02	-.15*	-.17*	-.24**	.24**	.23**	-.10	.03	(.88)

a $n = 166$. Internal reliabilities (alpha coefficients) for the overall constructs are given in parentheses on the diagonal

b Emotion talk and cognition talk were measured on a 7-point scale

** $p < 0.01$

* $p < 0.05$

Appendix 8. Table 2. Summary of model fit indices

	X2	df	Δ X2/df	SRMR	IFI	CFI	RMSEA
Measurement Model	708.001	470		.07	.94	.93	.05
Hypothesised Structural model (controls)	926.406	602		.09	.92	.91	.06
Independence Model	-	-	-	.00	.00	.00	.186
Hypothesised Structural model (no controls)	784.997	512	141.409, 90	.09	.93	.92	.05

Appendix 8. Table 3. Hypothesised direct effects (regression weights) ^a

Predictor variable	Dependent variable	β	S.E.	Standardized β
Overall injustice →	Anger	1 *	.39	.40
Overall injustice →	Relational Need	-1.45 **	.31	-.73
Overall injustice →	Meaning Need	-1.1 **	.26	-.63
Relational Need →	Anger	-.22	.14	-.16
Meaning need →	Anger	-.27 *	.13	-.18
Anger →	Emotional Talk	.53 *	.10	.47
Anger →	Cognition Talk	-.20 *	.12	-.19

^a N = 166 ; ** p < 0.01 ; * p < 0.05

Appendix 8. Table 4. Hypothesised indirect effects ^a

Predictor variable – Mediator – Dependent Variable	β	Standardized β
Overall Injustice → Anger → Emotional talk	.86 *	.29
Overall Injustice → Anger → Cognition talk	.49 **	.16
Relational need → Anger → Emotional talk	-.40 *	-.27
Relational need → Anger → Cognition talk	-.23 *	-.15
Meaning need → Anger → Emotional talk	-.42 **	-.25
Meaning need → Anger → Cognition talk	-.24 *	-.14

^a N = 166 ; ** p < 0.01 ; * p < 0.05

Appendix 8. Table 5. Hypothesised Interaction effects ^a

	β	S.E.	Standardized β
Anger → Cognition Talk (main effect)	.33*	.10	.28
Generalised self-efficacy → Cognition Talk (main effect)	.16	.14	.10
Interaction effect	.04	.09	.03

^a N = 166 ; ** p <0.01 ; * p <0.05 ;

In summary, the results were replicated from the first time point survey, as outlined in chapter 5:

- Workplace injustice is directly associated with anger, relational and meaning justice needs
- In terms of indirect paths leading to emotion talk (injustice via anger, relational need via anger and meaning need via anger), all were significant.
- In terms of indirect paths leading to cognition talk (injustice via anger, relational need via anger and meaning need via anger), all were also significant.
- The interaction effect of self-efficacy on cognition talk was not significant.
- The major finding from this time point, versus the first time point survey outlined in chapter 5, is that indirect effects for *cognition talk* were also significant.

Appendix 9: Supplementary results from the second time point survey (for chapter 6 results)

The results below are from the second time point repeated survey, conducted six weeks after the first time point survey (with London bus drivers). The sample is the same as outlined in chapter 5. The full hypothesised model (as presented in chapter 5) was replicated at this second time point. The tables below present moderation analyses for each of the five outcomes referred to in chapter 6: retaliation, rumination, self-affirmation, active solutions and psychological well-being. Significant interaction effects were found for: rumination and active solutions. These are elaborated below, with the relevant simple slope diagrams and significance outcomes.

Appendix 9. Table 6. Descriptive statistics, correlations and reliabilities ^a

	Variable	Mean.	SD.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Gender (1=male, 2=female)	1.08	.26									
2	Tenure (years)	7.94	7.33	-.01								
3	Emotional talk ^b	2.80	1.23	.01	.13	(.80)						
4	Cognition talk ^b	3.48	1.41	-.05	.01	.55**	(.87)					
5	Retaliation	1.90	1.00	-.12	-.02	.56**	.33**	(.87)				
6	Rumination	2.44	.88	-.04	.11	.42**	.30**	.32**	(.78)			
7	Self-affirmation	3.32	1.11	-.01	-.04	.16*	.47**	-.02	.10	(.89)		
8	Active solutions	2.80	.86	-.11	-.11	.42*	.67**	.35**	.33**	.55**	(.73)	
9	Psychological well-being	3.14	.85	.12	.10	-.12	-.03	-.25**	-.03	.18*	.06	(.88)

a $n = 166$. Internal reliabilities (alpha coefficients) for the overall constructs are given in parentheses on the diagonal

b Emotional talk and cognition talk were measured on a 7-point scale

** $p < 0.01$

* $p < 0.05$

Appendix 9. Table 7. Moderation analyses: Retaliation. Dependent variable: Retaliation

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.46	.30	-.122	-1.53	-.47	.24	-.12	-1.93	-.49	.24	-.12	-1.99*
Tenure	-.003	.01	-.02	-.270	-.01	.009	-.09	-1.48	-.013	.009	-.09	-1.39
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.46	.06	.57	7.36**	.46	.06	.57	7.26**
Cognition Talk					.005	.05	.007	.086	.03	.05	.04	.57
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									.05	.03	.09	1.38
<i>Adj R²</i>		.003				.33				.34		
ΔR^2		.02				.33**				.008		
<i>F</i> Δ		1.216				39.659**				1.917		
<i>df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Appendix 9. Table 8. Moderation analyses: Rumination. Dependent variable: Rumination

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.18	.30	-.04	-.59	-.17	.28	-.04	-.617	-.15	.27	-.03	-.540
Tenure	.01	.01	.11	1.46	.009	.01	.06	.911	.008	.01	.05	.792
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.30	.07	.36	4.17**	.31	.07	.37	4.34**
Cognition Talk					.07	.06	.10	1.15	.02	.06	.03	.397
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.10	.04	-.15	-1.95*
<i>Adj R²</i>		.003				.18				.19		
ΔR^2		.02				.18**				.02*		
<i>F</i> Δ		1.249				17.362**				3.820*		
<i>Df</i>		2, 157				2, 156				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. *p <0.05 ; ** p <0.01

Appendix 9. Table 9. Moderation analyses: Self-affirmation. Dependent variable: Self-Affirmation

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.05	.33	-.01	-.14	.07	.29	.01	.257	.09	.29	.02	.31
Tenure	.006	.01	-.04	-.50	-.004	.01	-.02	-.41	-.005	.01	-.03	-.50
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					-.12	.07	-.14	-1.69	-.12	.07	-.13	-1.59
Cognition Talk					.44	.06	.55	6.65**	.40	.07	.51	5.75**
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.06	.04	-.10	-1.37
<i>Adj R²</i>		-.003				.02				.03		
ΔR^2		.009				.03				.01		
<i>F</i> Δ		.749				2.715				2.043		
<i>Df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Appendix 9. Table 10. Moderation analyses: Active solutions. Dependent variable: Active solutions

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	-.36	.25	-.11	-1.399	-.26	.19	-.07	-1.37	-.24	.18	-.07	-1.29
Tenure	-.01	.009	-.11	-1.404	-.01	.007	-.13	-2.29*	-.01	.007	-.14	-2.44*
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					.07	.04	.10	1.54	.08	.04	.11	1.71
Cognition Talk					.37	.04	.61	8.83**	.34	.04	.55	7.61**
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.06	.02	-.12	-2.07*
<i>Adj R²</i>		-.009				.04				.08		
ΔR^2		.004				.06**				.04**		
<i>F</i> Δ		.303				5.351**				6.676**		
<i>Df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

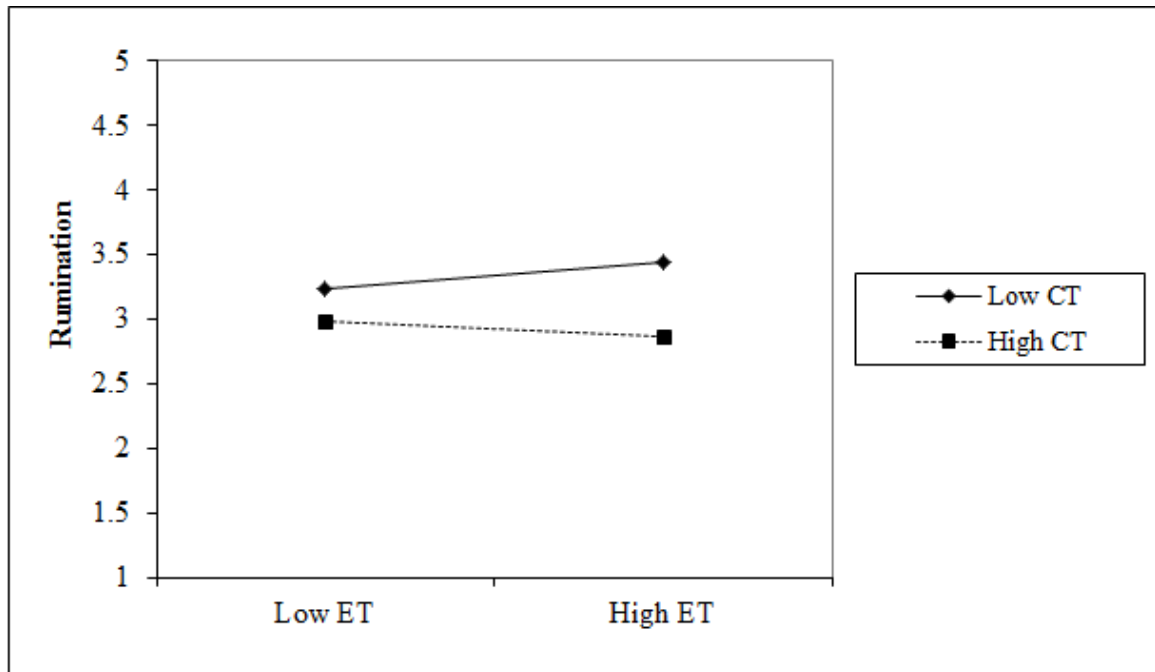
Appendix 9. Table 11. Moderation analyses: Psychological well-being. Dependent variable: Psychological well-being

	<i>Step 1</i>				<i>Step 2</i>				<i>Step 3</i>			
	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	SE	β	<i>t</i>
<i>Controls</i>												
Gender	.41	.25	.12	1.60	.42	.25	.13	1.67	.43	.25	.13	1.70
Tenure	.01	.009	.10	1.39	.01	.009	.13	1.68	.01	.009	.13	1.63
<i>Main effects</i>												
Emotion Talk					-.12	.06	-.18	-1.97*	-.12	.06	-.18	-1.91
Cognition Talk					.04	.05	.07	.792	.03	.06	.05	.511
<i>Two-way interaction</i>												
Emotion talk x Cognition talk									-.02	.03	-.05	-.647
<i>Adj R²</i>		.02				.03				.02		
ΔR^2		.03				.03				.003		
<i>F</i> Δ		2.239				2.007				.418		
<i>Df</i>		2, 157				2, 155				1, 154		

b Unstandardised coefficients. * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

Results for Rumination:

Cognition talk is posited as attenuating the relationship between emotion talk and rumination, such that the relationship would be weaker at higher levels of cognition talk. The two-way interaction between emotion and cognition talk was significant ($\beta = -.10$, $p < .05$). The plot of this interaction is displayed below.

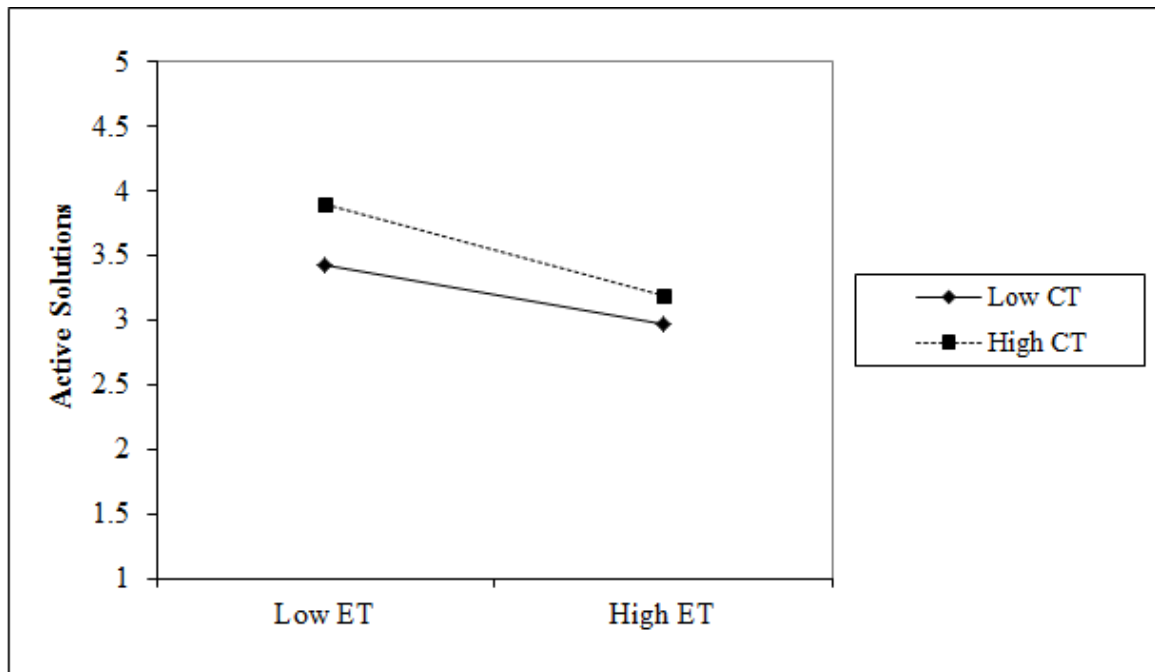


Appendix 9. 1. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and rumination (second time point data)

An examination of the simple slopes does not appear to support the prediction. However, the results are similar to those found in chapter 6, namely, that lower levels of cognition talk appear to be increasing rumination particularly so at higher and increasing levels of emotion talk. An examination of the simple slopes does **not** support the moderating effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and rumination (*low*: simple slope=.13, $t(163) = -.73$, ns; *high*: simple slope=-.09, $t(163) = 1.53$, ns).

Results for Active solutions

Cognition talk is posited as strengthening the relationship between emotion talk and rumination, such that the relationship would be stronger at higher levels of cognition talk. The two-way interaction between emotion and cognition talk was significant ($\beta = -.11$, $p < .01$). The plot of this interaction is displayed below.



Appendix 9. 2. Interaction plot for emotion talk, cognition talk and active solutions (second time point data)

An examination of the simple slopes supports the moderating effect of cognition talk on the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions (*low*: simple slope=-.24, $t(163)=-3.06$, $p<.01$; *high*: simple slope=-.55, $t(163)=-4.71$, $p<.01$). However, an inspection of the slopes does not appear to support the predictions. The results are similar to those found in chapter 6, namely, that high cognition talk appears to be decreasing one's search for solutions. This is true for both low and high levels of cognition talk. Both high and low levels of cognition talk strengthen the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions at low levels of emotion talk; as emotion talk increases, both low and high cognition talk appears to *weaken* the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions.

In summary, the results were replicated from the first time point survey, as outlined in chapter 6:

- Similar to the results presented in chapter 6, no results of significance were found for retaliation intentions or psychological well-being outcomes.
- Unlike in chapter 6, there were no results of significance for self-efficacy as an outcome.
- In this second time point of data, though the interaction for cognition and emotion talk on rumination was significant, the simple slopes were not.
- The interaction on active solutions provides the most interesting results at this second time point, in corroborating the findings from the first time point of data.

Unlike in chapter 6, both *high* and *low* slopes for cognition talk are significant with the second data time point. However, similar to chapter 6, the direction of the slopes is identical – but they do not follow the direction predicted. In symbiosis with the conclusion presented in chapter 6, what we have evidence of at the second data time point, is that overall, cognition talk *weakens* rather than *strengthens* the relationship between emotion talk and active solutions. Specifically, as victims engage in increasing levels of venting (emotion talk), there is an adverse effect on the impact of their attempts to re-evaluate, reframe and move on from an injustice (cognition talk). I referred to this adverse effect as ‘drowning out’ – the *asymmetry effect* -, whereby increased emotional intensity negates any positive impact of cognition talk, such that rather than increasing one’s ability to search for solutions, it weakens it.

- In a replication of results found for a symmetry effect as found in chapter 6, this second time point of data also showed that only emotion talk positively related to retaliation, and only cognition talk positively related to self-affirmation and active solutions. Unlike in chapter 6, however, no results of significance were found for the main effects of emotion and cognition talk on PWB. What is at work here is that a type of talk is linked with a specific type of outcome, as argued in chapter 6.