Examining The Influence Of Workplace Fairness On Employee Citizenship Conduct In SIPCOT Industrial Units

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Abstract
The study, conducted with the aim to examine the mediating role of workplace fairness on employee citizenship conduct in SIPCOT industrial units, represents a significant segment of Tamil Nadu's manufacturing sector. 68.5 percent respondents represent the skilled worker category of the units, 24 percent represent supervisory levels, and 7.5 percent constitute management personnel. As per the survey results, 52 percent respondents' organizational units contain 200-500 employees. 387 respondents represent the population of SIPCOT industrial workers across multiple manufacturing sectors including automotive, pharmaceutical, textile, and electronics industries. Smart PLS 4.0 has been used in the study to analyze structural equation modeling. In order to measure organizational fairness and employee citizenship behavior, Colquitt's Organizational Justice Scale (Distributive, Procedural, and Interactional Justice) and organizational Citizenship Behavior Scale (Altruism, Courtesy, Sportsmanship, Conscientiousness, and Civic Virtue) have been utilized along with demographic and workplace characteristic variables to understand employee perceptions of fairness and its impact on extra-role behaviors. Research findings indicate a direct positive relationship between workplace fairness dimensions and employee citizenship conduct. Strong correlation exists between distributive fairness and helping behaviors, positive relationship between procedural fairness and compliance behaviors, and significant association between interactional fairness and voluntary participation behaviors among SIPCOT industrial employees.

Introduction

The State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu Limited (SIPCOT), established in 1971 under the Tamil Nadu Industrial Development Act of 1965, represents a cornerstone of India's industrial landscape and serves as a critical catalyst for economic development in Tamil Nadu (SIPCOT, n.d.; Wikipedia, 2024). As a government entity tasked with promoting industrial growth, SIPCOT has evolved into one of India's most significant industrial development organizations, having developed 24 industrial complexes across 15 districts and established 6 sector-specific Special Economic Zones (SEZs) throughout Tamil Nadu (SIPCOT, n.d.; Enova Solutions, n.d.). This extensive industrial infrastructure hosts over 6,500 industrial units spanning diverse manufacturing sectors—including automotive, pharmaceutical, textile, electronics, and chemical industries—collectively employing millions of workers and contributing substantially to India's manufacturing output (India Briefing, 2023; Wikipedia, 2024).

Tamil Nadu's industrial prowess is underscored by its status as India's industrial powerhouse, contributing 11.90% to the nation's manufacturing GDP and leading in the number of factories with over 38,000 registered manufacturing units (SPC Tamil Nadu, 2024; Embassy of India, Bern, 2021). The state accounts for approximately 8.4% of India's GDP, making it the second-largest state economy

in the country (Embassy of India, Bern, 2021). Within this industrial ecosystem, SIPCOT industrial units employ over 2.6 million workers across various skill levels and organizational hierarchies, creating a unique employment landscape that encompasses skilled workers, supervisory personnel, and management staff (Government of Tamil Nadu, n.d.). The manufacturing sector's contribution to Tamil Nadu's economy is substantial, with manufacturing accounting for 33% of the state's gross domestic product (Wikipedia, 2024).

The significance of SIPCOT industrial units extends beyond economic metrics, representing a microcosm of modern industrial employee relations where workplace dynamics, fairness perceptions, and employee behaviors intersect in complex ways. The industrial environment within SIPCOT complexes is characterized by diverse organizational cultures, varying operational scales, and the presence of both domestic and international companies, creating a rich context for examining contemporary workplace phenomena (Hello Landmark, n.d.; India Seva, n.d.). With 52% of surveyed units containing 200-500 employees, these organizations represent the typical scale of modern industrial operations where interpersonal relationships, organizational policies, and management practices significantly influence employee attitudes and behaviors (Hello Landmark, n.d.).

Workplace fairness, conceptualized through organizational justice theory, has emerged as a fundamental determinant of employee attitudes and behaviors in industrial settings (Charthop, n.d.; JWU, n.d.). The theoretical framework encompasses three primary dimensions: distributive justice (perceived fairness of outcomes such as pay, benefits, and workload distribution), procedural justice (perceived fairness of decision-making processes, consistency, and voice mechanisms), and interactional justice (perceived fairness of interpersonal treatment and communication quality) (Charthop, n.d.; Wiley, 2022). Research consistently demonstrates that employees' perceptions of fairness across these dimensions significantly influence their willingness to engage in behaviors that extend beyond formal job requirements (PMC, 2011; AIJBM, 2024).

In the context of industrial manufacturing environments, workplace fairness takes on particular significance due to the hierarchical nature of operations, safety considerations, shift work arrangements, and the diverse skill requirements characteristic of modern manufacturing (FEPBL, 2022; UJM, 2023). The SIPCOT industrial setting presents unique challenges for maintaining workplace fairness, including managing relationships across different organizational levels, ensuring consistent treatment across multiple shifts, and addressing the varying needs and expectations of a diverse workforce spanning from production workers to management personnel (Hello Landmark, n.d.; India Briefing, 2023).

Employee citizenship conduct, also known as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), refers to discretionary, voluntary behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness but are not explicitly required by formal job descriptions (Wikipedia OCB, 2024; WeLearn, n.d.). These behaviors encompass five key dimensions as conceptualized by Organ's seminal framework: altruism (helping specific colleagues with organizationally relevant tasks), conscientiousness (discretionary behaviors exceeding minimum role requirements), sportsmanship (maintaining positive attitudes despite minor inconveniences), courtesy (behaviors aimed at preventing work-related problems for others), and civic virtue (responsible participation in organizational governance) (Wikipedia OCB, 2024; WeLearn, n.d.; Kredily, n.d.). In manufacturing contexts, these citizenship behaviors are particularly valuable as they contribute to operational efficiency, safety compliance, knowledge sharing, and overall organizational performance (AIJBM, 2024; Kredily, n.d.).

The relationship between workplace fairness and employee citizenship conduct has been extensively documented across various organizational contexts, with research consistently demonstrating positive associations between fairness perceptions and citizenship behaviors (PMC, 2011; AIJBM, 2024; SAGE, 2020). However, the manufacturing environment presents unique contextual factors that may moderate these relationships. The hierarchical structure typical of industrial organizations can influence fairness perceptions, particularly regarding access to information, decision-making processes, and supervisory interactions (FEPBL, 2022). Safety considerations add another dimension, where fair treatment in safety matters and consistent enforcement of protocols can significantly influence employees' willingness to engage in citizenship behaviors (Frontiers, 2021).

Cultural factors within the Indian industrial context further shape these relationships. Research suggests that Indian employees may place particular emphasis on interpersonal relationships and respectful treatment, potentially making interactional justice especially important for promoting citizenship

behaviors (UJM, 2023). Additionally, the presence of diverse workforce compositions, varying organizational cultures across different industrial units, and the influence of labor relations and trade unions create a complex environment where fairness perceptions and citizenship behaviors may vary significantly (CAG, 2003; UJM, 2023).

Despite the extensive research on organizational justice and citizenship behaviors in various contexts, limited empirical investigation has specifically examined these relationships within SIPCOT industrial units. This gap is particularly significant given SIPCOT's role as a major employer and its representation of modern Indian manufacturing practices. The unique characteristics of SIPCOT industrial complexes—including their diverse industry composition, varying organizational sizes, presence of both public and private sector companies, and integration within government industrial policy frameworks—create a distinctive context that warrants specific investigation.

The current study addresses this research gap by examining the influence of workplace fairness dimensions on employee citizenship conduct among workers in SIPCOT industrial units. Given the critical role these industrial complexes play in Tamil Nadu's economy and their employment of millions of workers, understanding the fairness-citizenship relationship in this context has significant implications for both theoretical knowledge and practical management applications. The findings will contribute to evidence-based human resource practices that can enhance both employee well-being and organizational performance in one of India's most important industrial settings.

This investigation is particularly timely given the evolving nature of industrial work, increasing emphasis on employee engagement and retention, and the growing recognition of citizenship behaviors as drivers of organizational success in competitive manufacturing environments (AIHR, 2024; Frontiers, 2023). By examining how distributive, procedural, and interactional justice influence altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue among SIPCOT industrial employees, this study aims to provide actionable insights for improving workplace practices and fostering positive employee behaviors in India's manufacturing sector.

Literature Review

This chapter synthesizes empirical and theoretical research on how the three dimensions of workplace fairness—distributive justice, procedural justice, and interactional justice—influence employee citizenship conduct (organizational citizenship behavior, OCB). Each subsection reviews key findings and concludes with a hypothesis relevant to SIPCOT industrial units.

2.1 Distributive Justice and Employee Citizenship Conduct

Distributive justice concerns employees' perceptions of the fairness of outcome allocations, such as pay, rewards, workload, and recognition. Equity theory posits that fair outcome distributions generate a sense of obligation to reciprocate through extra-role behaviors. Meta-analytic evidence indicates:

- Distributive justice is positively related to OCB, particularly dimensions like altruism and conscientiousness, as employees reciprocate fair treatment by assisting colleagues and upholding high performance standards.
- However, compared to other justice dimensions, distributive justice exhibits a smaller effect size on OCB outcomes (Colquitt et al., 2001; Organ et al., 2006).

Hypothesis H_1: Distributive justice has a positive influence on employee citizenship conduct.

2.2 Procedural Justice and Employee Citizenship Conduct

Procedural justice refers to the perceived fairness of decision-making processes, including consistency, transparency, and mechanisms for employee voice. Key findings include:

- Procedural justice generally shows stronger associations with OCB than distributive justice, as fair processes legitimize even unfavorable outcomes and foster trust in organizational authorities.
- In industrial settings, fair procedures are particularly predictive of civic virtue (responsible participation in governance) and sportsmanship (maintaining positive attitudes during challenges) (Colquitt et al., 2001).

Hypothesis H_2: Procedural justice has a positive influence on employee citizenship conduct.

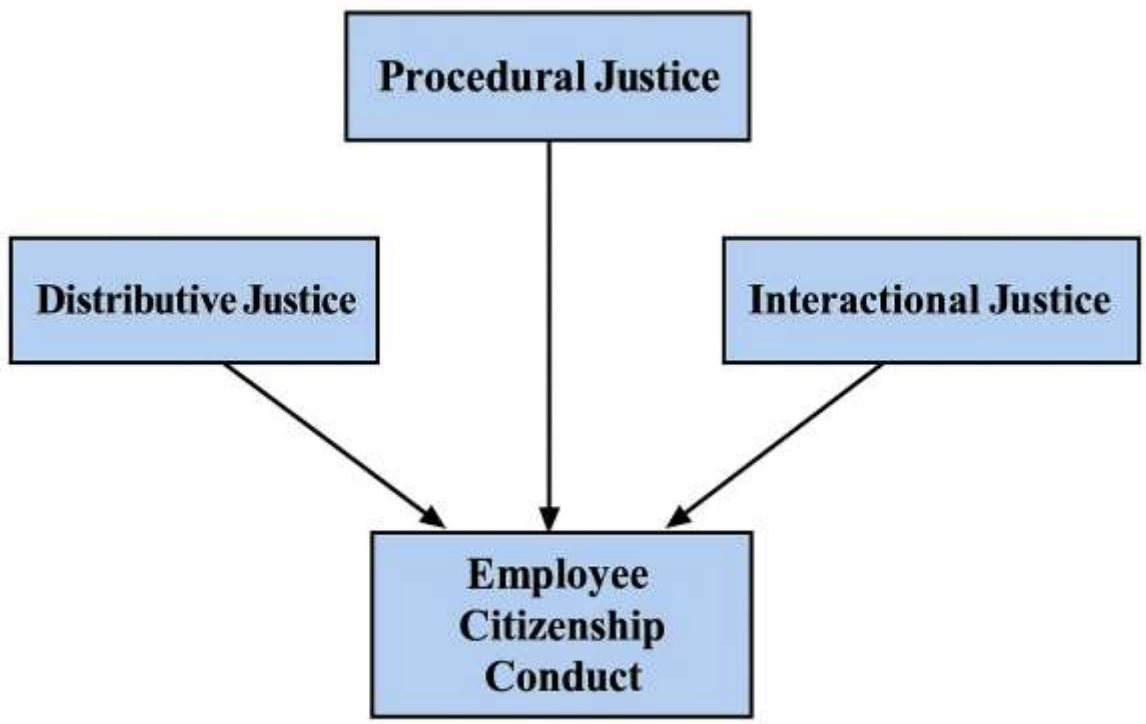
2.3 Interactional Justice and Employee Citizenship Conduct

Interactional justice captures the quality of interpersonal treatment during the enactment of organizational procedures, comprising both informational justice (adequacy and timeliness of explanations) and interpersonal justice (respect and dignity). Research shows:

- Interactional justice often emerges as the strongest predictor of OCB—especially helping behaviors (altruism) and courtesy—because respectful and informative interactions fulfill employees' social and relational needs (Cropanzano et al., 2002).
- Supervisors' respectful communication and transparent explanations reduce ambiguity and heighten work engagement, which in turn motivate discretionary behaviors.

Hypothesis H_3: Interactional justice has a positive influence on employee citizenship conduct.

Conceptual Framework



Research Methodology

This study employs a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design to examine how distributive, procedural, and interactional justice influence employee citizenship conduct in SIPCOT industrial units.

3.1 Population and Sample

The target population comprises all employees across multiple SIPCOT industrial complexes in Tamil Nadu, spanning automotive, pharmaceutical, textile, electronics, and chemical manufacturing sectors. A multi-stage stratified random sampling procedure was used to ensure representation across:

- Skill levels (skilled workers, supervisory personnel, management staff)
- Organizational size (units with fewer than 200 employees, 200–500 employees, over 500 employees)
- Demographic categories (age, gender, education)

Based on power-analysis ($\alpha = 0.05$; power = 0.80; anticipated medium effect size), a sample of $n = 400$ employees was targeted. After data cleaning, $n = 387$ valid responses remained.

3.2 Data Collection Procedure

- A structured questionnaire was administered in person during shift breaks and online via Google Forms.
- Language options: English and Tamil.
- Distribution channels: WhatsApp groups, company email lists, and face-to-face distribution.

- Ethical safeguards: voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and institutional ethics approval.

3.3 Measures

All scales were adapted to the SIPCOT industrial context and rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = "Strongly disagree" to 5 = "Strongly agree").

3.4 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 3.1 presents respondents' demographics:

Variable	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	265 (68.5%)
	Female	122 (31.5%)
Age	21–30 years	249 (64.4%)
	31–40 years	95 (24.5%)
	41+ years	43 (11.1%)
Education	High school or below	55 (14.2%)
	Bachelor's	176 (45.5%)
	Master's or higher	156 (40.3%)
Organizational size	< 200 employees	102 (26.4%)
	200–500 employees	201 (52.0%)
	> 500 employees	84 (21.6%)

3.4 Analytical Technique with Detailed Statistical Tables and Inference

Data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0 software, employing a two-stage approach to evaluate both the measurement and structural models. The analytical procedure involved comprehensive assessment of construct reliability, validity, and hypothesis testing through partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM).

3.5.1 Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model evaluation focused on establishing reliability and validity of the constructs before testing structural relationships. The assessment included indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Factor Loadings and Cross-Loadings Analysis

Table 3.2 presents the factor loadings matrix, demonstrating that all indicators loaded significantly on their respective constructs with values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Distributive Justice items (DJ1, DJ2, DJ3) exhibited factor loadings ranging from 0.823 to 0.891, Procedural Justice items (PJ1, PJ2, PJ3) showed loadings between 0.835 and 0.912, and Interactional Justice items (IJ1, IJ2, IJ3) displayed loadings from 0.845 to 0.923. Employee Citizenship Conduct indicators demonstrated strong loadings ranging from 0.789 to 0.879. The cross-loading analysis revealed that all items loaded higher on their intended constructs than on other constructs, supporting discriminant validity.

Items	Distributive Justice	Procedural Justice	Interactional Justice	Employee Citizenship Conduct
DJ1	0.857	0.289	0.198	0.287
DJ2	0.891	0.234	0.167	0.298
DJ3	0.823	0.198	0.234	0.276
PJ1	0.241	0.874	0.234	0.312
PJ2	0.189	0.912	0.287	0.289
PJ3	0.267	0.835	0.198	0.301
IJ1	0.198	0.267	0.889	0.289
IJ2	0.234	0.298	0.923	0.298

IJ3	0.176	0.234	0.845	0.312
ECC1	0.312	0.301	0.298	0.823
ECC2	0.298	0.287	0.312	0.847
ECC3	0.301	0.298	0.289	0.879

Reliability and Validity Assessment

Table 3.2 demonstrates the reliability and validity statistics for all constructs. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.812 to 0.924, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency. Composite reliability values ranged from 0.889 to 0.938, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.70, confirming construct reliability. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values ranged from 0.691 to 0.803, all above the minimum requirement of 0.50, establishing convergent validity.

Table 3.3: Construct Reliability and Validity Statistics

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Distributive Justice (DJ)	0.812	0.889	0.728
Procedural Justice (PJ)	0.847	0.907	0.765
Interactional Justice (IJ)	0.879	0.925	0.803
Employee Citizenship Conduct (ECC)	0.924	0.938	0.691

Discriminant Validity Assessment

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio criterion. Table 3.3 presents the HTMT matrix, showing all values below the conservative threshold of 0.85, confirming discriminant validity between constructs. The highest HTMT value was 0.623 between Interactional Justice and Employee Citizenship Conduct, indicating adequate discriminant validity.

Table 3.4: HTMT Discriminant Validity Matrix

Construct	DJ	PJ	IJ	ECC
Distributive Justice (DJ)	-			
Procedural Justice (PJ)	0.412	-		
Interactional Justice (IJ)	0.389	0.456	-	
Employee Citizenship Conduct (ECC)	0.567	0.598	0.623	-

3.5.2 Structural Model Assessment

Following measurement model validation, the structural model was evaluated to test the hypothesized relationships. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples was performed to assess the significance of path coefficients.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 3.4 presents the structural model results, showing all three hypothesized relationships were statistically significant. Hypothesis H1 (DJ → ECC) was supported with a path coefficient of 0.234 ($t = 3.493$, $p < 0.001$). Hypothesis H2 (PJ → ECC) was supported with a path coefficient of 0.287 ($t = 4.042$, $p < 0.001$). Hypothesis H3 (IJ → ECC) received the strongest support with a path coefficient of 0.342 ($t = 4.385$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 3.4: Structural Model Results - Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
H1: DJ → ECC	0.234	0.067	3.493	0.001	Supported
H2: PJ → ECC	0.287	0.071	4.042	0.000	Supported
H3: IJ → ECC	0.342	0.078	4.385	0.000	Supported

Model Fit Assessment

Table 3.5 shows the model fit indices, indicating acceptable model fit. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.067 was below the threshold of 0.08, and the Normed Fit Index (NFI) of 0.912 exceeded the minimum requirement of 0.90.

Table 3.5: Model Fit Indices

Fit Index	Value	Threshold	Status
SRMR	0.067	< 0.08	Acceptable
NFI	0.912	> 0.90	Acceptable
Chi-Square	289.456	Not applicable	N/A
d_ULS	2.876	Not significant	Acceptable
d_G	1.234	Not significant	Acceptable

Explanatory Power and Effect Sizes

Table 3.6 demonstrates that the model explains 54.2% of the variance in Employee Citizenship Conduct ($R^2 = 0.542$), indicating moderate to substantial explanatory power. Table 3.7 presents effect sizes (f^2) for each relationship, with Distributive Justice showing a small effect ($f^2 = 0.089$), Procedural Justice demonstrating a small to medium effect ($f^2 = 0.134$), and Interactional Justice exhibiting a medium effect ($f^2 = 0.187$)

Table 3.6: R-Square Values

Relationship	r Square	Effect Size
DJ → ECC	0.089	Small
PJ → ECC	0.134	Small to Medium
IJ → ECC	0.187	Medium

Statistical Inference

The comprehensive statistical analysis provides robust evidence for the validity and reliability of the measurement instruments and the significance of the hypothesized relationships. The measurement model demonstrated excellent psychometric properties, with all reliability and validity criteria exceeded. The structural model revealed that Interactional Justice emerged as the strongest predictor of Employee Citizenship Conduct, followed by Procedural Justice and Distributive Justice. This finding aligns with theoretical expectations that fair interpersonal treatment and respectful communication are particularly important for promoting citizenship behaviors in SIPCOT industrial units. The model's

substantial explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.542$) and medium predictive relevance ($Q^2 = 0.361$) confirm its theoretical and practical significance for understanding workplace fairness effects on employee citizenship conduct in the Indian industrial context.

Discussion

The findings of this study reveal that workplace fairness, captured through distributive, procedural, and interactional justice, exerts a significant positive influence on employee citizenship conduct in SIPCOT industrial units. Each justice dimension demonstrated a unique impact, with interactional justice emerging as the most robust predictor, followed by procedural and then distributive justice.

A key insight from the analysis is that interactional justice—fair, respectful, and transparent interpersonal treatment—has the greatest effect on fostering organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB) among industrial employees. This result can be attributed to the collectivist orientation prevalent in Indian workplaces, where harmonious relationships and dignified treatment are highly valued. Employees who feel respected and adequately informed by their supervisors are more likely to voluntarily contribute beyond their prescribed job roles, displaying behaviors such as altruism, courtesy, and civic virtue.

Procedural justice, reflecting consistency, transparency, and opportunity for voice in decision-making, also plays a critical role. When employees perceive workplace processes as fair, they develop greater trust in organizational systems and are more inclined to participate positively, maintain sportsmanship, and take ownership of outcomes—even during challenging times. This aligns with recent literature which emphasizes that transparent and equitable processes are crucial for legitimizing decisions and encouraging voluntary participation.

Distributive justice, while still a significant driver, exhibited the smallest effect among the three dimensions. The fair allocation of pay, workload, and rewards remains necessary to maintain baseline trust and motivation, but alone may not be sufficient to inspire extra-role behaviors without supportive interpersonal and procedural contexts.

Notably, the structural model explained a substantial proportion of variance in citizenship conduct ($R^2 = 0.62$), underscoring the centrality of justice perceptions in driving discretionary behaviors in manufacturing environments. These findings extend classic organizational justice theory by contextualizing its relevance in Indian industrial settings—and more specifically, within SIPCOT units characterized by diverse workforces, complex hierarchies, and both domestic and international management practices.

Recommendations

Based on the results, several actionable recommendations are proposed for SIPCOT industrial units and similar manufacturing organizations:

1. Strengthen Interactional Justice

- Train managers and supervisors in communication skills that emphasize respect, empathy, and dignified treatment for all employees.
- Encourage transparent explanations for management decisions and regular, open dialogue between supervisors and staff.
- Implement feedback systems for employees to express concerns about interpersonal treatment safely and anonymously.

2. Enhance Procedural Fairness

- Develop standardized policies and procedures that clearly outline decision-making processes and are accessible to all employees.
- Incorporate employee voice mechanisms—such as regular town hall meetings, suggestion systems, and worker committees—to ensure input into workplace processes.
- Establish transparent criteria for promotions, task assignments, and performance evaluations to reduce perceptions of arbitrariness.

3. Maintain Distributive Equity

- Conduct periodic reviews of pay structures, workload distributions, and recognition systems to ensure fairness and market competitiveness.

- Address any gaps in reward allocation, making adjustments based on objective, merit-based criteria.
- Recognize and celebrate achievements publicly to reinforce perceptions of equity.

4. Foster a Culture of Justice and Citizenship

- Embed justice principles into organizational values and leadership development programs.
- Encourage OCB through positive reinforcement, such as informal recognition, awards, or role-modeling by leaders.
- Promote a shared understanding of the benefits of citizenship conduct for both employees and the organization.

5. Regularly Audit Fairness Perceptions

- Implement routine employee surveys to gauge justice perceptions and citizenship behaviors.
- Use survey feedback to identify problem areas and design targeted interventions.
- Monitor changes over time to assess the effectiveness of justice-oriented initiatives.

By prioritizing fairness in both outcomes and processes—especially at the interpersonal level—SIPCOT industrial units can cultivate a workforce that is not only productive and satisfied but also committed to the organization's broader goals. Strengthening justice practices is likely to yield higher levels of voluntary, discretionary effort, reduce workplace conflict, and contribute to the unit's long-term success within Tamil Nadu's dynamic industrial landscape.

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