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Enhancing Willingness to Whistleblow Internally: The Role of Leaders and Work Culture

by

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Declaration

I hereby certify that this "thesis is all my own work, and I have not obtained a degree in NUI Galway, or elsewhere, on the basis of the research work presented".

Signed: _____   Date: 30th March 2021

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Abstract

Whistleblowing research shows that leaders play an essential role in steering ethical behaviour and work culture. This thesis investigates the factors that enhance employee willingness to internal speak up and how leadership can support this effort. Existing literature focuses on whistleblowing processes, internal speak up arrangements, whistleblower identity, recognition, the role of advocacy groups, and whistleblowing retaliation. In contrast, this thesis examines the pre-speak up organisational landscape by exploring how willingness to internal speak up can be nurtured and what role leaders play to facilitate this effort. To do so, I analysed an in-depth qualitative case study that includes interviews, document analysis, and field notes from observations in the production facility of a high-tech multinational organisation in the U.K. Exploring key organisational aspects and their cross-fertilisation, I found that when employees feel supported by their leadership, and when they are provided with a range of internal communication avenues embedded in the normal work-design, this may activate voice friendly culture. I also found that the presence of an ethic centric work environment and strong leader-follower attachment may enhance willingness to whistleblow internally. Answers to the research questions are offered through proposing a multi-layer conceptual, theoretical framework of Culture of Ethics and Internal Speak Up to provide a safe voicing space. The thesis concludes with recommendations on how this can be applied to future research.

Acknowledgement

List of Abbreviations/ Glossary of Terms

ACFE	Association of Certified Fraud Examiners
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease Outbreak 2019
ECI	Ethics and Compliance Initiative
CEV	Corporate Ethical Virtue
RBV	Resource Based View
MAIB	Marine Accident Investigation Branch

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1   Introduction to the thesis

This chapter provides an introductory overview of the research topic and how it is handled in the thesis. It also highlights what is presented in the rest of the research and the overall findings drawn from the analysis.

This thesis aims to make an academic contribution to knowledge in the area of internal whistleblowing. Whistleblowing is incredibly important as it enables organisations to discover malpractices; expose fraud, corruption, and environmental damage, as well as other misdeeds that may endanger public health and safety. Without whistleblowing, organisations may not get the opportunity to investigate problems and evaluate risks. Some of the wrongdoing could potentially go untouched, leading to an unethical, non-transparent and unfair work culture. Despite this, whistleblowing is usually considered a last resort and is also acknowledged as an effective way to report wrongdoing and protect the public interest. This is confirmed by the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners (ACFE) Report to The Nations (2018) Global Study on Occupational Fraud and Abuse, which shows that the whistleblower tips initially detect 40% of the fraud cases. However, this is not easy. Whistleblowing usually comes with high personal risks, including the risk of being humiliated, transferred to a remote location, demoted, fired, sued, blacklisted from their profession or financially and mentally devastated. Cases of reprisals against employees have doubled from 22% (2013) to 44% (2017) (ACFE, 2018).

Whistleblowing has been investigated from different perspectives, for example, what counts as whistleblowing (internal vs external disclosures), why and how a whistleblower speaks up, characteristics of whistleblowers, what makes whistleblowing effective, why, and how a whistleblower is retaliated against, how and to what extent a whistleblower is supported and protected by legislation, and the role whistleblowing advocacy groups.

Vandekerckhove (2021) has recently noted that research on whistleblowing is divided into two major groups, and they are categorised based on their definition. One group is more interested in how management runs an organisation, its structure, and how procedures are designed. They rely on Near and Miceli's definition (1985). The second group focuses on the possible suffering of whistleblowers and the different forms of retaliation they may face. This group follows Alford (2001), who considers whistleblowing without retaliation is not whistleblowing at all but instead just an employee doing their job. This study falls in the first group of whistleblowing research as I contribute knowledge on strengthening the work culture to enable voice and facilitate internal speak up.

History is full of whistleblowing cases and corporate frauds. For example, Li Wenliang, an Ophthalmologist, raised the alarm about the novel coronavirus-COVID-19 pandemic; Ed Pierson, a Boeing employee who raised concern about the 737 Max and asked to shut down the production line; Christopher Wylie, who brought Cambridge Analytica to everyone's attention; "John Doe", a pseudonym used by a whistleblower who leaked the Panama Papers and jolted many countries by disclosing the corruption of the elite; Julian Assange, the man behind Wikileaks; Edward Snowden who revealed the US National Security Agency's surveillance;

Cynthia Cooper from Worldcom, who reported the accounting fraud; and Sherron Watkins who exposed Enron's financial irregularities. In most of the cases, the concern was reported internally, providing an opportunity to fix the problem, and when the problem was not attended to, the matter was reported externally, and we all know what happened next. Research shows that some of the concerns raised internally are usually ignored, or the individual who is speaking up is likely to be retaliated against, which not only discourages the whistleblower but threatens the organisation's reputation and, in some cases, public safety.

Research shows that leadership plays a pivotal role in encouraging speaking up by welcoming employee feedback, listening to their concerns and rewarding them to continue practising similar behaviour in the future (Schein, 2016). Schein further adds that a leader may like to engage directly in the voicing process similar to the Caliph Omar (One of the most influential Muslim caliphs), who used to disguise and visit the city to get hold of first-hand information on public issues and collect opinions (Schein, 2016). Direct involvement of senior leadership in voicing shows that they are interested in taking actions, which can motivate employees to speak up (Detert & Burris, 2007). My study will examine the vital role of leadership in establishing a safe space for employees to voice concerns. In the next section, I present the justification as well as the scope of this study.

1.2   Theoretical underpinning and scope of the study

In this section, I discuss the need to investigate the pre-speak up organisational context and the main factors that usually play an important role in voicing concerns. Researchers have explored promoting internal speak up, knowing that most of the

concerns are raised internally, and have focused on speak up arrangements (e.g. Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Fotaki, 2019). Organisations develop internal reporting mechanisms to create a safe space for employees to speak up. If not managed carefully, these internal channels can fail the whistleblower and put them at risk. This necessitates a strong need to improve their willingness to step up and speak up about wrongdoing. The act of speaking up is acknowledged as the 'hallmark of ethical behaviour'.

In addition to this, whistleblowing is usually considered an outcome of organisational failure (Alford, 2016). Leadership and culture play an essential role in steering ethical behaviour. According to Global Business Ethics Survey (2018), done by Ethics and Compliance Initiative (ECI) on Ethics and Compliance in the Workplace, leaders set the tone and priorities by displaying ethical behaviour and holding employees responsible for any misconduct. Culture is also considered one of the biggest influences on employee conduct from an ethical perspective (Kaptein, 2011a). In strong cultures, research shows that wrongdoing is significantly reduced. One in five employees indicated that his company has such an environment (ECI, 2019). When an organisation is building a more robust ethics culture, leadership is paramount to all efforts. If leadership improves ethical behaviour, employees' perception related to 'trusting the system' also increases.

The organisational aspects, including ethical climate, ethical leadership, organisational justice, employee support, and organisational trust, are crucial in supporting internal speak up. However, there is not much work available exploring what value these factors add to the organisational dynamics if they all are investigated from an integrated lens. This study aims to contribute to this area by

developing a theoretical framework that enables voice to happen, so that internal speak up appears to be the norm. In the light of analysis and findings from my in-depth interviews, document analysis and observations, I argue that there is a need to engage more thoroughly at the root level regarding what an employee would need to feel supported and valued. This is something that appears to be the core of engaging in ethical conduct and being vocal in terms of speaking out. I have also expanded on the body of ethics, ethical climate, organisational justice and trust, and investigated how leadership may facilitate establishing an ethical environment, fair treatment and an air of trust across the organisation. I argue that the provision of various communication channels and supportive leadership are likely to encourage employees to speak up. When proactive communication is present, 71% of employees agree that there is evidence of workplace trust in their organisation (ECI, 2019). To summarise, research shows that it is in the organisation's control to create a culture where leadership is supportive, trusted and feedback-rich to encourage speaking out.

In this study, I focused on the salient emerging themes from the data and proposed an integrative framework that provides a vehicle to establish an ethical and voice-friendly culture where their leadership supports employees with a safe space to raise concerns. Despite being a conceptual framework, this study extends practical implications for leaders and practitioners.

This research is an in-depth qualitative case study of a multinational high-tech organisation in manufacturing survival and safety products. I conducted the study at their main factory site to understand organisational dynamics and interview employees at all levels. Before proceeding with the study, I conducted a pilot study

to polish and refine the interview guideline. In addition to the interviews, I collected

a variety of their documents involving policy, internal communication, marketing

material and employees' survey. Furthermore, I attended their meetings, an annual

event and visited the production floor as well as their cafeterias to get a sense of the

overall working environment. The observations made during these visits helped

complement what was discussed in the interviews and seen in practice (e.g., the

culture of accountability and overall atmosphere in their daily board meetings on the

production floor).

1.3   Aims of the study

The study aims to develop a novel theoretical understanding of how leadership is

likely to facilitate a culture of ethics and voicing concerns by focusing on employee

support, trustful work environment, fair treatment, valuing feedback of employees,

and ultimately leading to a continuum where employees will speak their minds. This

integrative approach aims to address the pitfalls and tensions in the related literature

and enhance the ability to put key organisational factors into practice. I also seek to

contribute to the academic literature on how voicing norms become secondary to

internal speak up if supportive leadership is in place.

1.4   Research questions

The overarching research question driving this study is 'how can an employee be

encouraged to speak up internally?' With this high-level but straightforward

question, I initiated the research and explored the current state of whistleblowing,

ethical culture, the role of leadership, employee voice, organisational trust and

organisational justice scholarships. Leadership emerged as a core theme in steering

ethical conduct and developing this openness across the organisation which further guided me to these two questions.

Research Question 1: How and when can leadership facilitate in developing an ethic-centric and voice-friendly work culture?

Research Question 2: How can willingness to internal speak up be nurtured?

My thesis is that whether a holistic investigation of pre-speak up organisational landscape can enhance internal speak up behaviour. This calls for a detailed literature review with clear signposting of gaps and limitations (see Chapter 2). I use Charmaz's constructive grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006) as my qualitative research approach. It may be surprising to come up with the use of grounded theory after a thorough literature review, but the organisational aspects examined are chosen with Blumer's sensitizing concepts (Blumer, 1954) for direction. Sensitizing concepts are used for general guidance and serve as starting point to approach empirical instances (Bowen, 2006). My analytical approach is inductive, meaning that all of the salient themes that I have come up with have emerged from data.

1.5   Structure of the thesis

Chapter 2 explores the extant literature available on whistleblowing, the importance of internal whistleblowing, how ethical conduct and ethical leadership comes into play, and focuses on the key sensitising concepts that are likely to encourage speaking up. Chapter 2 also discusses the specific gap in knowledge to which this study adds value and contributes.

Based on the learnings from Chapter 2, in Chapter 3 I discuss my theoretical and methodological reasoning, arguing why an interpretive approach was used and why a case study design is the best way to investigate this topic. It explains how the research project was conducted, as well as the study limitations and ethical considerations. I also present the qualitative analysis of the data and coding technique adopted in the study.

Starting with Chapter 4, I present discussion of findings from my interviews, analysis of data and observations. I also highlight salient themes and argue how they relate to the existing scholarships. In Chapter 5, I carefully analyse the key findings in the light of my research questions, propose a theoretical framework, and discuss the implications for future research.

In Chapter 6, I conclude the study with a brief recap of the thesis, a snapshot of the contribution to knowledge and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1 Introduction to the chapter

As discussed in the preceding chapter, this thesis seeks to enhance the understanding of the role of leadership in enabling voice and influencing a potential whistleblower to step up and speak up internally. This is not an easy task; therefore, it is important to understand whistleblowing and how leadership can potentially develop an ethic-focused and voice-oriented culture. The literature review is also crucial to inform and assess the current state of related scholarships and opportunities for further research. In this chapter, I begin by setting out my position and elaborating on the mainstream literature on whistleblowing, differentiating between internal and external whistleblowing, explaining why internal whistleblowing needs to be preferred, and the ramifications of external whistleblowing. I then provide a closer look at ethics in general, followed by a detailed review of ethical leadership, ethical climate, voice, organisational trust and organisational justice. These concepts have been considered critical organisational factors in the literature. They are also valuable to my research questions and may influence the pre-speak up atmosphere.

In this chapter, I discuss their impact on speaking up and gaps in the existing scholarships. Next, I review the literature where these lenses are integrated to understand the impact of speaking up and how leadership facilitated voice. In the final section, I summarise the debate and briefly discuss possible research gaps learned from the key scholarships, and how that may help shed light on the role of leadership in facilitating an ethic-focused and voice-oriented climate.

2.2   Introduction to whistleblowing

Over the last three decades, whistleblowing has attracted significant attention and is still a significant issue for many researchers worldwide. The term "whistleblowing" is of British origin and was initially derived from the English police constables who used to blow their whistles to inform others about wrongdoing (Cavico, 2003). In the U.S, it can be traced back to 1971 when Daniel Ellsberg leaked 'Pentagon Papers' exposing the country's involvement in the Vietnam War to the media (Greenwood, 2015). In 1863, the Federal False Claim Act was implemented to reduce fraud committed by government suppliers during the Civil War (Macey, 2007). If we observe the series of incidents of organisational wrongdoing and ethical breaches which came to public attention, from the late 1980s until the earlier 21st Century (e.g., the Clapham Rail Collision, Piper Alpha, Herald of Free Enterprise, Staffordshire National Health Service Trust, Bank of Credit and Commerce International, Anderson, Tyco), we see a phenomenal increase in acknowledging the importance of whistleblowing in controlling corruption, harmful and unethical activities. All these cases triggered a need for the establishment of whistleblowing legislation and strengthening organisational policies. This also makes whistleblowing a vital subject to consider for organisations as well as for managers to be familiar with and prepared for, to inform their organisational policies and procedures for both awareness and compliance purposes.

There is a debate among scholars on what comprises whistleblowing. King (1999) argues that whistleblowing is a sensitive communication style, which requires the communicator to consider several parameters, including the audience, purpose, language, and tone of the wrongdoing that is being disclosed. Whereas Jubb defines

"Whistleblowing is a deliberate non-obligatory act of disclosure, which gets onto public record and is made by a person who has or had privileged access to data or information of an organisation, about non-trivial illegality or other wrongdoing whether actual, suspected or anticipated which implicates and is under the control of that organisation, to an external entity having potential to rectify the wrongdoing" (1999, p.78).

There are several definitions of whistleblowing. The definition intends to present perspective around the term and how it is influenced by research considerations (Miceli & Near, 1992). Another definition that is widely used is ''the disclosure by organisation members (former or current) of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to persons or organisations that may be able to effect action.'' (Miceli & Near 1984, p.4; Near & Miceli 1996). This definition implies four key aspects; the occurrence of an event having illegal or unethical activity, a decision made by the employee on whether to report wrongdoing or not, if this decision is affirmative, then whether to report internally or externally and the possible reaction of the recipients of such disclosure (Banisar, 2011). It limits the whistleblower to be a current or former employee of the organisation. At the same time, it allows the organisation to design processes in a way that is supportive of internal reporting. Given the study's aims discussed in the preceding chapter, focusing on enabling voice and internal speak up, I have benchmarked Miceli and Near's definition as it appears more appropriate for this research. In the following sections, I review the literature on internal and external whistleblowing, whistleblowing retaliation, their suffering, and whistleblowing motivations. I then focus on the importance of internal whistleblowing mechanisms followed by linking whistleblowing with culture and ethics.

2.2.1 Internal and external whistleblowing

Internal whistleblowing occurs when the wrongdoing is reported internally to the line manager, supervisor, someone from the upper management or any pre-designated department or individual (e.g., ethics ombudsman or hotline) (Sims & Keenan, 1998). According to Miceli et al. (2008), nearly all whistleblowers raise their concern internally first to their line manager. When they are not heard, or a satisfactory action is not taken, then they blow the whistle externally (Near & Miceli, 2016). If the internally raised disclosures are taken seriously, then the organisation may easily reduce all associated costs of external whistleblowing. This will not only solve the issue at hand before it goes public, but this will pass a message to the organisation member that the organisation is very concerned about managing such problems. In return, employees would be more motivated to report a case of wrongdoing and have these dealt with internally (Near & Miceli, 2016). According to Keenan & Krueger (1992), one of the positive sides of encouraging internal disclosures is that employees may feel that they are helping the organisation, which may eventually increase their confidence.

Most employees, possibly sensing that managers will not acknowledge their complaints, do not raise concerns about wrongdoing (Miceli et al., 2008). Some laws protect whistleblowers from reprisal by providing appropriate reporting channels to be utilised (Miceli & Near 1992; Near et al., 1993).

External whistleblowing is when the disclosure is made to an outside party, for example: the media, a public interest group or regulatory agencies instead

of management within the organisation (Sims & Keenan, 1998). If the misconduct is reported externally, there is a possibility that legal advisors or solicitors may ask for some physical evidence confirming the presence of wrongdoing before the matter is escalated or looked into (Dworkin & Baucus, 1998). This may not be an easy task, and given the possible complexity in collecting such proof, a whistleblower may just highlight the issue internally. If an organisation rectifies the problem, then employees will never go outside to report; this will save the organisation's reputation and pass a message that employees are valued (Barnett, 1992).

Disclosures made to external sources can be more hostile to the organisation and may lead to unfavourable publicity or legal intervention (Miethe & Rothschild, 1994; Rothschild & Miethe, 1999). It is a bit complex in a way that organisations being accused of malpractices would prefer that whistleblowers utilise internal channels to report the wrongdoing rather than external ones (Near, 1989). At the same time, research also shows that most whistleblowing cases are reported externally because of not getting a satisfactory response from within the organisation (Vandekerckhove & Phillips, 2017).

It is well established that people remain silent due to the mum effect - when an individual knowing the repercussions of speaking up withholds bad news or information, lack of trust in supervisors, avoidance of rocking the boat, and fear of retaliation (Tesser, 1970; Roberts & O'Reilly, 1974; Redding, 1985; Miceli & Near, 1992). I am interested in exploring the pre speak up landscape so that this situation of an organisation blaming the whistleblower

and a whistleblower blaming the organisation is perhaps prevented. In the next section, I review the literature on whistleblowing retaliation.

2.2.2 Retaliation

Research shows that speaking up may lead to retaliation. Retaliation is an "undesirable action taken against a whistleblower – who reported wrongdoing internally or externally, outside the organisation" (Rehg et al., 2008, p. 222).

To understand retaliation, Kenny (2019) highlights using the resource-based view (RBV) framework by the organisation to get the best for their competitive advantage. Power is considered as a resource here. For example, retaliation one may face is usually associated with the power both wrongdoer and whistleblower hold; whistleblower having the powers in terms of a highly ranked position in the hierarchy or holding position in a business area where whistleblowing is mandated, i.e., compliance (Miceli & Near, 1987, Rehg et al., 2008; Kenny, Fotaki & Scriver, 2018; Kenny, 2019). There is plenty of helpful literature available on power in the sense of whistleblower's retaliation which is out of scope for this research.

Retaliation varies depending on the severity of the threat or trouble the disclosure can bring to the organisation. For example, if this is going to cause severe damage to their repute or if that is something perceived as an internal threat to the supervisor's negligence on a matter (Martin & Rifkin, 2004). Depending on this, an organisation may take measures to safeguard their interest and discourage others from speaking out. In addition to

organizational retaliation, Blenkinsopp et al. (2019) posit that whistleblowers may also face retaliation from peers in different forms. For example, they are socially shunned, their promotion is denied, or they are forced to resign. Research shows that the chances of retaliation an external whistleblower can face are higher than an internal whistleblower (Near & Miceli, 1986). But those who are retaliated against, their suffering and mental health are notable, which I discuss next.

2.2.3 Suffering

There are different forms of retaliation, including keeping the whistleblower in psychological stress, i.e., disciplinary action, giving closets to use as office space, demotion, transfer to a position which is less compatible with their skills so that they are stressed and ultimately fail in the role, and termination (Rothschild & Miethe, 1999; Alford, 2001). Many whistleblowers struggle with their sufferings for a long time. Their professional life is impacted when they are blacklisted from their field; their family life is affected when they face tension in their relationships; their finances are disrupted when they are unable to repay a loan and are bankrupted; and most importantly, their mental health suffers when they become depressed and sleep-deprived to name few challenges (Galzer & Glazer, 1989; Alford, 2001; Kenny, Fotaki & Scriver, 2018; Kenny, 2019). Despite serious potential sufferings, it is important to understand what motivates a whistleblower to speak out.

2.2.4 Motivations

Much research has been done on understanding whistleblowing intentions or motivations so that the speak up behaviour can be predicted (Kaptein, 2020). Studies also argue that understanding intentions and motivations may not match with actual behaviour (Mesmer-Magnus & Viswesvaran, 2005; Park & Blenkinsopp, 2009). Since whistleblowing is a delicate topic and investigating actual speak up behaviour is complicated, it is argued that understanding people's motivation may help predict behaviour for enhanced understanding of the antecedents (Kaptein, 2020). Azjen's (1991) 'Theory of Planned Behaviour' has been used to predict employees' behaviour, whether ethical or unethical. This theory has also been used in investigating the difference between attitude and intention and intention and behaviour. Azjen argues that they are all driven by our beliefs; a) attitude is driven by our belief on the consequence of our behaviour (ethical or unethical); b) subjective norms (social pressure to engage in an ethical or unethical behaviour), and our belief; c) intention is the perception of how easy or difficult it is to display behaviour. Park and Blenkinsopp (2009) posit that Ajzen's 'Theory of Planned Behavior' can be used as a general theory in predicting whistleblowing intentions.

Overall, it has been acknowledged that whistleblowers are motivated by their personal interests (Ugaddan & Park, 2019), or genuine desire to speak out to protect others (Miceli et al., 2008; Seifert et al., 2010), or they are saints who are willing to sacrifice the self to protect others (Grant, 2002), or they find speaking out as 'choiceless choice' - out of their morality to raise concern

(Alford, 2001), or they are mandated by their role (Miceli and Near, 1987), or motivated by bounty to report wrongdoing (Near & Miceli, 2016; US Securities and Exchange Commission, 2017), or 'parrhesiasts' - who take the risk to tell the truth to power (Vandekerckhove & Langenberg, 2012; Weiskopf & Tobias-Miersch, 2016; Kenny, 2017; Kenny, Fotaki & Vandekerckhove, 2020; Kenny & Bushnell, 2020). Alford (2001) posits that there are people who do not intend to be a whistleblower, they just speak out with the intention of having the wrongdoing fixed, but at some point in the process, they become accidental whistleblowers. Morality is another factor influencing whistleblowing decisions, whether to speak out of loyalty of the organisation or justice for the broader group of people or the public. Lindblom (2007) defines organisational loyalty as when the employee shows concerns about matters which are likely to damage his employer's repute in public – this may hinder the employee from disclosing organisational wrongdoing, and then there is another take on loyalty to the larger group or society – this requires the employee to report the wrongdoing. When the employee reports externally, that is considered organisational disloyalty, and contrary to this, some scholars consider this as 'rational loyalty' (see Vandekerckhove & Commers, 2004). If reported internally, this is usually seen as part of the organisational loyalty so that the organisation is alerted about the wrongdoing to address the concern. This highlights the need to understand the importance of internal whistleblowing mechanisms, which is discussed next.

2.2.5 Importance of internal whistleblowing mechanisms

Research shows that effective internal whistleblowing mechanisms have been identified as possible channels for protecting organisations from external whistleblowing (Barnett, 1992; Keenan & Krueger, 1992; Rothschild & Miethe, 1999). The use of an internal speak up system may help detect potential problems (Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Fotaki, 2019). Researchers have associated external whistleblowing with the non-existence or ineffectiveness of internal reporting procedures (Barnett, 1992). According to Tavakolian (1994), one of the best ways for organisations to avoid the damage of external whistleblowing is to encourage internal disclosures. Reasonable consideration has been given to the formation of internal reporting mechanisms within organisations (Ferrell et al., 1998; Treviño et al., 1999). Near & Miceli (1986) and Miceli et al. (1999) suggest that due to fear of retaliation and lack of protection offered by the organisation, many potential whistleblowers do not even come forward. Additionally, if not handled properly, a whistleblowing case can ruin years of hard work and, if managed actively, can be beneficial for the organisation (Tavakoli, Keenan & Crnjak-Karanovic, 2003).

Moreover, an effective internal whistleblowing system requires vigilant organisational management (King, 2000). Despite the benefits of internal whistleblowing, most organisations seem unable to encourage internal speak up. Fear of retaliation by the organisation is also a critical aspect, which usually deters the employee from coming forward. When it comes to speaking out, the degree of protection an organisation offers to its employees

is very important for potential whistleblowers (Miceli et al., 1999; Near & Miceli, 1986). In the next section, I discuss the need to encourage internal speak up.

2.2.6 Encouraging internal speak up

Research shows that if malpractices were reported internally, it would be perhaps the best use of whistleblowing procedures, and this will help an organisation fix issues that come to the surface without compromising their reputation and finances (Miceli et al., 2012; Seifert et al., 2014). Therefore, it is crucial to create voice-friendly work environments where employees feel comfortable and safe to speak up.

Cheng, Bai and Yang (2017) argue that employees may speak up internally when they feel safe and are provided organisational support. According to Kenny, Vandekerckhove and Fotaki (2019), a variety of speak up channels that are perceived as responsive and effective such as an external ombudsman or independent hotline, tends to encourage internal disclosures. Contrary to this, Martin (2020) highlights that the official channels are expected to address issues, but in reality, they usually serve as deception and may cause mistrust of organisational procedures. Whistleblowing policies and channels are essential, but Martin emphasises the need to pay more attention to enhancing skills, reframing one's mindset or culture and looking at other ways to resolve issues. Research shows that there are situations when employees do not raise a concern with the intention of "whistleblowing", but rather voice concern as part of their job and then learn

through the process that they are "whistleblowers" (Rothchild, 2013; Kenny, Fotaki & Vandekerckhove, 2020). Therefore, in the following section, I differentiate employee voice and whistleblowing.

2.3   Employee voice and whistleblowing

In this section, I outline the difference between employee voice and whistleblowing and how are they interlinked. Research on employee voice was coined by Hirschman, who defines voice as: "any attempt at all to change, rather than to escape from, an objectionable state of affairs, whether through individual or collective petition to the management directly in charge, through appeal to a higher authority with the intention of forcing a change in management, or through various types of actions or protests, including those that are meant to mobilize public opinion" (1970, p.30). Mowbray, Wilkinson and Tse (2015) define employee voice as: "an opportunity to have a say" (p.385). Most researchers consider voice as an 'upward communication' and an 'extra-role behaviour' aimed at getting the issues fixed and suggest for continual improvement (Morrison, 2011; Morrison, 2014; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). Whereas whistleblowing is not just about upward communication or have a say, it is more complicated (see previous sections of this chapter) and involves speaking up about organisational wrongdoing (Miceli & Near, 1984; Near & Miceli, 1985). Sometimes it is not easy to differentiate whistleblowing from voice when employees use whistleblowing channels to report their dissatisfaction or file a grievance (Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Fotaki, 2019). In these cases, a close analysis between 'organisational wrongdoing' and 'other concern' becomes necessary for a clear distinction (Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Irfan, 2020).

Research shows that voice scholars acknowledge supervisors and other colleagues within the organisation as primary recipients, whereas whistleblowing recipients have been bifurcated into two types; internal and external (see section 2.2.1 for more details) – internal whistleblowing is when the wrongdoing is reported internal to an organisation, and external whistleblowing is when the malpractice is reported outside of the organisation. Further to this, how voice and whistleblowing disclosures are addressed and responded to, either positively or negatively, is another widely researched aspect in both scholarships. Whistleblowing has also been studied as an escalation of voice – in a sense that mostly the concern is raised internally and upon seeing no improvement or clarification, it is escalated to the next level, and then further escalation may end up with external whistleblowing (Donkin, Smith & Brown, 2008; Lewis & Vandekerckhove, 2015; Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Irfan, 2020). In this thesis, since my focus is on internal speak up, for the reader's clarity, I may use internal voicing opportunities or voicing concerns to convey this intersection or overlap of internal whistleblowing with voice. In the next section, I discuss how employee voice can be impacted by leadership.

2.4   Employee voice and leadership

The role of leadership is considered central to the employee voicing experience (Detert & Burris, 2007). Leadership mainly affects voice for a couple of reasons; firstly, speaking up mostly involves sharing a concern with someone who has the power to address it, and leaders are targets of the voice process; secondly, leaders have control over organisational resources, i.e., salary, rewards, and promotion. Their openness to speaking up can significantly influence employees' willingness to come forward. Milliken et al. (2003) consider leadership openness in the form of

employees' understanding that the manager is receptive to their ideas and addresses the matter raised. Detert and Burris investigated leadership and employee voice involving approximately 3,000 employees and 223 managers in a restaurant chain. They argue that a leader's behaviour involving flexibility to change shows that voice is appreciated. They also posit that psychological safety (i.e., a perception that it is safe to engage in interpersonal risks at the workplace) (see Edmondson, 1999) plays a vital role in developing a safe voicing climate. Leaders are pivotal to establish psychological safety. In a study by Detert and Treviño (2010), they conducted 89 interviews in a high-tech corporation and found that in addition to the immediate supervisors, skip-level leaders (or distal leaders) are also likely to influence employees' voice either directly; via direct interaction or indirectly; via organisation climate or structure and policies. This shows that managers are also important in encouraging voice. Further to this, Blenkinsopp and Snowden (2015) argue that the role of leadership behaviour is paramount in establishing a culture of voice through role modelling, commitment to listening, and the ability to acknowledge mistakes as this signals to employees what kind of behaviour is accepted and needs to be practised in the organisation. For these reasons, the role of leadership has been highlighted in this study.

The need here is to design a framework that can facilitate managers in encouraging employee voice. There are some leadership styles, including ethical leadership, authentic leadership and transformational leadership, which have been highlighted to encourage pro-social behaviour and play an important role in creating a voice climate (Mowbray, Wilkinson & Tse, 2015). In their conceptual voice model, they clearly outline three stages involving: a) voice opportunity, b) Mechanism and Target, c) Channel and how Leader-Member Exchange theory (exchange between

leader and follower) can influence the selection of voicing channel. The model provides a practical holistic view of employee voice. In this thesis, I take a step back and argue that this 'management-employee bonding' needs to be pre-established to enable voice, and only then one may advance to the first stage of the model with appropriate motive and content. In addition to this, Lewis (2011) claims that if leaders do not encourage ethical behaviour across the organisation then whistleblowing policies and channels may not be very valuable. This resonates with Lavena's (2016) study, which focuses on the determinants of the decision to blow the whistle through surveying approximately 36,000 federal employees from 24 agencies. It suggests that individual motives along with organisational culture and leadership should be accounted in order to promote ethical behaviour. This implies focus on the organisation's culture and its ethical impetus, which is discussed next.

2.5   Organisational culture and ethics

It is well acknowledged that organisational culture plays an important role in employee speak up. Culture indicates how employees feel about the organisation, values, and beliefs that help establish standards of behaviours (Geertz, 1983). Whereas ethical climate refers to the overall feel (right and wrong) of the workplace. Ashton (2015) posits that to encourage internal speak up, there is a clear requirement for an ethical culture and the belief among employees that raising concerns will be viewed positively by the organisation. Ethical culture comprises those features of the organisation that may encourage ethical behaviour and discourage unethical conduct, such as ethical role modelling (Kaptein, 2011b). Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Fotaki (2019) highlight Kaptein's work in this area and his Corporate Ethical Virtue (CEV) model, which encourages ethical behaviour. His model comprises of seven features

involving; a) clarity – which shows to what extent an organisation has detailed the level of ethical expectations required from employees. If the behavioural expectations in terms of organisational norms, values and ethical standards are explained in depth, it will be easy for employees to comply; b) congruency – refers to the important question of to what extent the leadership is role modelling ethical standards; c) feasibility - shows to what extent the organisation has made the necessary resources available to the employee as well as suitable working conditions to help them fulfil their role; d) supportability – shows to what extent an organisation is supportive of ethical conduct so that employees are motivated to adhere to a code of conduct; e) transparency – shows to what extent wrongdoing is handled in the organisation as well as the visibility of internal reporting mechanisms; f) discussability – shows to what extent an organisation is open to having a dialogue on ethical situations and voicing of concerns; and g) sanctionability – shows to what extent employees believe that their ethical or unethical behaviour is managed in terms of a reward or punishment. Kaptein checked this model to see if there is any relation with the five possible responses of employees ranging from inaction, confrontation, reporting to management, calling ethics hotline, and external whistleblowing. His study helps us understand different organisational features involved in forming the culture and the possible reactions of speaking out. However, it does not cover the entire speak up experience as well as what happens after employees' report concerns (see Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Fotaki, 2019) and most importantly, it fails to address the personal motivation of an individual to engage in this act. This shows the need to research the possibility of promoting speak up through developing an ethically-driven work culture where speaking up becomes so fluid that it is not seen as a selfish or heroic act – requiring much thinking and

looking at the repercussions – but instead is considered as a usual voicing act. The connection between ethics and whistleblowing is well recognised. In the following section, I focus on how wrongdoing and whistleblowing are seen from an ethical perspective.

2.6   Ethics and whistleblowing

Ethics is taken from the ancient Greek word 'ethos', which means 'customs or tradition, a way of thinking or moral character' (Allen, 2014). Duska et al. (2011) note ethics as "the discipline dealing with what is good and bad with moral duty and obligation; a set of moral principles or values; a theory or system of moral values; or the principles of conduct governing an individual or group" (p.34). Hilliard and Ferreira (2001) note that "values are general standards by which people live, they represent their views about what is acceptable or not" (p.93). For more than 2000 years, many philosophers and researchers have been exploring and arguing about how people should behave and what is morality? What are the origins of these two widely debated concepts? In general, many people perceive ethics as something that can help decide what is right and wrong. It is associated with the subject of how people ought to act, whereas morality is the practice of this concept. Many disciplines have tried to define ethics in different senses; for example, philosophers have named it 'science of morality'. Mannion et al. (2018) consider this as a 'principal driver' which guides whistleblowing behaviour.

This implies a deeper understanding of ethics in the whistleblowing world. Theories of ethics were originated from moral philosophy or the study of morality. Various philosophers further investigated these at different times. For example, classical

utilitarian considers an action to be right only as long as it causes happiness to most of the involved people, and the action would be wrong if it does not. In a whistleblowing context, if speaking up is benefitting more people, it is wise, and if it is causing trouble for many in terms of job loss due to business closure or deficit because of negative reputation, it may not be an appropriate act. Immanuel Kant's deontology addresses this problem in utilitarianism. Utilitarianism focuses on the outcomes, whereas deontology addresses that one must consider his action first and evaluate if it can be accepted globally. The selected choice would only be right if it meets the requirements of a moral norm, or in other words, 'right' should be prioritised over 'good'. So when an auditor speaks up about illegal acts i.e. cooking the books, then through a deontological lens the auditor is generally accepted to do so (Duska, Duska & Ragatz, 2011). All of this is important to make an ethical judgment (Zakaria, 2015).

While ethics is important, and while we should understand the main guiding frameworks of utilitarianism and deontology, we cannot really think about these in practice—and in the context of whistleblowing—without a view to the organisational context involving norms, culture, and climate around us. From the perspective of an observer, Park, Blenkinsopp and Park (2014) have named this ethical judgement process as "An Observer's Value Orientation" – which is when an observer of wrongdoing uses his knowledge, experiences, beliefs, and other associated complexities to decide if reporting would be right or wrong. In this value orientation, they suggest using three value orientations, namely, a) legal and moral principles orientation (LM) – this resonates with the general perception that speaking out is an individual's legal and moral duty at work. If this is something widely promoted by the organisation, it may impact positively on whistleblowing

intentions; b) social and human relations (SH) – this aspect refers to the level of candidness with other colleagues, quality of their relationship and that the act of speaking out would be seen positively; c) economic value orientation – refers to if speaking out would be economically beneficial.

The act of whistleblowing is seen as prosocial behaviour, comprising of egoistic (i.e., personal interests) and altruistic (i.e., for the wellbeing of others) intentions (Dozier & Miceli, 1985; Holtzhausen, 2009). Whistleblowing is widely recognised as reporting immoral or unethical behaviour. Tsahuridu and Vandekerckhove (2008) posit that "whistleblowing requires an individual to be a moral agent who is responsible, able and willing not to be fully determined by the organisational means and ends and having a belief that speaking up will cause the correction of an organisational wrongdoing" (p.111). Moral agency is acknowledged as a personal trait that encourages people to go by the ethical rules and is self-regulated (De George, 1992; Dodson, 1997). People with a solid moral sense are more likely to uncover wrongdoing and raise concerns (Dozier & Miceli, 1985). People have their motives for speaking up (see section 2.1) but mostly what they have in common is realising that it would be morally incorrect if they did not speak out about the wrongdoing.

As discussed in the preceding sections, whistleblowing is a complex phenomenon; it is acknowledged as a "choiceless choice" where whistleblowers follow their sense of morality without considering its repercussions (Alford, 2001), and some researchers argue that employees are accountable both legally and morally to be loyal to their employer and raise concerns (Lindblom, 2007; Dungan, Young & Waytz, 2019).

If we consider the above broader concepts of ethics in an organisational context, then whenever people come across an ethical situation, they ask the Socratic question of 'What should I do?' (Victor & Cullen, 1988). In simple words, the understanding of organisational processes having ethical content in them is encompassed in the concept of an ethical work climate. Establishing an appropriate ethical work climate where voices and conflicting opinions can be appreciated remains an 'elusive goal' (Mannion & Davies, 2015). This is one of the areas where this thesis seeks to attempt such a goal and contribute to the literature. Ethics is about the guiding frameworks of what is right and wrong, but the cultural context and climate in which we find ourselves are strong influences on this. In the next section, I shed some light on how whistleblowing is observed through an ethical climate lens.

2.7   Ethical climate and whistleblowing

The ethical climate is the "shared perceptions of what ethically correct behaviour is and how ethical issues should be handled" (Victor & Cullen, 1988, p.51). Every organisation imposes ethical standards and values and prepares guidelines for ethical problems it may face. Ethical climate does not only help an organisation's members on moral decisions to find the answer of ''what should I do?'' but also helps in the decision-making process to answer ''how shall I do it?'' (Victor & Cullen 1988). The organisation's ethical climate helps determine how employees make ethical decisions (Cullen, Victor & Carrol, 1989). Victor and Cullen developed a tool comprising a set of questions that may help measure ethical climate and then further suggested that there should be a good balance between an ethical climate and an organisation's strategy. I have used some of the questions in developing my

interview guide. There is no one-size-fits-all approach to ethical climate, but best practices can be identified that may characterise a positive ethical climate (Victor & Cullen, 1987). These best practices: are humility and a zero-tolerance for the destructive behaviours of individuals and groups, justice, integrity, trust, structural reinforcement, and social responsibility (Johnson, 2012).

Victor and Cullen (1987, 1988) suggested five types of ethical climates: independence climate, caring climate, instrumental climate, rules climate, and law and code climate. Each of these climates is comprised of an underlying concept of ethics. I will elaborate on this more while discussing each type in the following section and shed some light on their association with speaking up.

2.7.1 Independence climate

This type of climate is based on deontological principles. It advocates that people's beliefs are based on their personal moral values to make ethical decisions. According to Victor & Cullen (1988) and Martin & Cullen (2006), personal morality and values are prioritised, and employees are responsible for higher ethical standards. Therefore everyone has their own perception of right and wrong, and they are expected to follow their moral and personal beliefs (Mayer, 2014).

2.7.2 Caring climate

A caring climate is based on utilitarian ethics. It encourages individuals to base their behaviour and decisions around benevolence and society. Organisational policies usually promote this concern for others (Wimbush &

Shepard, 1994). Therefore, employees feel responsible for speaking up about wrongdoing at the workplace (Martin & Cullen, 2006). According to Wimbush et al. (1997), this type of climate is assumed conducive to ethical behaviour such as making whistleblowing disclosures.

2.7.3 Instrumental climate

According to Martin & Cullen (2006), an instrumental climate promotes the selfish perspective of people's and organisations' interests. Due to the egoist element in this type of climate, this is assumed not to go well with whistleblowing (Wimbush et al., 1997). This also resonates with Wang and Hsieh (2013), who posit that an instrumental climate dissuades employees from taking action, which is helpful for the betterment of others.

2.7.4 Rules climate

A rules-based climate is based on deontological ethics. It encourages employees to strictly follow the organisation's rules and utilise them to manage ethical issues across the organisation (Rothwell & Baldwin 2006; Wimbush et al., 1994). Legislation, rules, and acts control organisations, and they are required to fulfil or comply with specific requirements to operate. A rule-based climate is likely to be helpful where speak up systems are established and are detailed enough for employees to use as guidance for ethical decision making (Wimbush et al., 1994). In an independence climate, personal beliefs help make an ethical choice, whereas in a rule-based climate,

the direction on following the prescribed rules mostly comes from the employer.

2.7.5 Law and code climate

People and organisations are required to follow legislation and professional codes of conduct in the same way as it comes from the government or professional body. Adherence to the regulations is also taken from a deontological perspective. This type of climate seems to have a strong association with whistleblowing (Wimbush et al., 1997). Miceli and Near (1985) suggest that those who speak up internally are usually obligated to perform inspection and report the results, i.e., auditors, nurses (Blenkinsopp et al., 2019; Mannion et al., 2018).

In a rules climate, the focus is on organisational policies and procedures setting up the internal context, whereas, in a law and code climate, the emphasis is on following the regulatory requirements or the professional standards.

Research shows that ethical climates can help employees understand the overarching role of morality. This awareness may not only stop them from engaging in an unethical act but is likely to encourage them to speak up about wrongdoing (Wang & Hsieh, 2013). Rothwell and Baldwin (2006) conducted a quantitative research study to investigate the relationship between whistleblowing and different types of ethical climates (which are discussed in the previous section) along with some contextual variables, namely organisation size, policies and procedures in place about the

reporting of a misconduct, supervisory status, tenure, internal audit, and lastly utilisation of polygraphs to predict whistleblowing behaviour among public servants in the state of Georgia, U.S.A. Their research also had certain limitations in the sense that: the survey was distributed by mail to 600 participants, out of which 300 were civilian public employees and 300 were police personnel. Moreover, all respondents were government employees and may have different organisational policies from those working in the private sector. Therefore this study is tailored for public servants and is less generalizable. Ahmad et al. (2014) noted that because of the complexities involved in whistleblowing, ethical climates might not have much influence due to the associated risk of retaliation. They concluded that 'rule climate', is the only type of ethical climate with some positive relationship with whistleblowing as it mandates employees to speak up internally.

Ethical climate can be promoted by creating an inclusive environment in which all members of the organisation can participate in articulating values, and making decisions in the process of putting these values into action (Ray, 2006). When ethical managers are informed about potential malpractice, they take corrective action before the problem becomes inevitable (Miceli, Near & Dworkin, 2009). Unlike leaders at the Enron Corporation, where an aggressive environment was nurtured, and the organisational culture was to get the work done and make profit irrespective of the means to do it, this vision breached the ethical boundaries (Sims & Brinkmann, 2012). An ethical climate may help us enhance an overall understanding of ethical behaviour, but it may not help us predict whistleblowing behaviour. This study does not aim to predict whistleblowing behaviour but rather to develop certain conditions in the organisation that may help encourage employees to voice concerns. Leadership is widely acknowledged in establishing such conditions.

Since the entire debate in this study is around ethical behaviour, I briefly discuss ethical voice in the next section to distinguish it from employee voice in general and how this is seen from a leadership perspective.

2.8 Ethical voice and leadership

Ethical voice is acknowledged as a type of voicing behaviour to improve unethical organisational norms and practices (Huang & Paterson, 2017). Paterson and Huang (2019) claim that when an ethical concern is raised to an ethical leader, the followers get to see action taken, and thus they realise the value of ethical behaviour at work. On the contrary, if leadership is not observed showing interest in the concerns raised and are found retaliating, there is a possibility that a 'culture of silence' may prevail. Edmondson (2013) argues that when employees feel that the leadership is not interested in understanding problems, they usually prefer to remain silent. Edmondson finds that if employees are recognized as 'courageous' when they speak out instead of 'troublemaker', then this may affect the culture of silence. Leaders need to observe this change in voicing patterns among employees and recognize them when they speak up. Silence about important issues can impact an organisation's ability to uncover problems (Milliken, Morrison & Hewlin, 2003). Research shows that ethical leaders are likely to be more vocal about organisational issues and direct employees to focus on the right thing as well encourage them to share their concerns (Walumbwa & Schaubroeck, 2009), and perhaps that is why they are acknowledged to provide voice to their followers (Brown et al., 2005).

In addition to this, perception of fairness at work is associated with leader's overall direction about how employees should be treated. In the cases of Enron and

Worldcom, research shows that when leadership was found involved in unethical situations, this raised a question about the ethicality and fairness of organisational policies. In the following section, I discuss how leadership can potentially support setting up an ethical atmosphere in the organisation and how this may facilitate speaking up.

2.9   Ethical leadership and whistleblowing

In this section, I review the literature on ethical leadership, how ethical leaders are likely to influence ethical behaviour, and their role in setting an ethical tone across the organisation. Most of the research undertaken to date on this strand is quantitative and has used structured questionnaires with close-ended questions, and hence is limited in the richness of responses collected for analysis.

Employees who perceive that they are treated fairly are inclined to engage in internal speak up to benefit the employer (Seifert et al., 2010; Seifert, Stammerjohan & Martin, 2014). Given the rise in business scandals over the last few years, the need to develop an ethical climate has become inevitable. The role of leadership influences ethical culture and ethical behaviour (including whistleblowing) in organisations (Brown et al., 2005; Culiberg & Mihelič, 2017). Brown et al. (2015) find that managers who make fair decisions become role models for their subordinates and can pave the way in developing an ethical climate. Thus, they have a direct effect on employees' ethical behaviour and perceptions (Sert et al., 2014). The ethical work climate assures its employees about expectations from management (Deconinck, Deconinck & Moss, 2016). According to Martin et al. (2017), promoting an ethical work climate means that the leadership expects

employees to behave ethically. Ethical leadership is an important concept and can influence the ethical behaviour of organisation members. Brown et al. (2005, p.120) define ethical leadership as "the demonstration of normatively appropriate conduct through personal actions and interpersonal relationships, and the promotion of such conduct to followers through two-way communication, reinforcement, and decision making." The first part of this definition explains that ethical leaders exhibit such behaviour (honesty, care and trustworthiness) which makes them a legitimate role model (see Trevino, Brown & Hartman, 2003). The later part suggests that ethical leaders establish a benchmark by setting ethical standards, rewarding ethical behaviour, and through interpersonal communication (Brown et al., 2005).

In order to develop ethical leadership theory, Deconinck et al. (2016) concluded that social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and social learning theory (Bandura & McClelland, 1977) were equally utilised. They further explained that in social learning theory, people learn through role modelling; if someone observes a colleague being rewarded or punished because of their ethical or unethical behaviour, they tend to behave ethically. In comparison, social exchange theory advocates reciprocity. Brown et al. (2005) illustrated this by giving the example of a leader who shows concern for the betterment of his followers, and in return, his followers act in ways beneficial to the organisation. Leaders are considered ethical role models when they emphasise ethical expectations, just treatment, and reward or punish their subordinates according to their behaviour. Paterson and Huang (2019) articulate that most of the ethical leadership research has focused on social learning theory, where role modelling is central to this. They propose a new phenomenon of role ethicality, meaning "the degree to which organizational members consider acting ethically part of their organizational role requirements" (p.2838). There are

also few limitations to this concept. For example, they did not consider ethical climate, which may have an influence. In the current research, I have carefully considered several key organisational aspects related to ethical behaviour to fully grasp the subject and learn new dimensions.

Further to this, research on how ethical leadership influences speak up and its dynamics are scarce (Bhal & Dadhich, 2011; Cheng, Bai & Yang, 2019). In their study of Ethical Leadership and Internal Whistleblowing, Cheng, Bai and Yang (2019) have looked at the subordinate's perception of organisational politics meaning when organisation members use resources to safeguard their interest – and argued that senior management should display a strong ethical stance when interacting with the team members and making decisions. Their study, however, lacks attention to the 'feeling of unfairness' and mistrust perceived by employees, which may influence internal speak up. In this study, I have also added organisational justice and investigated trust to understand how this may impact the overall speaking up experience.

2.10   Organisational justice and whistleblowing

The concept of justice – or fair treatment – is another factor that stands out when it comes to speaking up. In this section, I briefly outline the origin of justice, how justice evolved over time, the recent concepts, and their association with organisational justice and whistleblowing.

Plato believed the formation of law is from God, and so is the concept of justice (Pangle, 1988). He also believed that justice resides in an individual's personality and is exhibited through their behaviour (Lycos, 1987). Plato transcribed a dialogue

between Socrates and few others, in which they define justice as, it is fair enough to bring trouble to those who caused harm to you. However, Socrates point was that if justice is excellence, then causing harm to someone will influence that excellence, and therefore the act will not be 'just' anymore. Socrates had argued in The Republic of Plato that vengeance is never a part of justice. Raphael (2001) suggested that Plato defines justice as 'sticking to your own job', and Aristotle believed that 'law is to promote virtue and prohibit vice'. Before Aristotle concluded this definition, he discussed that law is meant for the greater good. It requires people to act bravely, have self-control, and good temperament. Many philosophers believe that Aristotle's approach is right for distributive justice. Lycos (1987) claimed that these ideas from Ancient Greece about justice aim to bring the best out of people and communities. As compared to his predecessors, Aristotle was more focused on equality and categorised it as key to justice. He further elaborated that if equals are treated unequally or unequals are treated equally, this would be entirely unjust (Gaus, 2018). Justice is a multi-dimensional concept that ranges from how much an employee earns to how fairly they are treated by the management (Sert et al., 2014). Organisational justice examines how fairly employees are treated in their workplace (Moorman, 1991). There is limited research available examining the link between organisational justice and internal disclosures. For example, literature shows that equitable processes facilitated by organisation justice convince employees to voice their concerns (Seifert et al., 2010).

Literature shows that there are three dimensions of organisational justice, including distributive justice, procedural justice and interactional justice. Each of these dimensions is likely to impact the possibility of internal speak up (Colquitt et al., 2001). I will shed some light on all three types, followed by a brief discussion

showing which justice type has been acknowledged as conducive to internal speak up.

2.10.1 Distributive justice

The concept of distributive justice is based on 'fairness of outcomes'. Put simply, when someone associates the amount of input or effort they put into some work with the output or compensation they receive in return (Greenberg, 1990). It is an individual belief about the fairness of this entire process. Learning from fair organisational policies and practices, when a whistleblower decides to raise a concern, prior literature suggests that they expect fair resolution of their report, which in return may lead to increased reporting of immoral practices (Seifert et al., 2010).

2.10.2 Procedural justice

Procedural justice refers to 'fair process' or the detailed procedure that is followed to reward or compensate an individual for their work or effort. According to Fein et al. (2013), procedural justice does not only involve organisational decision-making about a procedure but also the way it is carried out. Research shows that the fair application of whistleblowing policies and procedures enhance reports of wrongdoing (Miceli & Near, 1992). This type of organisational justice has been considered an essential aspect of organisational justice in the organisation for two reasons; people's interest in their personal outcomes (i.e., economic benefit) and sense of identification (i.e., appreciation for work or effort) within groups (Cropanzano & Ambrose, 2001). Ugaddan and Park (2019) contend that

procedural justice is associated with whistleblowing intentions provided that the employee's perception about the organisation is impartial, consistent, and clearly observed to be taking actions against wrongdoing.

2.10.3 Interactional justice

Some researchers have divided interactional justice into interpersonal justice and informational justice. Interpersonal justice is how respectfully a member of an organisation is treated. In comparison, informational justice refers to the extent to which explanations are given to organisation members about procedures or decisions and how those were concluded (Greenberg, 1990). An organisation may have a well-designed and fair whistleblowing policy in place, but an employee's interaction with the whistleblowing recipient can sabotage the entire speak up experience. Fair interaction has the potential to enhance internal speak up, but if a whistleblower is threatened by their managers, this may lead to silence. Ugaddan and Park (2019) find that transparent, timely and open communication may develop a speak up friendly work atmosphere.

Seifert et al. (2010) conducted a study on 447 internal auditors and management accountants. The hypothesis they wanted to test was that whistleblowing tends to increase when employees perceive that the procedures in place are fair, management is supportive, and appropriate action is taken when reported. Their findings suggest that when whistleblowing policies and procedures echo the above-discussed justice dimensions, this enhances the chances of disclosures. They also discussed that "higher levels of procedural justice, interactional justice, and distributive justice

significantly increase the perceived likelihood of whistleblowing." (Seifert et al. 2010, p.707). They argued that fair policies might enhance the propensity of whistleblowing, but at the same time, organisations are expected to follow whistleblowing regulations. Their research had some limitations, including that the underlying whistleblowing model was conceptualised under the purview of the Sarbanes-Oxley Act. Therefore, the study may not be generalized to auditors and accountants outside the U.S. Secondly, the method used was quantitative, and it has certain limitations (i.e., context and richness of data) to conduct such type of study. Previous research on this strand was more inclined towards organisational effectiveness instead of investigating the perception of fair treatment on internal speak up.

In a study by Ugaddan and Park (2019) using the Merit Principles Survey 2010 (United States), they analysed the association of trustful leadership, social exchange and self-determination theories, and organisational justice to predict whistleblowing intentions. They contended that organisational fairness and trustful leadership can positively impact speaking up. Their study also applied quantitative methods. An in-depth qualitative study on this topic may reveal more valuable findings. Trust is another critical organisational aspect that can impact employees' performance and other activities. Research shows that trust in managers enhances speaking up about wrongdoing (Seifert et al., 2014). In the following section, I focus on trust in general and see how organisational trust is likely to influence internal whistleblowing.

2.11 Organisational trust and whistleblowing

Trust is a vast concept, and it has various dimensions at interpersonal and inter-organisational levels. There are several definitions of trust. For example, Sztompka (1999) defined trust as "the expectation that other people, or groups or institutions with whom we get into contact – interact, cooperate – will act in ways conducive to our well-being. In most cases, we cannot be sure of that, as others are free agents, trust is a sort of gamble involving some risk. It is a bet on the future, contingent actions of others." (p.25). Another widely used definition by Cook & Wall (1980) is "... the extent to which one is willing to ascribe good intentions to and have confidence in the words and actions of other people" (p.39). The term 'confidence' has also been used as an alternative to 'trust'. I am more in favour of Mayer, Davis and David (1995) who define trust as "the willingness of a party to be vulnerable to the actions of another party based on the expectations that the other will perform a particular action important to the trustor, irrespective of the ability to monitor or control that other part" (p.712). They differentiate trust from cooperation (one may cooperate with others irrespective of trust factor, but trust may lead to better cooperation), confidence (when assumption and risk factor is absent from the interaction) and predictability (somehow associated with trust but trust is the next level of predictability). They also discussed various factors of trustworthiness which are important to understanding the trust context which enables the trust phenomenon including; ability – could be a skill or competency which may bring dependency at a task-specific level, benevolence – when a trustee is expected to 'do good to the trustor' resulting in a helpful behaviour, integrity – when a trustee is expected to follow and display widely accepted values and principles. Research shows that trust is pivotal to leader-follower interaction and is likely to influence internal speak up

(Xu, Loi & Ngo, 2016), and these trust-related contextual factors are equally important in strengthening their trust-bond with supervisors (see also Schoorman, Mayer & Davis, 2007), which in turn enhances employee voice (Seifert et al., 2014).

Organisational trust refers to "the organization's willingness, based upon its culture and communication, behaviours in relationships and transactions, to be appropriately vulnerable, based on the belief that another individual, group or organization is competent, open and honest, concerned, reliable and identified with common goals, norms, and values." (Gillis 2003, p.11). Put it simply, organisational trust is a positive demeanour among organisation members that the other party will display good values and will not take advantage of their dependency and vulnerability in an uncertain situation. Organisational trust takes place in a social setting, and that setting represents a unique culture or the norms of the organisation involving people's behaviour, communication style, structure, and hierarchies. Research shows that in addition to having fair speak up policies, organisations need to be trustworthy at the interpersonal and organisational level (Seifert et al., 2014). They propose that one way of promoting internal speak up is by enhancing trust through publicising the number of internal disclosures received and what actions were taken. However, this may not be practical for cases where confidentiality of the matter and anonymity of the whistleblower are of concern. Seifert et al. (2014) further suggest that if organisations are able to train supervisors on how to be supportive to those who speak up, this may positively influence employees' trust.

There are three forms of trust that are usually found in organisations, namely calculus-based trust, identification-based trust and knowledge-based trust (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). Gibson (2012) claims that trust enhances productivity, morality,

performance, justice and commitment across the organisation. Trust develops over a period when both of the parties meet each other's expectations. Trust is developed from calculus-based to knowledge-based, and then it reaches to identification-based (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). This shift from one level of trust to another is sequential. The understanding of how trust develops (Binikos, 2006) in leaders and organisation is fundamental in providing safe voicing space.

2.11.1 Calculus-based trust

This form of trust is based on the calculation of benefits or rewards one receives to maintain trust or the setbacks one has to face for not maintaining the trust (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). The reason it is called calculus-based is perhaps it is based on deterrence, for example, fear of punishment (if there is lack of trust) and encourage by reward (if trust is preserved). This is also known as the first level of trust, which is sensitive in the sense that at the beginning of a relationship, little is known about how others will behave and therefore, one will carefully weigh the risk of getting involved (Binikos, 2006). Due to this reason, one may be reluctant in voicing behaviour if they expect that the outcomes would be less than ideal.

2.11.2 Knowledge-based trust

This type of trust is based on how well an individual or organisational behaviour can be best predicted. It requires continuous communication and understanding of various aspects of awareness and predictability (Binikos, 2006). This form of trust develops from calculus-based trust, which brings a lot of information to both parties (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). The more

people know about each other, the better they get at predicting other's behaviour, and this improves mutual trust. Therefore, research shows that people are likely to engage in pro-social behaviour at this stage because they are in a position to predict the outcomes.

2.11.3   Identification-based trust

In identification-based trust, involved parties are very familiar with each other's requirements and intentions. They start trusting each other in a way that one party finds it easy to represent another party when needed (Lewicki & Bunker, 1996). Their mutual understanding is strong enough to allow them to think and feel like their counterparts. Research shows that strong leader-follower bonding may lead to trust, which further leads to internal speak up (Binikos, 2006).

Trust plays an important role when it comes to internal disclosures. An employee does not trust raising a concern with the wrongdoer directly or to the line manager, knowing that the outcomes will not be helpful. Binikos (2006) claims that, where there is trust, employees prefer to voice concerns internally. In addition to this, the consistency in leaders' ethical behaviour in terms of adhering to the organisational values and norms sends a clear message to the followers that the organisation is built on the grounds of ethical values and can be trusted (Pučėtaitė, 2014). The same appears to be resonated in this study, and it further adds to the literature by showing an integrative lens of looking at internal speak up and how ethical leadership may encourage an ethical and fair atmosphere among organisational members. As discussed in the preceding section, trust develops over time. While developing trust,

employees are likely to scan the organisational atmosphere and observe the pre-speak up landscape by critically analysing: if the work culture is conducive to speaking up, if their leaders are open to change and are willing to provide a safe voicing space, if speak up policies are fair, and lastly to what extent the organisation and their leaders can be trusted. All these concerns are likely to add value when it comes to deciding to speak up internally.

2.12   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed key studies of whistleblowing, including an introduction to the topic, the difference between internal and external whistleblowing, and the complexities around whistleblowing retaliation and whistleblower sufferings. Each of these topics provides an overall understanding of whistleblowing and how a whistleblower can add value in exposing wrongdoing or potentially suffer from retaliation. This triggers the need for easing the speak up experience and observing key scholarships on the importance of internal whistleblowing and whistleblowing motivations which in turn established the need for encouraging internal speak up.

My research questions for this study focus on investigating leadership's role in influencing speak up and how they can potentially enable an ethic centric and voice-friendly work culture. I have discussed the mainstream literature relevant to my study; addressing pre-speak up landscape and the key organisational context surrounding the speaking out atmosphere involving ethical climate, ethical leadership, employee voice, organisational justice, and organizational trust, which led me to appropriate theoretical canvasses. I then expanded each of these concepts

and observed if they are likely to advance internal speak up and the potential role of leadership in enabling voice. While each of these concepts highlights an interesting lens and connection with internal speak up, there are also gaps that need to be addressed. For example, it has been discussed that none of Victor and Cullen's ethical climates are conducive to speak up except the rules climate (Rothwell & Baldwin, 2006) and law and code climate (Wimbush et al., 1994). While these ethical climates are important, mandating speak up 'by law' or 'by role' may not always be helpful due to the fear of the unknown, i.e., the risk of retaliation or no response. Organisations are expected to respond positively to the concerns. Otherwise, this may discourage employees from raising sensitive issues (Blenkinsopp et al., 2019). Ethical climate may help us enhance an overall understanding of ethical behaviour, but this needs to be advanced by leadership who are able to advocate ethical conduct. The role of leadership is acknowledged to be the game-changer in this tension of whether to speak up or not - I then discuss employee voice and leverage it to be used as internal speak up by taking a step back from Mowbray, Wilkinson and Tse's (2015) voice model, and argue that 'leader-follower bonding' needs to be preestablished at an individual level to enable voice. Only then one may advance to the first stage of their model with appropriate motive and content.

Further to this, Kaptein's corporate ethical virtue model also lacks this critical piece of personal motivations to strengthen leader-follower bonding' or making an employee feel obliged to voice concerns internally. This also implies the need to enhance our understanding of how leaders may influence an employee's perception of fairness and trust in the organisation. Organisational justice and trust have been mainly quantitatively explored and argued to influence internal speak up positively. I

argue that all of these concepts may play an important part in setting up the pre-speak up landscape, and to date, they haven't been integrated in a qualitative study. I look at these key organisational aspects through an integrative lens and investigate how they are supportive to internal speak up and how they can be utilised together to provide a safe space for internal speak up.

From the literature review, the research being produced around internal whistleblowing associated with the above-discussed concepts is mainly positivist and quantitative in nature. The participants are offered limited choices of responses, and this choice of selection is made by the researcher (Saunders, Philip & Adrian, 2016). Therefore, this leads to limited outcomes, and the results may not represent the actual story. I am more interested in immersing into the research context to get a full grasp of the situation and respondents' experiences, and this is where the contribution of the thesis is made. Whereas the research topic at hand necessitates a thorough investigation of context as well as an understanding of people's experiences. In the next chapter, I explain the theoretical and methodological approach used to carry out this research study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1   Introduction to the chapter

In the preceding chapter, I reviewed the literature on whistleblowing, focusing on the importance of internal speak up and how leadership paired with ethical voice is likely to come into play by displaying ethical behaviour and bonding with the followers. I also provided an overview of organisational justice and organisational trust and discussed how an integrative lens may be useful in facilitating employee voice and internal speak up. In this chapter, I focus on the research process by outlining the methodological approach undertaken for this research. I begin by explaining my research philosophy and research design. I then shed light on the research methodologies and provide the basis for my choice. After that, I assess my research strategy and the method of reasoning used to answer the research questions. I also justify the selection of qualitative research methodology along with suitable data collection methods. After that, I outline how I have analysed the data followed by ethical considerations, reflections, and limitations of the research study.

3.2   Research philosophy

The research philosophy expresses the researcher's belief about the way in which data about a phenomenon is collected and analysed. There are three main research philosophies, including ontology, epistemology, and axiology. According to Collis and Hussey (2014), a research paradigm is a philosophical framework that explains how research should be carried out. The best way to identify which research paradigm should be undertaken for this study is to analyse the most suitable ontological and epistemological considerations. In a nutshell, ontology addresses the

question of 'What is there to know about?' and epistemology investigates 'How we know about it?'.

3.2.1 Ontological Position: Constructionism

Ontology deals with the belief about reality and what we think the truth is. According to Saunders, Philip & Adrian (2016), ontology refers to "assumptions about the nature of reality" (p.127), and Scotland (2012) mentions that ontology is "the study of being" (p.9). There are two main ontological orientations, namely, constructionism and objectivism. Constructivism views 'reality' as reliant on perceptions and the actions of social actors, that knowledge does not exist independent of social actors. Therefore, all individuals develop their own unique perceptions about the same phenomenon. For example, few people may perceive a 100-year-old chair as an antique, and others may find it a useless object. To get to know what others think about a phenomenon, a researcher is required to interact with people and investigate their underlying understanding. Whereas objectivism considers that "social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors." (Bryman & Bell, 2015, p.21). For example, things are what they are; a chair is a chair, regardless of what people think about it. Whistleblowing requires social actors to interact (Miceli & Near, 1996). Therefore, constructionist perspective in exploring this phenomenon is important in this study.

3.2.2   Epistemological Position: Interpretivism

Epistemology addresses the question of acceptable knowledge (Bryman & Bell, 2015). As discussed in the preceding chapters, this study investigates leadership's role in establishing ethical and safe voicing space where employees are motivated to speak up. The research questions are exploratory and require a deeper understanding of the organisational context and warrant an interpretive approach.

a. How and when can leadership facilitate in developing an ethic-centric and voice-friendly work culture?
b. How can willingness to internal speak up be nurtured?

Interpretivism suggests that reality is multiple because it reflects the distinctiveness of humans. The knowledge acquired through this approach is socially constructed rather than objectively determined or scientifically discovered (Crotty, 1998). A researcher using the interpretivist approach aims to produce the best possible explanation of the phenomenon under study by having two-way communication with the participants (Creswell, 2012). Whereas positivism implies what is 'posited or given'. It focuses on straightforward and precise methods to produce data that is not influenced or unbiased by the interpretation of social actors (Saunders, Philip & Adrian, 2016). In other words, acceptable knowledge is highly objective and measurable (Tuli, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Research tells us that most studies exploring whistleblowing are based on positivism (use of surveys, i.e., quantitative method) and lack in tapping people experiences

(Miceli et al., 2018). Whistleblowing, as discussed in the preceding chapter, involves social interaction among individuals. For this study, interpretivist stance is taken because it allows creating that space where the details can be explored to make actual sense of interactions and experiences. By using interpretivism, this study attempts to fill this gap in the literature.

3.3   Research method

The research method is how data is collected and then analysed in relation to the research question (Crotty, 1998). Research method may involve semi-structured interviews, participant observation, document analysis, survey and self-completion questionnaires or structured interviews. In this study, I have collected data through semi-structured interviews, organisation documents and observation.

3.4   Research strategy

A research strategy is a course of action to conduct business research. There are three main research strategies, namely qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method. Research strategy is selected based on the epistemological orientation of the research. In addition to epistemology, ontological assumptions and the link between theory and research play a role in choosing the most suitable research strategy (Bryman & Bell, 2015). Research questions are equally important in making a reasonable choice. Since this study looks at the pre-speak up landscape and voicing intentions, it is vital to immerse into the research setting. This study follows a qualitative research approach. I interacted with organisation members and was immersed in the research setting to comprehend my research questions and to get hold of detailed interpretation (Cooper & Schindler, 2005). Whereas in quantitative

research, a hypothesis is developed and tested under the jurisdiction of a particular theory (Warfield, 2010). A researcher who is performing qualitative research is usually categorised as 'interpretivist', or 'constructivist'. I investigated my research topic and the sensitizing concepts detailed in the literature review. Charmaz (2006) suggests that in order to ensure an in-depth understanding of the research topic, qualitative research is helpful to understand experiences and their meaning.

3.5   Method of reasoning: Inductive

The link between theory and research is important. This is represented by selecting the appropriate methods of reasoning that a researcher adopts, and here for this study, my method or reasoning is more in line with inductive theory (Saunders, Philip & Adrian, 2016). Inductive theory or inductive reasoning works from data, and theory is usually proposed towards the end of the research study (Goddard & Melville, 2004). One of the primary purposes of inductive theory is to let research findings emerge from the data without imposing any structured methodologies (Thomas, 2006). This kind of approach is primarily used in situations where there are few pre-established theories and where the researcher expects that more could be achieved. Epistemologically, the inductive theory is associated with interpretivism. In terms of ontology, it is linked with constructionism and is more open-ended and exploratory. Whereas in deductive theory, the researcher usually begins with "an abstract, logical relationship among concepts, then move towards concrete empirical evidence" (Neuman, 1997, p. 46). A deductive approach is usually used where there are pre-established theories, body of knowledge and where the intention is to test those theories by identifying a corresponding relation (Saunders, Philip & Adrian,

2016). In this study, I iteratively looked at my data and expanded on the literature to induce the theory (Charmaz, 2006).

3.6   Reasoning for my research approach

In order to establish a suitable research design for this study, there were three aspects that were considered: a gap in the currently available literature, research purpose and ontological & epistemological assumptions. As discussed in the preceding chapters, there is limited literature available investigating the role of leadership in enabling voice to support internal speak up. This could lead to a work culture where a potential whistleblower may comfortably raise his concerns internally. There is not much research available addressing the importance of enabling voice by featuring prominent organisational contextual factors involving ethical climate, ethical leadership, ethical voice, organisational justice, and trust. However, very little literature is available addressing all these concepts and their influence on internal speak up (Rothwell & Baldwin 2006; Seifert et al., 2010; Kaptein, 2011b; Seifert et al., 2014; Ugaddan & Park, 2019). These studies have certain limitations too. For example;

a.   The research methodology for such studies that have been mainly adopted is quantitative, and their work could not justify and comprehend leadership role in establishing a voice friendly work culture where people can be provided with a safe space for voicing concerns internally.

b.   There is a need to strengthen theoretical contribution by investigating if employees' voicing intentions could be improved.

c.   Their research work has been heavily confined to the financial sector

         (involving internal auditors or management auditors) and the health sector

         (e.g., NHS).

d.   Whistleblowing is yet to be investigated in the life-saving products business

         for the marine, defence and aerospace sectors in the U.K.

What makes this research study novel is the integrated lens towards investigating

leadership role in facilitating voicing of concerns. This integrated approach suggests

a conceptual framework of providing guidance to have an ethic focused and voice-

oriented work culture. Furthermore, it is imperative to let the respondents speak for

themselves. Given the research purpose and my philosophical research preferences

discussed in the previous sections, this study considers subjectivist assumptions and

epistemological stance as interpretivism. According to Saunders, Philip & Adrian

(2016), respondents should be given the opportunity so that they can speak freely

and maximum information can be collected. In addition to this, I have selected

qualitative approach due to the fact that; my research topic is largely unexplored and

requires a deep understanding to induce a theory. A qualitative approach is also

helpful in investigating unexpected insights. King (2004) asserted that the qualitative

research method permits one to closely see the phenomenon from the perspective of

the research participants. In this qualitative study, I have used in-depth semi-

structured interviews to collect data, made observations, and collected a variety of

documents for analysis.

3.7   Case study

Case study method facilitates a researcher to closely explore the data within a

specific context. Case study allows the researcher to delve deeper into the issues and

research questions (Yin, 2003). Generally, there are three categories of case study: exploratory case study, descriptive case study, and explanatory case study (Yin, 1984). The exploratory case study aims to ask general questions so that the researcher may probe for details and collect as much data as possible. A pilot study is considered a prototype of an exploratory case study, and it is important in a sense to determine the protocol that will be followed. Therefore, in this study, prior fieldwork and a little bit of data collection were done to test interview guideline and determine potential responses. I have discussed the pilot study in the following section. In a descriptive case study, the idea is to describe the natural phenomenon and begin with a descriptive theory to support the description of the story. In an explanatory case study, the researcher examines the data closely and tests the theory. This kind of design is mainly used in causal studies (Yin, 1984).

There are several benefits of using the case study method. For example, Yin (1984) suggests that: firstly, the examination of data becomes easy within the context of its use. Secondly, the case study method is flexible in terms of intrinsic (examines the case for its own sake), instrumental (to examine a certain pattern of behaviour), and collective (data from several different resources is collected) approaches to accommodate both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data. Thirdly, qualitative case study not only helps to explore data in a real-life context but also helps to explain the real-life situation complexities, which is challenging to discover in survey research. Despite these benefits, there are a few limitations too. For instance, Yin (1984) explains three types of limitations: firstly, case studies are usually blamed for lack of rigour that is mainly due to biased views of the researcher to influence findings. Secondly, a generalisation of a single case is considered challenging because of a small sample size, e.g., one or two research participants.

Thirdly, qualitative case studies are considered too long because of an ethnographic or longitudinal study involving tons of data over a period of time. Ruddin (2006) argues that the primary focus of case study researchers is not to aim for generalisation but to highlight that the case has been investigated thoroughly from all possible aspects (cited in Dubois & Gadde, 2014).

To summarise, Zaidah & Zainal (2007) find that the case study method is accepted as a beneficial method because it empowers the researcher to analyse data at the micro-level and provides opportunities to explore real-life situations and study participants' behaviour.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to investigate internal speak up in a multinational organisation that is in the business of producing life-saving products and designing safety solutions for the marine, aerospace, and defence sectors in the U.K. According to Dubois and Gadde (2002), "the interaction between a phenomenon and its context is best understood through in-depth case studies" (p.554). Therefore, an in-depth case study is adopted for enhanced learning (Bryman & Bell, 2015).

3.8   Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to check the appropriacy of interview guideline and to identify potential weaknesses related to respondent fatigue, comprehensibility, and logical order of the questions. Participants of the pilot study were asked to comment on the interview guideline, the order of questions, any possible confusion and misunderstanding, and the possibility to improve the language used in probing questions (Hagan, 2010). The idea of conducting a pilot run was helpful in improving and rehearsing the questions. The interview guideline was developed

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using the key organisational factors that I have discussed in Literature Review (see Chapter 2). For example, a few of the questions around ethical climate were tweaked from Victor and Cullen's (1988) original study on ethical climate. The development of the interview guideline is detailed later in this chapter, please see section 3.10.1, and the interview guideline is added in Appendix 4.

The pilot study was conducted in May 2017. A brief email covering the research topic and research objectives was sent to my colleagues, PhD students at the Management School of Queen's University Belfast. The selection of participants was voluntary as they showed interest in my research and wanted to participate. There were three participants comprising of two males and one female. One of them was an experienced qualitative researcher who had hands-on experience in conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews. Another had a good grasp over quantitative research and was in his final year of PhD, and the third participant was a first-year PhD student who had faith in positivism. Each interview lasted for 30-45 minutes. The motivation of inviting these mixed-background participants was to understand their perspective on the interview guidelines and observe how they respond to questions. After the interview session, each participant was asked: if the interview questions were understandable, if the sequence of questions was meaningful and made sense, if any of the question was offensive or unpleasant, and if they found any probing question less relevant or in need of revision. The feedback collected from these participants was constructive. I will now briefly explain their responses to the above points:

a.   Were the interview questions understandable? One of the participants responded that if I could explain in few words about some of the concepts in advance to the discussion, i.e., what is ethics and what organisational justice

entails. She believed that this would help the actual respondents to answer precisely. Therefore, I decided to quickly introduce such terms in the actual fieldwork for a better understanding of the topics.

b.   Did the sequence of questions appear to be in proper order? All of the participants suggested that the sequence and order of the questions appear to be logical and the transition from one question to another was meaningful.

c.   If any of the questions were offensive or unpleasant? Two of the participants suggested that whistleblowing is a very delicate topic. Although they did not find the questions unpleasant, but they advised that developing rapport is extremely important to initiate discussion on such a sensitive topic.

d.   Is there any question that might create confusion and need to be revised or rephrased? None of the participants felt the need to revise the questions.

This pilot study made interview guideline more comprehensible and ultimately successful in the actual fieldwork. My primary supervisor also reviewed the final draft of the interview guideline.

On the technical side of things, this pilot study also taught me how to use a digital recorder and how to transcribe a recording. I tried using an online web application (i.e., Dragon) where one would upload the audio file, and it is expected to generate an MS Word document showing the transcription. This did not work in my case, and the file exported was full of special characters instead of verbatim transcription. I listened to all the recordings and manually prepared the transcripts. While conducting the interviews, I took notes to record key points of the discussion and non-verbal expressions while responding to a question.

Furthermore, when I analysed the transcriptions and coded the data, I was able to understand key emerging themes. This helped me enhance my understanding of the questions and their corresponding anticipated answer. The pilot study also confirmed my understanding concerning how to get on with a semi-structured interview by keeping the participants engaged and motivated throughout the discussion.

3.9   Reflexive analysis

Qualitative research is interconnected with the philosophy of an interpretivist. The rationale could be the researcher's need to involve respondents and interpret their understanding of concepts that are under observation. According to Saunders, Philip & Adrian (2016), social constructionism implies that "partially shared meanings and realities are dependent on people's interpretation of the events that occur around them" (p.568). In qualitative research, these meanings are derived from social interactions and data collected for analysis.

Researchers suggest that interpretive study needs to be reflexive. Reflexivity is about giving systematic attention to knowledge construction, mainly how a researcher influences every step of the research process. Reflection refers to considering the factors a researcher is analysing, including theoretical, cultural, political and intellectual standpoint of what is being researched (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017). They further suggest that reflexivity means that in the construction process, the researcher should be careful with the social context, for example, language and society. It is not about denying the human touch at every stage of the research process. It is rather about establishing a balance to assess subjectivity. Reflexivity involves critical reflection of how knowledge is produced, what factors influence a researcher, and how those factors are disclosed at every research stage (Guillemin

and Gillam, 2004). The idea of being reflexive is to produce rigorous research by improving its quality and validity. A reflexive researcher can understand the limitations of the knowledge being constructed, and know when to take a step back and critically assess his role in the research process (Guillemin & Gillam, 2004).

According to Alvesson & Skoldberg (2017), there are four levels of reflexivity that could be critiqued: interaction with empirical material (interviews, observations and documents), interpretation (underlying meanings), critical interpretations (ideology, social reproduction and power) and reflection on text production and use of language (selection of voices represented in the text). Further to this, when data is constructed through interviews, observations, or document analysis and so on, the extent of interpretation is not much until a perspective, or a frame of reference is applied. In addition, the researcher is confined to a few styles of interpretations, some are prioritised, and others are less focused. For example, if someone has devoted their life to a specific theory, their repertoire of interpretations would be limited. Therefore, it is ideal that researchers are creative enough to sense multiple interpretations and increase their reflectivity (Alvesson & Skoldberg, 2017).

Being a Human Resources Practitioner and having worked at the managerial level with different organisations, I handled talent management, learning and development, organisational changes, human resources systems, benefits administration, restructuring of processes and employee relations. I also had a chance to closely observe wrongdoing at the workplace and convened several disciplinary committees to investigate organisational as well as individual-level complaints, conflicts and proposed a variety of corrective and preventive strategies. This exposure led me to investigate the underlying role of leadership advocating ethics, fairness and people's perception of trust at work and how these influence

internal speak up. Given the richness of these concepts, I decided to pursue my research project with an open mindset, and therefore I adopted the inductive qualitative approach to discover peoples experience in a real-life context.

My primary supervisor was also in favour of this research design, and her publications are solid pieces of qualitative research. When I started PhD programme, I did not have a good grasp of the research methods. The research approach I took for the master's dissertation was a mixed method. My supervisor recommended attending a 'Research Methods' course offered by Dr Lucy McCarthy at Queen's University Belfast. This helped me enhance my understanding and make an informed choice to conduct this study. In addition to this, realising that my study involves people perception around a variety of organisational aspects, I thought it is important to understand modern organisations and what it takes for people to thrive in today's world. For this purpose and after consulting with my supervisor, I took another course on 'People and the 21st Century Organisations' by Dr Heike Schroder at Queen's University Belfast. On my supervisor's recommendation, I also attended an Academic English Writing course from Queen's University, Belfast. During my research journey, I took notes of possible assumptions that I made during several stages of information collection, interpretation, and analysis. In this note-taking process, I also recorded reflection of my personal values, interests (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and beliefs about how organisations should work. I have worked with the higher education sectors in the Sultanate of Oman and Pakistan. Working in the education sector in these countries (mainly non-profit) is different from the work atmosphere and direction in the corporate sector. My recent experience of working in the public sector of Canada has taught me a different perspective of human resources and voicing culture in western societies. The corporate sector is usually

more fast-paced and perhaps focuses more on return on investment. This influences the organisational setting from various angles, i.e., structure, policies, profit, and societal impact, to name a few. I had hands-on experience of shaping some of the key organisational factors and policies in different organisations. For these reasons, I was expecting that the research participants would be fully versed with the organisational policies and organisational factors like the way I did. Employees from the senior leadership team were familiar with most of the policies and clearly understood work culture and their role in setting an overall direction. Their language and awareness about the management related concepts (e.g., organisational justice, trust and ethical situations) were helpful for me to engage in discussion. While conducting interviews, I mostly enjoyed the conversation on leadership congruency, fair treatment and trust with senior management and asked probing questions. Shop-floor employees did not know much about organisational policies. There were some conversations on the manufacturing process, product quality and product testing, which I did not like much and desired the participant to jump to the bottom line. They were more technical and direct in responding to my questions. They were comfortable talking about the specifications and product requirements, whereas I was focused on getting their responses to my questions. I feel that my engagement with respondents from the shop-floor was initially less engaging. But after a couple of interviews, I was able to find a balance in my conversation by being more patient, listening to what they wanted to share, and ask probing questions to link their experiences with the topic at hand. I also learned through the process to be careful not to dismiss some of the things said by certain participants, especially when other data (documents, other interviews etc.) seemed to contradict these. This was part of becoming familiar and comfortable with this method.

In addition to this, I also travelled frequently from the U.K. to back home in Oman to meet my wife and a new-born. Further to this, I continued working remotely for my employer in Oman on a part-time basis. Oman time was three to four hours ahead of UK's, and I used this time difference in my favour by getting up early in the morning and finishing job-related tasks. After that, I would head to my shared office space to commence research-related commitments. After two years into the PhD programme, my primary supervisor accepted a position with the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG). Professor Kenny assured me to find a suitable supervisor at QUB and suggested to support if I am interested in transferring to NUIG. I didn't think for a second to pursue my research without her guidance. There were a few administrative formalities, and overall, the transition went smooth. My frequent travel, a part-time job, and the degree programme's transfer might have influenced the research process, my findings, and data analysis. I want to acknowledge this explicitly. I took notes of my reflexivity into my field notes. Detailed field notes help record the researcher's biases (Wolfinger, 2002).

Further to the researcher's biases, research participant may adjust their responses depending on their perception of the researcher and the research process. I tried to mitigate this by presenting them the project brief to communicate the scope and purpose of the study, participant consent form confirming their voluntary participation in the study and used an interview guide to conduct semi-structured interviews. Research tells us that interviews are used to share information, but also to achieve other goals, for example, participants presenting their involvement in terms of the way they want to be seen, and researchers to establish their preconceived perceptions (Alvesson, 2003). While answering my research questions,

most of the participants related similar feelings and responses. Although each approach was different, they were, in essence, validating each other. If a study of this nature was done by someone internal to the organisation, my understanding is that they perhaps wouldn't have been able to access the on-ground realities, as compared to someone coming from outside of the organisation and asking these thought-provoking open-ended questions around different organisational aspects.

There were a couple of instances when I got off the topic and asked a less relevant probing question to satisfy my curiosity about how they responded to a particular situation. Although I realised it shortly after asking the question and got the conversation back to the interview guideline, but this was something I could not control. This was due to my prior knowledge and experience, and perhaps, I wanted to enhance my learning to understand and differentiate their industry best practices.

3.10 Data collection

As discussed in the preceding sections, my approach is to conduct qualitative case study research. This section explains the modus operandi followed to connect with the organisation where this research took place as well as interaction with the research participants to obtain their cooperation and collect secondary data. Data is collected in the form of primary and secondary data. In qualitative research, primary data is collected using semi-structured interviews. The secondary data comprises of internal publications and/ or publicly available data that is in line with the research topic (Wahyuni, 2012). As suggested by Patton (2002), this method of collecting data from different sources facilitates the researcher to collect more relevant information, and to crosscheck the trustworthiness of the data to produce robust findings.

After receiving a referral from my supervisor about an organisation operating in the business of manufacturing life-saving products and solutions for the aerospace, defence and marine sectors in the U.K., I contacted their Managing Director by writing a project brief (see Appendix 1). This led me to set up an initial meeting with him to pitch my research project. This organisation is part of a multinational group of companies. They are producing life-saving products and designing safety solutions for more than 150 years. During the meeting, we discussed the importance of my research project and its benefits from the study. The Managing Director further introduced me to their Human Resources Manager to discuss the support I needed to initiate the research study. I had a couple of meetings with the Human Research Manager at their manufacturing site. Their head office was in a different city. In our first meeting, I explained the research project, research objectives and questions that I aimed to explore. In the second meeting, we discussed the support I needed, including the minimum number of research participants, permission to observe and take notes across their facility, company documents and policies, and the tentative interview timeline. I was given a private conference room situated at the end of their main-floor corridor where they had senior management offices. There was another conference room in the corridor, and this was occupied mainly by the marketing team. Most of the offices had a wooden door, but these two conference rooms had a tinted glass door. From the privacy and confidentiality perspective of the interviewees and the information they would share, this provided space was reasonable. I was also briefed about the structure of the organisation and different levels of employees. HR Manager gave a detailed tour of the site, production floors and the cafeterias. I also provided a Participant Consent

Information Form (see Appendix 2) and Participant Information Sheet (see Appendix 3) to my research participants.

Given my research strategy and research philosophy discussed in the previous sections, I conducted semi-structured interviews across all levels of the organisation, engaging technical and operational staff (shop-floor employees), middle management (i.e., line managers, skip-level managers) and senior management (i.e., top management). My sample represented all departments of the manufacturing site. Moreover, I supplemented my interviews with the collection of various documents (i.e., policies, staff surveys, magazines, and newsletters), publicly available information (i.e., local and international media, participation in the corporate social responsibility events, hosting fundraising events, and launch of new products). All this was done through their Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts. I also conducted some observations by attending their daily, weekly, and monthly meetings, cafeterias, production floor, reception area. I also attended one of their popular staff events of the year. While analysing my interviews, I kept comparing the emerging themes with the literature and used that knowledge back in the field to enhance my understanding and refresh my lens of looking at different concepts. I also kept refining my research questions under the light of top themes and went back and forth to the literature for further reading where necessary. In the next section, I explain my primary data collection through semi-structured interviews, documents collection and observations.

3.10.1   Semi-structured interviews:

According to Parker (2003), the qualitative researcher should communicate closely with the participants to fully understand the current state of real-life

practices. Wahyuni (2012) suggested that the basic component of an interview is to put the interviewee at ease so that they can share their experiences, stories, and perspectives about a particular social phenomenon under study. That is why interview methods are widely used for collecting empirical data, and the use of in-depth qualitative interviews is acknowledged as the most suitable format for case study research.

Designing and developing interview guidelines:

A qualitative interview or semi-structured interview guideline was devised by considering the Rubin and Rubin (1995) responsive interviewing model. Their approach focuses on the importance of keeping questions flexible and adaptive to collect maximum information. The interview guideline was designed to include main open-ended and then probing questions. The guideline is provided in Appendix 4. Probing questions were used, followed by each main question to clarify some points and to keep the discussion flowing. As discussed in the previous section, the pilot study was helpful in fine-tuning the interview guideline.

The interview guideline was designed around some of the sensitising concepts, including ethical climate, ethical leadership, ethical voice, organisational justice and organisational trust. The questions were derived from existing scholarships. For example, the questions addressing ethical climate were taken from the widely used Victor and Cullen's (1988) empirical study of "The Organisational Basis of Ethical Work Climates". Five ethical climates, namely caring, law and code, rules, instrumental and independence, emerged from their study. The questions they had used in the study had a similar purpose of tapping the observer's perception of such

factors (Schneider, 1975). Ethical leadership at work assessment questions were developed by Kalshoven, Den Hartog & De Hoogh (2011), and their study was based on the work of a few other researchers who had used behavioural dimensions of ethical leadership, i.e., fairness and power-sharing, transparency, open communication, ethical awareness, people-orientation, and integrity (Brown & Trevino, 2006; Brown et al. 2005; De Hoogh & Den Hartog, 2008; Trevino et al. 2003). The questions to probe organisational justice, including procedural justice, distributive justice, interpersonal justice and informational justice, as laid out by Colquitt (2001), were carefully utilised to guide the semi-structured interviews in this study. According to Lewicki and Bunker (1996), the three types of trust are interrelated, and trust develops over time from one stage to the other, i.e. it starts from calculus-based trust, and then develops to knowledge-based trust, and ultimately to identification-based trust. The questions incorporated in the interview guideline were carefully chosen to reflect this evolution of trust and to collect rich information. Therefore, instead of reinventing the wheel and drafting a new interview guideline, I decided to utilise these widely accepted self-assessment dimensions and draft questions to gather data. I also had to tweak a few of the questions and probed to get the best possible information.

The interviews:

Before commencing the fieldwork, research ethics approval was taken from the University's Research Committee. The interview package containing the project brief, and participant information and confidentiality form was given to all participants, and their written consent was taken. Each

interview was initiated after giving a brief introduction of the project and explaining the purpose. Participants were also advised that the interview could be terminated at any stage if they wished it to be. All the interviews were conducted in a private conference room which was designated for the research work. Interviews lasted for 35-50 minutes and were recorded with the permission of the interviewees. During the interviews, I also utilized Charmaz's (2014) interview etiquettes and participants expectations. For example, instead of nodding during the conversation, I preferred asking, 'That's interesting, can you tell me more about it?', and a couple of times when I observed that the question was causing uneasiness, I reminded the interviewee that we can skip the topic and move on to the next. After every interview, I kept improving in navigating the interview guideline and softening the questions depending on my initial perception about the research participant and their exposure to the concepts at hand. For example, the technical staff was less oriented on the leadership side of things because they did not have much exposure. Therefore, I did not probe much on that topic for their ease and comfort. At the end of each interview, debriefing was done, giving the participant another chance to ask questions, make comments or provide more information. In order to record additional information about the interviews, I also took notes during the interviews to ensure that none of the information goes unattended. The note-taking was in line with Schatzman and Strauss's (1973) assertion that three types of notes can be recorded, namely observation notes (or field notes to explain situation during the interview), methodological notes (to keep track of

issues regarding methods being used), and theoretical notes (to record what themes and findings are coming up to surface).

3.10.2 Document analysis:

Documents are another pivotal source of data. The purpose of document analysis is to systematically review and appraise the information in a way that makes sense to be incorporated with the rest of the data (Bowen, 2009). As discussed in the preceding sections, this study involves document analysis to support interviews and observations. The below Table shows a range of documents collected for analysis.

Table 3. 1: Type and number of documents collected for analysis

Document Type	Description	Number of documents
Company policies	Employee related policies	39
Speak up policy and code of conduct	Speak up policy and ethical code of conduct guides	3
Newsletters and flyers	Company newsletters and flyers	5
Annual marketing report	Annual report showing their business, products and success stories	1
Staff satisfaction survey	Employee surveys done in 2016 and 2017	3

Product catalogue	List of products	4
Industry magazine	Offshore magazine	1
Press release	Business acquisition and mergers, corporate social responsibility initiatives. **Sources:** Seanews, Riviera, Bloomberg, oedigital, marinelink and Twitter	11
Total		**67**

I gathered a variety of documents for analysis, including employees related organisational policies, speak up policies, staff satisfaction surveys, employees' newsletters, annual reports, and marketing material (Bowen, 2009). Most of the documents were produced by the organisation itself and were used by employees and senior management to make a decision and share information. I also included publicly available information from local and international media to understand how their name and brand are perceived outside of the organisation. So overall, there were 67 documents included for analysis. I have discussed my data analytical approach in the next chapter.

3.10.3 Observations:

As discussed in the introduction section and previous sections that this study involves observation. Although this was not an ethnography, I have tried adding that lens to my research to complement data collected through

interviews and documents. The purpose was to have an intensive case study and get hold of as much information as possible to produce a rich analysis. For this reason, I attended their daily board meeting, weekly meeting, and monthly meeting. In addition to this, I observed their regular operations on the production floors and spent time in cafeterias and reception areas to have an informal interaction with the employees. I was also invited to attend one of their annual events at a prestigious location outside the organisation premises. So, overall, I had 112 hours of observation. The table below captures a summary of my observations:

Table 3. 2: Nature of observation

Nature of observation: September 2017- January 2018	Description	Number of hours
Formal meetings	Daily board meeting, weekly meeting, monthly meeting	7
Production floor visits	Observe manufacturing of different products, their assembly line, casual interaction with staff to note their experience with others and with the company	42
Annual event	Observed employees in an informal setting, and their interaction with each other	5

Reception/ waiting lounge	Casual interaction with employees and visitors while waiting for the cab, how people were received, their impression. Customer support was in the same area to respond to client calls.	23
Kitchen and cafeteria	Casual interaction with employees in informal and relaxed setting.	20
Initial meetings	Introductory meeting to kick-off the project	3
Meetings with HR Head	To plan interviews as the participant selection kept evolving, and other data collection requirements	12

I took notes on a daily basis to record my perception and interpretation of observations. While observing, I kept some of Charmaz's (2014) fundamental questions in view; "What is happening in the setting(s), What are people doing? … How do people in the setting explain what is happening and their actions concerning it?" (p.43). In the next section, I outline my sampling strategy.

3.11 Sampling

The importance of this research study is based on investigating a variety of sensitising concepts, including ethical climate, ethical leadership, organisational

trust and organisational justice that could reveal the reasoning to support internal speak up. According to Blumer (1969), grounded theorists usually commence study by identifying their research interests and appropriate concepts (cited in Charmaz, 2006). This further leads to establish ideas and sensitise the researcher to probe the topic. In a situation when a researcher finds a sensitising concept to be of less relevance, it is excluded from the study. Glaser (1978) suggests that qualitative researcher usually initiate their research by outreaching to people who are well informed about the topic and make their way to the most appropriate research participants.

According to Bloor and Wood (2006), purposive sampling (non-probability sampling) is the best technique to specifically choose research participants, knowing that they may provide rich information about the research topic at hand. Therefore, in this research study, theoretical sample and purposive sampling were used to develop a theory. Initially, 22 participants were selected because this sample size may generate sufficient information. A potential list of participants was prepared with the help of the HR Manager from all levels and all departments of the organisation's manufacturing facility in the U.K. This initiative facilitated involving a good mix of characteristics (Bryman & Bell, 2015), including gender, age, varying responsibilities (e.g., white-collar and blue-collar professionals) and varying employment duration.

3.12   Organisational Context

This research study was carried out in a high-tech organisation based in Northern Ireland, which is in the business of manufacturing life-saving products and designing safety solutions for the marine, defence, and aviation sectors. High technology

organisations are mostly perceived as systematic and more thorough in their business approach, but the Edward Snowden case is an excellent example of such organisations with serious malpractices. The most recent examples are Boeing 737 Max crash and Facebook Cambridge Analytica. These examples remind us that irrespective of how modern an organisation is, the wrongdoing is so fluid in nature that it can easily slip through the cracks and may go totally unnoticed or ignored.

The UK's maritime industry is leading the world for its innovative designs, with many small firms producing world-leading and state of the art safety products and solutions. Historically Northern Ireland's economy has been underdeveloped compared to the rest of the U.K., which is due to political and social turmoil. In the 1980s, the Irish and British governments established International Fund for Ireland (IFI). IFI encouraged small and medium companies to develop their partnership with European and North American companies. More than 74% of businesses in Northern Ireland are family-run, comprising 40% of regional employment, and these businesses are considered the backbone of Northern Ireland's economy (McGregor, 2017). Northern Ireland is home to innovative and sophisticated manufacturing businesses in the U.K. Aerospace & defence, ocean liner, automotive, shipbuilding, textile, and tractors define Northern Ireland's rich manufacturing history (ManufacturingNI, 2019). According to Invest Northern Ireland (2021), the manufacturing and engineering sectors have multiplied by up to three times in recent years compared to the rest of the U.K., which is because of their focus on Research & Development and commitment to deliver innovative designs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, they have shown resilience with their people-first approach, and 86% are confident to resume their pre-COVID growth by 2022 (PWC Family Business Survey, 2021).

This high-tech organisation is a family business and is acknowledged for its family-like work culture. When it comes to speaking up, organisational structure plays an important role. Research tells us that organisational structure can impact whistleblowing, both negatively and positively, due to the hierarchy, organisational policies and management behaviour (Miceli & Near, 1992; King, 1999; Lee, 2018). The primary purpose of organisational structure is to allocate resources and organize their relationship with each other mainly in terms of division of labour and business operations. In a manufacturing setup, the organisational structure is usually traditional or divisional, meaning that the focus is on products, market, geographic location and how to operate the business (ManufacturingNI, 2019). This kind of structure is simple and gives managers more control in daily operations, performance, vacations, benefits, and career opportunities. When it comes to whistleblowing, this power imbalance puts employees in a vulnerable situation (Roberts, Brown and Olsen, 2011). According to Miceli and Near (1992), in a top-down organisational structure, the propensity of internal speak up is less because this model is likely to deter people from expressing views that are different from those in leadership roles. In contrast a matrix structure can allow for open decision making, and teams are divided based on products and report to different product leads, with a dotted line to the quality assurance team. Multiple reporting lines encourage open decision making and typically offer more voicing opportunities. In the organisation studies here, their structure was hybrid, it had hierarchical elements by having product-specific departmentalisation, and all teams were also closely working with product design and quality assurance units. Their multiple communication channels (see Chapter 5, Section: 5.2.5 for details) were enabling teams and sections to engage with each other effectively and due to senior leadership team presence in

their meetings, things were less bureaucratic and more transparent. A few years ago, the sinking of a fishing vessel incident encouraged the senior leadership to improve their communications across the organisation. This was not a matter of organisational wrongdoing, but rather an incident in which one of their clients could not deploy the lift-raft. Instead of being proactive about this, their approach was reactive and defensive. The incident is discussed in Section 5.2.4 in Chapter 5. From that point onward, the leadership team improved the voicing culture.

My first motivation was to study an organisation that is acknowledged as a leader in the industry and closely examine what they do to handle wrongdoing and how they react when people voice concerns. My second motivation was to carry out this investigation in an industry where this type of research is scarce. Knowing these interests, my primary research supervisor recommended a lead working at a senior position in the organisation, which later became the case study.

This organisation is operating for more than 160 years. They were also acknowledged by the Queen's Award for Enterprise for leading with their innovative and creative safety solutions. With over 3,000 employees worldwide, the organisation has 8 manufacturing sites, 15 offshore support centres and more than 70 service stations. In addition to this, they operate a network of over 500 third party service stations and distributors across the globe.

The organisation is set to produce a range of safety products supported by its network of service centres, where technical experts are available worldwide at over 2,000 ports. The timeline showing their history and achievement is available in Appendix 5.

There are three main reasons for undertaking this research at their manufacturing facility in the U.K.:

- This was their largest hub for manufacturing lifesaving products and designing safety solutions.

- This was their biggest product test centre.

- This facility also managed sales and global service stations.

These three reasons helped me get hold of valuable data for the study. Their 60 years old manufacturing facility has become a credible source of income for the surrounding communities. Most of the parts they need to manufacture a product are procured from local markets. These two factors appeared to be helping the organisation to develop strong bonding with the local community. Due to the sensitive nature of their products and solution (see Appendix 6 for a complete list of their products), their business is regulated, and any negligence in manufacturing or servicing of a product may harm the public. They had detailed technical guidelines and specifications to follow for each of their products and their respective model. In addition to this, they were frequently audited by the government agencies (i.e., Maritime Coastguard Agency and Department for Transport) and their clients from the aviation and defence sectors. Given the critical nature of their business, there is a need to investigate internal speak up and how leaders can facilitate employees' voicing experiences. For example, assuming that if they do not have a voice-rich culture and the material used to prepare a life jacket is flawed or there is negligence in terms of assembling the product, then it is possible that the life jacket may not fulfil its purpose and hence may endanger user's life. It is important to investigate their work climate and understand leadership's involvement in ensuring public safety.

When I initiated data collection, the organisation was settling in with some changes in the senior leadership team; one of the senior directors got promoted to the site's Managing Director (MD) position, and the former MD was transitioning to the Group's Vice President (VP) role. After consulting with the VP, the MD allowed me to carry out the research study. The senior leadership team reporting to the newly appointed VP started reporting to one of their peers. When I started interviewing, I felt the leadership team was a little reluctant in sharing their thoughts, and I had to reiterate the main purpose of the research study. I did not want to be perceived as someone appointed by the MD to collect employees' opinions on various organisational topics. Therefore, I explained my role again as a researcher from the university, and I am not affiliated with their organisation in any way. I also reassured about the confidentiality of the interviews in a way that pseudonyms will be used. I have explained the confidentiality of my data in Section 3.15 – Ethical Considerations.

3.13   Characteristics of research participants

This research study used purposive sampling (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), and the selection process of participants kept changing to engage participation from all levels of the organisation, having a good mix of both genders, their position in the hierarchy and their employment duration with the organisation. The Table below highlights such features.

Table 3. 3: Characteristics of research participants

Sr. No.	Designation	Gender	Employment Duration

1	Operations Director	Male	15 years 4 months
2	Management Accountant	Female	8 years 5 months
3	Materials Manager	Female	13 years 3 months
4	Managing Director	Male	19 years
5	Production Manager	Male	1 year 11 months
6	Senior Sales Manager	Male	20 years
7	Technical Manager	Male	24 years 9 months
8	Central Logistics Manager	Female	14 years
9	Technical Configuration Control Manager	Male	6 years 8 months
10	Liferaft Technician	Male	7 years
11	Lifeboat Technician	Male	11 years
12	Assistant Technician	Male	5 years
13	Assistant Technician	Female	4 years 8 months
14	Senior Technician	Female	8 years 4 months
15	HR Business Partner	Male	1 year 6 months
16	Shipping and Export Clerk	Male	16 years

17	Group Servicing and Training Manager	Male	21 years
18	MES Coordinator	Female	6 years 1 month
19	Packaging Clerk	Female	12 years 6 months
20	PA to Vice President	Female	11 years 5 months
21	Lifting Engineer	Female	27 years
22	Engineering Trainee	Male	1 year 9 months

In addition to this, research participants were aged between 21 and 62 years, and their employment duration with the organisation was between 1 and 27 years. In the next section, I shed some light on my data analytical approach comprising of guidance from Charmaz's grounded theory.

3.14   Data Analysis

This section presents my data analytical approach and the reasoning for taking guidance from the grounded theory. I also describe the practical steps involved in my coding technique. After that, I provide a brief overview of my research criteria. I highlight the use of qualitative research and the way I immerse into the research setting by conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews, document analysis and observations.

In a qualitative study, data analysis is carried out after performing multiple readings and interpretations of the data. There are four commonly used qualitative analyses

strategies, including the general inductive approach, grounded theory, discourse analysis and phenomenology (Thomas, 2006).

Glaser and Strauss (1967) introduced grounded theory. According to Ong (2012), there are two main versions of grounded theory, namely Objectivist Grounded Theory Method (OGTM) and Constructivist Grounded Theory Method (CGTM). The fundamental difference between both methods is that the first one is immersed in positivist and objectivist methods. In addition, it is confined to authenticate or distil quantitative research methods, but then it evolved over time, and started focusing on verification while producing theory (Ong, 2012). In comparison, CGTM addresses "the phenomena of study and sees both data and analysis as created from shared experiences and relationships with participants" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 130). In addition to this, Ong (2012) asserts that the difference is also evident in terms of the level of coding, drafting memos, and the way categories are developed. In this study, I follow Charmaz's constructivist approach, which highlights the feelings and experiences of research participants.

According to Charmaz (2006, p.2), the "grounded theory method consists of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves". Grounded theorist typically approaches data analysis by labelling fragments of data. This labelling or coding process facilitates in differentiating and comparing various such fragments and therefore making sense of the data. The grounded theorist aims to find the most appropriate fit between his rudimentary research interests and the sensitising concepts transpiring from data (Charmaz, 2006).

The analysis of this research follows an inductive process, which is common in grounded theory. Therefore, in line with these guidelines, I will perform data

analysis by carrying out initial coding and focused coding. This kind of coding is usually known as line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2006). My coding technique is detailed in Section 3.14.2 – Qualitative Coding.

3.14.1 Data analysis process:

Fraenkel et al. (2012) assert that data analysis is the process of simplifying data and enhancing our understanding. There are four commonly used qualitative analyses strategies, including the general inductive approach, grounded theory, discourse analysis and phenomenology (Thomas, 2006).

According to Charmaz's (2016), the "grounded theory method consists of systematic, yet flexible guidelines for collecting and analysing qualitative data to construct theories 'grounded' in the data themselves" (p.2). Grounded theorists usually approach data analysis by labelling fragments of data. This labelling or the coding process, facilitates the differentiation and comparison of various such fragments and makes sense of the data. Grounded theorists aim to find the most appropriate fit between their rudimentary research interests and the sensitising concepts transpiring from data (Charmaz, 2006). As discussed in Section 3.4 – Research Strategy, I have used a few key organisational factors as sensitizing concepts in this study and used an iterative process to compare them with the literature and outline new emerging themes. Blumer's (1954) sensitising concepts can facilitate the initiation of the coding process by giving meaning and identity. This initial interest usually leads to more valuable directions. Charmaz (2003) explains that "sensitizing concepts offer ways of seeing, organizing, and understanding experience; they are embedded in our

disciplinary emphases and perspectival proclivities. Although sensitizing concepts may deepen perception, they provide starting points for building analysis, not ending points for evading it. We may use sensitizing concepts only as points of departure from which to study the data" (p. 259).

The analysis of this research followed an inductive process. Analytic induction is one of the approaches for developing a theory, and it involves getting the feel of what is happening in the research environment for enhanced understanding. Qualitative interviews, documents, and observations are collected to perform the start of the analysis by fragmenting, coding, and categorising data. In order to adopt these guidelines, I performed data analysis by carrying out initial coding and focused coding (Charmaz, 2014). Initial coding is conducted by naming each line of data, whereas focused coding analyses big fragments of data (Charmaz, 2014). Both coding techniques are discussed in this Chapter. See Section 4.3 – Qualitative coding.

Grounded theory is produced by capturing common themes emerging from the data. In the beginning, themes are abstract and may not immediately emerge, but they tell a meaningful story as soon as they are identified (Bowen, 2006). When analysing the data, part of the process involved deepening my understanding and engagement with the data to make sense of it, the level of familiarity with the research participants, and the work they do. This encouraged me to investigate the data with a sense of flexibility, improvisation, and open-mindedness (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

Computer-assisted qualitative data analysis-NVivo Use:

There is a variety of computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software

packages available that can assist in analysing qualitative data. There are

limitations associated with this type of software package, including auto-

coding fragments that could increase the risk of losing the actual context.

However, the limitations can be controlled by not relying on this feature

and knowing the context of an entire chunk of data while coding and

manually categorising. The advantages outweigh the disadvantages by

offering: an easy method to manage and archive data and the ability to

search large data sets, identifying patterns, and the ability to retrieve social

media posts (e.g., Twitter, Facebook) (Spencer et al., 2003). In order to

mitigate the risk of using this type of software, I complimented my

interview transcripts with organisational documents and observations to

ensure that I was fully immersed in the context and had a holistic

understanding of the organisational setting. This ensured that the actual

context was not lost during this analytical stage. The most current version

of NVivo 12 Plus is one of the most widely used software packages in the

analysis and data management. I used this software to store and manage all

of the data, including interview transcripts, organisational documents, and

my field notes. I initiated the analysis by performing line-by-line coding

considering a few keywords as a sensitizing theme to get a sense of the data

(see Appendix 7). After that, I re-read my data and initiated focused coding,

which later helped me to remove overlapping codes. I did this while

continuously referring back to the literature to accommodate new emerging

themes. Going back and forth between the data and literature allowed me to

enter into an 'interactive space'. This process is known to keep the

researcher engaged (Charmaz, 2014). The coding process is discussed in the next section.

3.14.2 Qualitative coding

In qualitative research, according to Creswell (2012), once the data is gathered, transcribed, and read-through, the transcripts are coded. Coding is the process of breaking texts into fragments in a meaningful way by giving a shorthand label that shows what the researcher perceives it to mean.

"Coding is the pivotal link between collecting data and developing an emergent theory to explain these data. Through coding, you define what is happening in the data and begin to grapple with what it matters" (Charmaz, 2014 p. 113). Grounded theory coding plays an important role to establish the foundational structure or bones of analysis. Theoretical understanding and integration then formulate these bones into what could be considered a working skeleton. Charmaz's Grounded Theory coding comprises of two main phases: the initial phase, which involves naming each word, line, or chunk of data; and the focused phase, which involves sorting and synthesising frequent initial codes and organise big chunks of data.

3.14.2.1 Initial coding:

During initial coding, I kept myself open to explore whatever theoretical possibilities might emerge from data. During this phase of the analysis process, as suggested by Charmaz (2006, 2014), I was inquisitive to learn:

a. What does the data suggest, express or leave unsaid?

b. From whose point of view is it from?

c. What theoretical category does the specific data fall under suggest?

The use of sanitizing concepts assisted me to start coding the data. They gave me a starting point for initiating analysis. Initial codes are based on the action words which are grounded in the data; therefore, I looked carefully and identified a language of actions including 'communication', 'compliance', 'decision making', 'ethical behaviour', and 'fair treatment' (see Appendix 7). I liked this kind of approach because it decreased the likelihood of coding for people and instead preferred to observe what is happening in the data. For example, in this study, I used the concept of ethical leadership, which further led me to other important concepts, such as 'leader-follower boding'. The beauty of Constructive Grounded Theory is that the researcher gets to learn about the missing pieces and then locates unique opportunities to dig deeper to further a research study.

Line-by-Line coding:

Line-by-line coding refers to the naming of each line of your data. It directs the researcher to look at things that are often overlooked and may go unattended otherwise. This kind of coding mechanism encourages the researcher to remain open to the data and observe implicit concerns. In line with Charmaz (2014), I used the following strategies while coding my data:

a. Breaking the data up into components (e.g., by looking at the context of the question asked, and the content of response received)

b. Defining the actions based on their context (e.g., by understanding the whole scenario and perceived assumptions)

c. Comparing the data with data (e.g., by looking at and comparing an individual response to a consistent question)

d. Identifying gaps in the data

All interview transcripts, documents, and observation notes were organized and coded in NVivo. These codes were the short phrases, or the actual words used in the qualitative data. The purpose was to avoid forcing the data into preconceived theoretical concepts so that they could stand out naturally. Similar codes were then grouped after comparison and renamed to give a more meaningful outlook. The initial coding generated a range of codes. Similar codes were then grouped together.

3.14.2.2   Focused coding:

Once the initial coding is done, the researcher is required to initiate focused coding to analyse big fragments of data and "look for what these codes imply and what they reveal" (Charmaz, 2006, p.59). This may showcase a unique view of the analysis.

Focused coding also involves comparative analysis to confirm the adequacy of initial coding. Where needed, it involves recording the most significant initial code in a more structured way. As I referred back and forth to the literature, this approach was iterative for me to draw the themes out. For example, by constantly comparing data to the literature, the role of leadership emerged as a key theme in facilitating employee voice because they potentially could make internal speak up experiences easier. I then took these themes and included them in my analysis and discussion chapter (see Chapter 6). All themes emerged from the data, and my literature kept

evolving. The table below is indicative of this, and the full codes are available in Appendix 8.

Table 3.4: Indicative emergence of codes, sub-themes and salient themes

Theme	Sub-theme	Coding	Example of Data
Voice friendly culture	- Periodic board meetings	- Board meetings - Continuous Communication - Feedback - Morning meetings	*"We have board meetings every morning... We'd have bosses at our meeting and then any information or anything else we'd give feedback to our workers as such to see any issues. So, we are well communicated that way."* *"Here they ask for feedback on almost everything, whether it is a failure or success – you get to learn how things can be improved next time."* *"In all of our meetings, we keep some time aside for 'Kudos and Bravos' to encourage good work. Our monthly meetings involve showcasing of work done by different teams. This does not end here, recognition at the department level occurs regularly. This is the nature of the work and also a desire to stay connected and be engaged. There are also group emails sharing the same with everyone at the factory."*
	- Open door policy	- Open door approach	"Senior management was found to be helpful and available to

			provide quick advice and support." *"We encourage a culture of open and honest communication, to share concerns and promote integrity. All managers are responsible for maintaining an "open door" for their direct reports and any others who may wish to reach out to them... "*
	- Easy to approach	- Easy access - Available round the clock - Easy to get along	*"The senior management is here for more than 25 or 26 years, and what gives them popularity and such respect is that you can knock the door and go and speak to them and say I have got a problem, or I have got a question. I have worked in other companies where you don't get near the boss."*
	- Feedback-rich environment	- People opinion - People forum - Communication meetings - Encourage ideas	*'If you had any ideas, I mean they would take them on board…'* *There are no visible barriers to stop anyone from sharing their feedback…"* *"Here they ask for feedback on almost everything, whether it is a failure or success – you get to learn how things can be improved next time."*

			"In all of our meetings, we keep some time aside for 'Kudos and Bravos' to encourage good work. Our monthly meetings involve showcasing of work done by different teams. This does not end here, recognition at the department level occurs regularly. This is the nature of the work and also a desire to stay connected and be engaged. There are also group emails sharing the same with everyone at the factory."

3.14.2.3   Research criteria

The quality and validity of qualitative research rely on the richness of the data collected. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), there are four main factors to check the quality and validity of this kind of research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. All these factors play an important role to establish trustworthiness. A couple of ways to check whether credibility and transferability exist in qualitative research is to make sure research participants have a good understanding of the topics being discussed and a clear explanation about how the research context can be transferred to other contexts. The 'dependability' or reliability refers to the extent to which research findings could be repeated. If the entire research process is well documented, it may help other researchers replicate the study and achieve similar findings. The conformability factor refers to how researchers bring their own viewpoint and that a reflexive approach is

needed to articulate these biases and how they may have affected the entire research process.

Transcribing all interviews and coding all data assisted in ensuring a deep understanding of the content and participant intent. Constant comparative analysis was used to confirm that there was a connection between analysis and emerging theories so that the theory being developed has a strong basis (Charmaz, 2014). For confirmability and to ensure consistency among all interviews, the interviews were conducted the same way: a face-to-face discussion in a distraction-free environment. For example, a conference room away from the production floor was used, and the Human Resources Department assisted in informing the concerned department head about participants' involvement in the research study. Since all interviews were recorded, there was no chance of excluding any aspects of the interview discussion. This also guided me to reflect on my thoughts throughout the interviews and data analysis, thereby reducing my bias to some extent. Interpretive research is meant to be reflexive (Charmaz, 2006; Holloway, 1997), and it considers knowledge as cultural and communal construction, and therefore the researcher should reflect on how his views have influenced the research process.

3.15 Ethical considerations

According to Martin and Rifkin (2004), whistleblowing disclosures are harmful in many ways, and whistleblowers may face retaliatory consequences involving job loss, pillorying and humiliation. There is a chance that some participants may have had bad whistleblowing experiences and questioning this may make them feel

uncomfortable. As suggested by Kenny et al. (2015), all research participants should be fully briefed about the research study before initiating the interviews to avoid any potential distress. Ethical approval was taken from the University's Research Ethics Committee. Given the delicacy of the research topic and sensitizing concepts surrounding speak-up measures, participants confidentiality was the prime concern. They were given a project brief document explaining the research study, and a voluntary consent form was taken. All interviews were conducted face-to-face in an on-site private conference room. I reminded the participants that I would be recording the interviews with their consent. None of them raised a concern about recording our discussion. They were also told that if it needs, they can terminate the interview at any time without giving any reason. They were also given contact details of my primary research supervisor in case if they would like to raise any concerns or seek more information. Moreover, every effort was made to ensure Silverman's (2017) classic ethical concerns, namely codes & consent, confidentiality and trust. Research participants' protection was ensured in the research process by using pseudonyms instead of their real names to avoid disclosing their actual identity.

3.16 Limitations of the study

There are certain limitations that need to be considered, and the same could be used as opportunities for further research in the future.

A single case study at one location:

This research study was conducted at a multinational organisation's major production factory located in the U.K. Therefore, generalisability or the external validity of the study could be argued. But according to Stake (1995), the choice of

the case study should be made because they provide an excellent opportunity to learn, and in-depth analysis facilitates in achieving theoretical generalisation. Therefore, Lee et al. (2007) asserts that in a single case study, the focus should be on particularisation instead of generalisation. In addition, this research study fits the definition of Yin's (2003) 'revelatory case' which prevails "when an investigator has an opportunity to observe and analyse a phenomenon previously inaccessible to scientific investigation" (Yin 1984, p.44). This kind of study with the idea of observing leadership role in enabling voice and facilitating internal speak up through an integrative lens of several key contextual factors, including ethical climate, justice, ethical leadership and trust, might be the first attempt. Exploring these concepts in the marine, aerospace and defence safety products industry would be the first of its kind in the U.K.

Analytical method:

Grounded theory is strongly linked with analysing data in a way that researcher needs to fragment his data into several chunks. Few researchers believe that this fragmentation of data leads to a loss of overall sense of the context (Coffey & Atkinson 1996), but at the same time, it is helpful to get to the bottom of data and understand its richness.

Hypothetical situation:

As discussed in earlier sections, whistleblowing and the use of speak up measures is sensitive area, and research participants might feel uncomfortable if they are directly questioned about a whistleblowing incident or their motivation. The interview guideline was designed in a way that I did not probe directly if they had blown the whistle in the past or if they would like to report a concern. My approach was rather

open on how they found the work environment or management role in terms of supporting voice and internal speak up. Or how they would feel if they witness wrongdoing? An open-ended hypothetical question has limitations, including a lack of capturing actual information and uncertainty if the respondents act the way they responded (Miceli, Near & Dworkin 2008). But its use is acknowledged to explore a sensitive topic like whistleblowing (King, 2001).

According to Keenan (2000), whistleblowing involves delicate issues both from the perspectives of individuals and organisations. There are some limitations while presenting hypothetical scenarios; lack of potential factors that might impact the decision to speak up in reality (Dalton & Radtke, 2013), and understanding the gravity of wrongdoing in real-time setup, perhaps that is why most of the whistleblowing research is based on hypothetical and scenario-based situations, and that is due to the difficultly in accessing real-life people who have spoken up (Culiberg & Mihelič, 2017).

3.17   Conclusion

In this chapter, I have discussed my research philosophy and justified my empirical research approach, which is inductive and an in-depth qualitative case study. I also discussed take-away from the pilot study in terms of practising the interview guideline and refining it for the fieldwork, followed by my reflexive account and their impact on the study. I have discussed my data collection methods involving 22 in-depth semi-structured interviews across multiple levels of a high-tech organisation in the U.K. In addition to this, I complimented my interview data by analysing 67 organisational documents, including policies, reports, newsletters, magazines, and some publicly available information on their social media accounts,

as well as 112 hours of observation. I then briefly outlined the organizational context of the study and characteristics of research participants.

In this chapter, I have also discussed an overview of my qualitative data analysis approach, which is guided by Charmaz's constructive grounded theory and use of Blumer's sensitising concepts, which led to more meaningful scholarships. In this study, I used NVivo to organise my data for coding and fragmenting chunks of data to let it emerge into themes. The analysis of data was iterative, and the coding process developed over time. New thoughts came to mind as I progressed with the analysis, and in this exercise, I also had to exclude several codes and themes that appeared less meaningful. I have also elaborated ethical considerations and study limitations.

In the next chapter, I provide a detailed overview of the salient themes and discuss how they stand out and add value to the literature, when they are observed from an integrative lens.

Chapter 4: Findings

4.1   Introduction to the chapter

This chapter presents the salient themes that emerged after analysing the semi-structured interview transcripts, documents, and notes taken during observation and throughout the analysis. As discussed in the preceding chapter, my data analytical approach is guided by Charmaz's (2006) Constructive Grounded Theory Method (CGTM). CGTM focuses on the importance of the feelings and experiences of research participants. It also requires the researcher to be immersed in the research setting to fully engage the respondents, leading to an enhanced understanding of the research problem. While analysing the data, part of the process involved a reflexive understanding of how I made sense of the data and my background knowledge. The way I reflected on these aspects are explained in the Methods Chapter, see Chapter 3.

The data analysis revealed significant themes and sub-themes. As I moved along the process, similar themes were clustered. These emerged into salient themes and transformed my data into findings. I discussed each key theme by cascading all responses that corresponded with different employee groups. While working through the findings, I noticed that people's perceptions appeared to be influenced by where they were located in the organizational hierarchy. Therefore, I categorized employees into three main levels and have organized the data accordingly. These three categories or levels of employees include shop-floor employees, middle management employees, and senior management employees. The table below highlights the difference between each level of employees in the organisational hierarchy.

Table 4. 1: Categories of Employees

Employee Level	Description
Shop-floor	Comprises of employees working on the production floor and are directly involved in the production or service design process. More than 70% of the organisation's workforce was part of the shop-floor. Their job was technical, and they were part of the union.
Middle management	Comprises of those employees who supervise at least one employee. Few team leaders were working on the shop-floor. Most of them had offices upstairs, away from the shop-floor. They were directly reporting to the senior management team of the production facility.
Senior management	Comprises of those employees who manage the overall operations of the production facility. They are mostly the heads of different divisions i.e., finance, marketing, compliance, quality assurance, human resources, and legal affairs. Their managing director is also considered within this category.

The organization of data based on the above levels highlights and differentiates their

perception around several organisational aspects, and each group's voice is distinct

and preserved for enhanced understanding of the actual context. Moreover, this presentation strategy is helpful in many ways. For example, it clearly shows who is concerned about what, how they perceive and think about other groups and how they see issues are addressed in general.

4.2   Themes

I thoroughly read all transcripts and documents to gain a better understanding of each piece of information before organising these into NVivo. Several themes emerged from the data while doing this. Themes are patterns that elaborate key content and their meanings. As discussed in Chapter 3, after coding all transcripts, documents, and observations notes, themes emerged based on the significance of data, and new literature was added based on the salient themes (Ryan & Bernard, 2003).

According to Braun and Clarke (2006), looking for themes is an active process, and emerging themes need to be highlighted. All the salient themes have been critically analysed and discussed in the following sections. Appendix 8 shows my coding process in detail and how the salient themes which are discussed below, emerged.

4.2.1   Commitment to work and emotional support

The first theme that emerged was an organisational commitment to work and emotional support. Most of the line managers were found to give a 'safe space' to their team members. That is, team members were allowed to go home or work at their own pace if they were feeling distressed due to a personal issue or due to a life-changing event. Their work and family-friendly organisational practices were observed during interviews. Research shows that where there is a high level of

support, employees feel comfortable voicing concerns and reporting unethical behaviours (Wang & Hsieh, 2013).

Shop-floor Employees

A respondent mentioned that his line manager went beyond his expectations to support him in a personal matter.

Respondent 05: "I have only been with the company just over a year and again if I can use my manager, he's been so helpful, so approachable, takes a very keen interest, I was recently buying a property, he was a pillar of help and support… if I needed to meet my lawyer or you know any other banks whatever he was like "just go on you know sort yourself out and come, take your time"…very cooperative, very helpful, very supportive, very understanding." [Jason]

This is an excellent example of how caring the leadership was when it came to supporting employees in any possible way to make them feel valued and comfortable in working with senior managers and approaching them with their concerns. When I probed another employee, Alice, from the shop-floor on the level of support and cooperation she received, she responded:

Respondent 06: "If you go to someone with a problem, they will try to help. They don't just pass it out and say, "oh just go see Joe up the stairs." Or, yea, where they say, "oh what's the problem? How can I help?" [Alice]

She sounded as though this was normative across the organisation. She further added that if a colleague was not aware of how to help with the issue, he would direct you to another person who could help.

Middle Management

A manager shared a similar kind of experience where he felt highly supported and valued.

Respondent 15: "I have never left his office going 'oh he didn't want to speak to me, or he didn't, I annoyed him, or he raised his voice to me'...here's a little thing because of how he's treated me. We had a child, my wife went into intensive care after it, very, very ill in fact we didn't think she was going to make it. And he phoned me every day, "how is she, don't come back yet, I don't want you back yet, you need to be at home, put your family first." And at the time there were serious issues going on at work, he told me, put them aside, sent flowers out to my wife...with that kind of support you build up loyalty." [Antonio]

These are good examples of how caring the leadership team was when it came to supporting employees in any possible way so that they feel valued and comfortable in working with the leadership and approaching them with their concerns. This also reflects Tavakolian's (1994) research that shows how supportive organisations encourage involvement and open exchange of information. While talking to an employee about his experience in the cafeteria, I learned another similar example of how employees felt valued at the company.

Field notes: "I forgot my umbrella in the cafeteria yesterday, so I went there next day to see if there is a chance to retrieve it. This was my third umbrella. I already had lost two umbrellas to the wind. Upon inquiring one of the employees said that he had kept it back in the Kitchen. What a relief! While chatting about his experience at the organisation, he mentioned that: 'At the moment my girlfriend's pregnant and I'm having to get out quite a lot for hospital appointments and scans and stuff and the boss is very accommodating, very accommodating I must say. So, they haven't turned me down once for the time needed off work. Things like that, I think they're

very fair. Flexible in people's working hours and you will see this much in here'."

[Observation, Meeting - Cafeteria 1, December 2017].

From my interviews and observations, it was clear that leadership was open to facilitate employees in their personal matters. This kind of support appeared to be keeping employees committed to their work. Research shows that a potential whistleblower may speak up internally only if they feel that they will be supported in the organisation (Cheng, Bai and Yang, 2017) and their concerns will be attended to fairly. This aspect of internal speak up appears to be encouraging in the organisation. These organisational elements that support internal speak up appear to be present and have a positive impact.

Senior Management

A senior manager expressed the organisational leadership's intentionality to support employees:

Respondent 09: "I think we have all known each other for so many years now; I'd say it's more like family-oriented atmosphere… we all try to help where we can. If I can't get to the root of that problem, I'll pass it to one of my colleagues that work along with me and that can help." [Sam]

Sam brought a different lens to this conversation on the topic of family and work support that the organisation has a family-like feel where everyone is willing to lend a helping hand. It resonated with most of the research participants that the overall atmosphere across the organisation is supportive.

Supportiveness appeared to be embedded in the organisation's ethos. Leadership wanted employees to know the impact of their work on the clients they served, especially in the way clients were supported in very personal ways. During my visits

to the production floors, I noticed letters and newspaper clippings were displayed on the wall showing appreciation from people who had used the organisation's products.

Filed notes: "There were posters displayed on the shop-floor reminding the technical workers on the sensitivity of products they were manufacturing. There were also appreciation letters displayed on the floor from clients thanking them for saving their lives. This observation was confirmed by one of the managers too "we do not wish our products to be used, but in a life-threatening situation, our products are there to save lives. We also get appreciations from end-users". The purpose of displaying those letters was to encourage technical staff that their hard work is valued, and they are serving a big purpose." [Observation, Site visit, October 2017].

By displaying letters and newspaper clippings that showed survivors from different incidents, the organisation was perhaps developing a genuine sense that they are saving lives, and by doing so, motivated their employees with the knowledge that the work they do is important. This sense of serving others through their personal life-saving products was reflected in most of the interviews and observations.

By providing all necessary support to employees in their work, keeping their morale high by displaying personal 'thank you' letters, and extending extra support to manage their personal priorities, I think the leadership was trying to make employees feel supported and valued.

4.2.2   Perception of fair treatment and trust in the workplace

The second theme that emerged was the perception of fair treatment and trust in the workplace. Research shows that the perception of fair treatment encourages

employees to reciprocate this at work and engage in ethical behaviour (Trevino & Weaver, 2001). Impartial and equal treatment was observed in terms of consistent implementation of policies and how the resources were distributed, such as work and pay, and sound reasoning. This section shows how some of my research participants felt regarding fair treatment and trust and my interpretation of their experiences.

Shop-floor Employees

Most of the respondents shared their positive feedback about the way they were treated at the organisation. For example, one of the technical employees articulated that:

Respondent 11: "For me in my role, I get a lot of respect, I get a lot of dignity plus I give it, but I don't know if it goes across the whole group. I can't answer that, I don't know. I don't know what goes on outside my own role to be honest. It may be better to speak to one of the supervisors or something who would be able to maybe."
[Terry]

Terry, speaking for himself, said that he felt valued and respected quite well. He further suggested I speak with a line manager to learn their perspective. While saying this, he sounded convinced that everyone would be acknowledged the same. This led me to engage managerial staff in the conversation to get more clarity about the sense of fairness and trust from their perspective. I explained to the respondents what fair treatment is by giving examples. These included fair treatment in terms of workload, compensation, raising or receiving concerns, respect, promotion, and bonuses (if any). These also included fair treatment in the sense of applying speak up related organisational policies.

Melissa expressed her distrust in the way people were promoted. Her concern was that they have better product knowledge than their superiors but are not considered for career progression.

Respondent 18: "I mean we know the products inside out. The managers come down and they don't know the products, why we shouldn't be given the chance? You know but even that is leading hand, no one ever progresses to the management."
[Melissa]

Melissa was perhaps not happy with the promotion procedure. Many of the middle management and senior management employees I interviewed mentioned that they started their careers from the shop-floor. Few of the employees considered this trend of 'promoting from within' one of the organisation's biggest strengths. Melissa's perspective was perhaps based on her personal situation and experiences.

In addition to fairness, a respondent from the shop-floor shared reasons for trusting the organisation. From her perspective, she trusts the organisation because it is one of the oldest businesses in town. It has been operating at the exact location for more than 60 years and has been a good employer to her family.

Respondent 10: "My mom worked here for forty years. She was an inspector on the shop floor...so look like I'm going same direction, same way, hopefully I'll be here another ten years." [Hilary]

There were two other employees I interviewed whose parents worked at the same production site until their retirement.

Middle Management

While discussing fair treatment in general, one of the hiring managers gave an example of merit and fair hiring competitions:

Respondent 20: "I would say in terms of fairness when we were recruiting people, I don't make any difference between men or women or age profile. It's not an issue. And some of the rules are quite physically demanding so, you know, it would be very easy to just pick young fit men and just let them do it but it's not fair." [David]

According to David, most of the production related jobs can be physically demanding. In a production business, a young man could be perceived as the ideal and best fit. However, managers do not let this cloud their judgment but rather give a fair chance to everyone.

Another middle manager shared his feelings on fair treatment and his success story of growing within the organisation:

Respondent 02: "I was eighteen and did my apprenticeship. I was able to do my training in an engineering role. When I finished my apprenticeship, the company promoted me to Team Lead. Normally a technical diploma is a must for that role, I did not have the qualification, but I had the skills. Later, they encouraged me to study. Currently, I am studying mechatronics, so I'm out one day a week at the local college, it's a three-year course. So, the company they pay for the day I'm off, and still, give my full weekly wage…" [Larry]

Larry sounded motivated when he shared his experience because of the way he was promoted and later asked to go to college.

Senior Management

One of the senior managers who was working for the organisation for more than a decade added:

Respondent 17: "I think they're fair. There was a lot of work done on our policies and procedures by a middle management team. I think they're very fair, actually.

I've only ever worked here. People have left here and come back, so their procedures and policies must be OK. The retention tells you that policies are fair.''

[Caley]

Caley tried to connect fairness and transparency with employee retention. Due to fairness and transparency, the interviewee articulated how former employees sometimes return and re-join the organisation. The same was reflected during my observation:

Field notes: "In addition to collecting data from the interviewees, during my visits, I had a friendly chat with few employees on the production floor, as well as at the reception desk (while waiting for the cab to arrive). The chat was totally general, and the aim was to learn an overall perception of how they feel working at the factory. Most of them expressed their satisfaction saying that they are treated well at work, and they get paid on time." [Observation, December 2017]

The perception of fairness and transparency was slightly different for those who were involved in sales. For example, Bernhard mentioned that:

Respondent 14: "If a sales guy travels on Friday or Saturday you know it's all lovely, but he needs to be here on Monday. You know someone else travels over a weekend, they are likely to get the day off. So, the policies are slightly different, but they are being brought over time. "[Bernhard]

He also discussed the role and scope of their work by saying that their job is more demanding, and they don't get time to breathe. If they have to travel, they do not get a day off in lieu of the day like others. He also mentioned that a lot of their clients are from outside of the U.K. and in different time zones. This makes him spend much time on the phone, even during night hours. From my observations and

discussion with two other managers, the sales team was getting bonuses for the extra time and effort they put. While speaking with Caley, she articulated that 'they cannot get all', and there is always a difference of opinion, especially between the production team (on the shop-floor) and the sales team. Benefits are custom-tailored for both teams. This is common, as employees in an organisation pay attention to how people are rewarded and penalized (Brown et al., 2005).

Ted, a senior manager, highlighted that they try to be fair with their employees in everything they do, including fair distribution of work so that no one experiences unnecessary stress and work under pressure.

Respondent 03: "It's a busy factory, but if somebody came to me and said, "I have too much to do," it's my responsibility as their manager to do something about that. Nobody should be under so much pressure that they feel they can't cope. It's also about having that relationship with your colleagues to understand that and take some of the pressure off…" [Ted]

From most of the interactions with employees and my observations, it seemed like the element of fairness mainly was acknowledged among all levels of employees. Fair treatment was closely observed by employees, and leaders were seen as playing an important role in developing this perception. Fair workplaces seem to enhance the likelihood of having the understanding that the organisation does not discriminate, is supportive of equal treatment, and thus encourages voicing intentions (Seifert, Stammerjohan & Martin, 2014).

In addition to this, while attending their monthly meeting, one of the senior managers spoke with other managers about keeping employees engaged:

Field notes: "The language on modelling good behaviours, walk the talk, follow through on your commitments, do not promise what you cannot deliver, and be consistent with the team in everything you do was observed to be used frequently…" [Observation, Monthly meeting, December 2017].

During my discussion with Ted, he added that being open and honest helped them to build a sense of trust in the workplace. He also said that they are developing interpersonal trust through leader's role modelling, integrity, developing rapport with the team, and allowing people to work autonomously.

4.2.3   Adherence to policies and procedures

The third theme that emerged was adherence to policies and procedures. Graham (1986) proposed that a leader can foster a rule-based work environment that may promote speak up by shielding the individual from the risk of retaliation. Most of the respondents had a good understanding of the importance of compliance with the policies. This was necessitated by the nature of their business and frequent client audits. Employees at various levels had different opinions about following policies and procedures. From the documents provided, the organisation's policies can be categorized as shown in the following table.

Table 4. 2: Categories of policies

Policies	Employees		Products	Service Stations
	Unionized	Non-unionized		
Company policies	√	√	√	√
Group policies		√		

Regulations	√	√	√	√

There were three major groups of policies: employee-related, product-related, and service stations related. Employees were distributed into unionized, or widely known as shop-floor employees, and non-unionized, which I have labelled as middle management and senior management employees in the study. Further to this, there were three main sets of overarching policies applicable to these three major groups. Company policies were designed for shop-floor employees. Group policies were meant for managers and leaders, and the third set was regulations covering all aspects of their business.

Furthermore, each product line had varying standard procedures and instructions. The manufacturing of most of their products was client-driven. For example, the defence sector had detailed criteria and specifications outlined for everyone to follow. Additionally, there were also specific regulations imposed by the government for most of their products. With all these policies, processes, and regulations, they were primarily heavily audited by the clients and their internal legal and compliance teams. In the following sections, I discuss all of these policy categories and provide examples.

Shop-floor Employees

A shop-floor employee mentioned that:

Respondent 11: "There are rules, slightly different from ours, head office rules so again we've got three different sets of people all working with three different sets of rules. For example, look if you don't get a day off (for a time period) on the shop

floor, you go and do a lottery and you could win a hundred pounds but that's only

for the shop floor." [Terry]

Terry sounded a little dissatisfied about having different policies for different levels of employees. Employees who were directly involved in the production had a different code of business conduct than those with a supervisory role or a desk job. They were more familiar with the overtime policy, annual leave carry-over policy, sickness policy, and the employee lottery scheme. This was observed in one of their policies where they explained a lottery system to increase the attendance of technical employees on the shop-floor. All employees who attended the work throughout the month without taking a day off were allowed to participate in the lottery draw, and the winner could win a hundred pounds.

As discussed previously, the data shows that there were multiple sets of policies addressing everything about the workplace. For example, middle managers and senior managers were given an extended medical benefit and were allowed to take short leave(s) to attend medical appointments more frequently and sometimes allowed to work from home.

In addition to employee-related policies, the organisation had another set of standard operating procedures for their products and services.

Middle Management

While discussing with one of the middle management employees about policies and their application, he expressed that:

Respondent 15: "I do think that our HR rules and processes are fairly lenient. Regarding well sickness is one thing, sickness is a joke, it's hardly lenient…we have got different rules than others." [Antonio]

Antonio shared his thoughts on the user-friendly HR policies and noted that they are easy to follow. However, both Antonio and Jason highlighted that sick leave was something that was not being implemented consistently. From the policy documents, it appeared that shop-floor employees had fewer sick days than the managerial cadre employees. This is something that might not have been made clear to all employees. Antonio further brought another essential point to the discussion, saying that:

Respondent 15: "I think it's two standards. We have a service network, and that standard is very high. I don't believe the same standard of ethics is applied internally. I'll give you an example. I used to audit the Service Stations. We found that there were some service engineers that weren't servicing to the correct manuals to the right processes, they were cutting corners. OK. And they were disciplined; they suspended the Service Station for a month." [Antonio]

The organisation runs hundreds of service stations across the world. Few of the service stations are run by the organisation but most have been outsourced. The interviewee highlighted that the organisation was pretty strict with meeting product servicing requirements and, in the case of violation, the organisation took strict actions leading to suspension of the service station's license. From my observations and analysis of organisational policies, there was no follow-up quality check at the service stations as they did not have a quality assurance team, and that was why the organisation was stringent about the quality of their services. There were several quality checks at the main production facility before letting the products go off the shop-floor. The policy around the quality of products included a few procedures and tests before they were ready to be delivered. Service station staff were required to follow the same protocols, but due to lack of periodic audits, they were not fully complaint, and it is likely that the leadership was stricter with them.

Senior Management

From my discussion with the senior management and the available documents, I learned that all the shop-floor staff-related policies were designed in collaboration with the union representatives.

Respondent 16: "A lot of our procedures and policies that we have created, if they affect the likes of the shop-floor workforce, well that has to be then negotiated with the union and accepted by the union." [Brad]

One of the senior managers, Brad, discussed that policies were designed not only at the Group Head Office but at the production facility. Senior management speaks with the union representative before introducing a new policy or amending a current one. All the policies related to shop-floor employees were designed in collaboration with union representatives. In addition to people related policies, the organisation also had various procedures focused on their product line. Brad commended the organisation for following the policies related to products by saying that, given the sensitivity of the products, they are left with no choice but to follow the customer requirements and regulations, and the organisation is cautious about it.

Respondent 16: "We are approved by a number of external bodies…we are in the life-saving business. So, to be quite honest with you, we are audited to death. We have a number of policies and procedures that are all aligned to fit our particular business needs or change in legislation." [Brad]

Another participant, Steven, mentioned that the organisation was also dealing with the defence sector, and they have their code of conduct they are bound to follow:

Respondent 7: "Some of the big contracts that we have are military so again they're very much, they're very stringent on what they want and what they expect from the

product and we have to sort of, we're very heavily audited and we have to ensure

that we comply with everything." [Steven]

All this highlights that their business involves many policies, procedures, mandatory

regulations, and customer requirements. There appears to be a little bit of flexibility

on implementing employee-in implementing employee-related policies for both the

shop-floor employees and the managerial staff. However, the majority of the

employees confirmed that the organisation has a zero-tolerance policy when meeting

the quality standards of their life-saving products. In the following observation, I

highlight another example of how strict the organisation was in terms of adhering to

their procedures.

Field notes: "One of the research participant met me in the Pantry and we spoke a

bit about the soccer game from last night, which further reminded him an example of

how ethically strong the organisation is: 'they were screening a Russian company to

deliver an order, and while checking routine scrutiny checks whether the equipment

can be exported to a small Russian company, one of the Directors highlighted a

small point (in terms of number of units being sold) and they ended up cancelling the

deal with them. Later that night, my research participant saw that Russian

company's name on the list of sponsors by Manchester United. If Manchester United

can deal with that company then why not us?' – in this rhetorical question,

participant meant that their organisation is strictly following their protocols and

policies." [Observation, September 2017].

It appears that the organisation is striving to follow their rules and policies. With the

exception of the above discussed decentralised policies, and given the nature of their

business, the production facility studied appeared to be strict on complying with the

law and professional standards. Research shows that in places where rules and

policies are followed, this encourages reporting of work-related issues (Wang & Hsieh, 2013).

4.2.4   Ethic centric workplace

The ethic centric workplace is the fourth theme that emerged, showing the organisation's emphasis on ethical conduct. Participants were asked questions regarding ethical conduct in general. They were asked how the management ensures that ethical values are kept, and their understanding of ethics at work. The role of leadership emerged as a prominent component for facilitating ethical behaviour at various levels of the organisational hierarchy. In most of the company policies and newsletters, I observed their commitment to conducting ethical business.

Policy handbook: "We strive to act ethically and with integrity in our business relationships and we expect high standards from our employees as well as our contractors, suppliers, third parties and other business partners…" [Policy excerpt]

Most of the employees were found to be advocating for ethics in their behaviours and interactions. According to Brown, Trevino, and Harrison (2005), leaders are usually expected to be the source of ethical guidance and role models for employees (O'Boyle and Dawson,1992). Research shows that employees are likely to speak up if they believe in the morality of management (Mayer et al. 1995; Brockner et al. 1997).

    Shop-floor Employees

One of the employees working at the shop-floor articulated that:

Respondent 10: "My boss would put you in the right direction, and if you're doing something wrong, he'll let you know. It's not as if you know you're left on your own, there's always help and guidance to help you through your job." [Hilary]

Hilary was working with the organisation for several years, and she expressed her satisfaction that her line manager was approachable to ask for guidance. He always directed them do the right thing, which is ethical and the correct procedure. The respondent mentioned that her line manager was always available, leading them to the correct way of doing things. The correct way of doing things is not only compliance with the rules but is the ethical way of getting things done. Morrison (2011) suggests that if managers are easy to approach, it perhaps shows their openness to voice. Most of the shop-floor workers were aware that the line management was always there to help and direct them to do the right thing.

Middle Management

It is imperative to note that middle management went through a training programme on working ethically, and leading the team(s) by role modelling. For example, one of the managers mentioned that:

Respondent 04: "Recently, we have had training on ethics addressing what we can do, what we can't do and what we can accept, what might not be acceptable." [Lisa]

Middle management tended to have good knowledge about ethical conduct and standardising work so that everybody could understand. During my discussion with few line managers about this strand, I learned that they were working on creating an ethical workplace based on two principles, one being available and easy to approach and the second by role modelling.

Their focus on role modelling appears to be based on social learning theory, where people learn best when they observe a role model showing appropriate behaviour (Brown & Trevino 2006).

Larry shared a potential ethical scenario and how they were able to address it to avoid problems:

Respondent 02: "When we started manufacturing inflatable walls, they get used for armies around the world for training purposes. They are just big air-filled structures, but they create such a formation that it replicates a house or a building. In the manufacturing process, there are different glues for different materials for bonding, and the one glue which was procured was less effective, although it would have taken less time for technicians to use that instead of changing glues for different surfaces. They would have saved a lot of time, which means less hours to pay, but would have risked the quality of our product. When I realized that I developed comprehensive instructions showing how and where to use different glues and provided training to ensure their compliance." [Larry]

This was another example of showing employees that they need to follow the correct way of getting their work done irrespective of the added cost and time.

Senior Management

One of the senior management employees emphasized that the understanding of ethical conduct did not come easily. It came from role modelling and how they changed their roles from managers to leaders, from directing or giving instructions to displaying ethical behaviour. Others in the senior management team also echoed the training programme on ethics, and they were able to bring few positive changes

as a result. For example – "a shift from a blame culture to an inclusive approach to problem-solving." (Respondent 16) – [Brad].

Brad also shared his thoughts on the organisation's atmosphere. Previously, if an employee had reported a problem or a concern, he would have been blamed for it. Now they have entirely changed their approach of looking at concerns by introducing the 'five whys' methodology, which focuses on findings the root cause of an issue and then finds an appropriate solution. One of their policy documents had a few thought-provoking questions for the reader to reflect on when facing an ethical situation for awareness:

Policy handbook: "Is what I am doing, or being asked to do, legal, fair, ethical and honest? How will I feel about myself afterwards if I do it? If I see anything or overhear anything that is immoral, unjust, unethical or fraudulent, how will I feel if I do nothing about it?" [Policy excerpt]

There were several examples of ethical scenarios in the organisation's Code of Conduct document with the purpose of guiding employees on how they are expected to react when facing an ethical dilemma for awareness:

Document: "Situation: You're about ready to sign a new customer to a big contract worth over €300k. Your manager is under a lot of pressure to increase sales. S/he calls you into his/ her office and tells you his/her job is on the line, and s/he asks you to include the revenue for your contract in the sales figures for the quarter that ends tomorrow. You know the contract is a sure thing, but the customer is out of town and cannot possibly sign by tomorrow. Question: What do you do? Answer: You must accurately record information in the books and records of the company together with all relevant documentation and approvals. This includes recording the correct

date. Failing to keep accurate books and records may be a criminal offence. You should also report that such a request was made of you". [Code of conduct - Excerpt]

Ethics appeared to be the core of not only their organisational policies, but as discussed above, it was likely the norm at all levels of the organisation. Their training intervention on ethics had a meaningful impact. They were consistently reaffirming a commitment to ethics by displaying good behaviours and workplace ethics.

4.2.5 Voice friendly culture

The fifth theme is a voice friendly culture. The organisation had a range of communication channels. Managers and the leadership team were found to promote voice, welcome opinions, and respect confidentiality regularly. Most of the respondents expressed their satisfaction and high level of confidence in the way management supports them and encourages voicing using a variety of communication channels on a regular basis.

Shop-floor Employees

For example, Peter, one of the shop-floor employees, explained how frequently they communicate:

Respondent 1: 'We have board meetings every morning. All the other sections whether it be life jackets, single seaters, pack of the rafts in the areas we would then get feedback. We'd have bosses at our meeting and then any information or anything else we'd give feedback to our workers as such to see any issues. So, we are well communicated that way." [Peter]

I also attended one of their daily board meetings. Every morning, all team members meet with product departments (e.g., life jackets, life rafts, lifeboats, emergency communications). A detailed list of products is provided in Appendix 6. In these daily meetings, they not only discuss the work in hand, but they also talk about any general issues, including health and safety, or if anyone has concerns to be addressed. Peter expressed his appreciation for their daily meetings and the involvement of senior management in their work.

Melissa, a shop-floor employee, added that they keep some time in all of their meetings to recognise the work being done across the organisation.

Respondent 03: "In all of our meetings, we keep some time aside for 'Kudos and Bravos' to encourage good work. Our monthly meetings involve showcasing of work done by different teams. This does not end here, recognition at the department level occurs regularly. This is the nature of the work and also a desire to stay connected and be engaged. There are also group emails sharing the same with everyone at the factory." [Melissa]

From Melissa's point of view, this cross-communication of success stories with everyone at the organisation was keeping all involved in the discussion. This information was motivating for those who were being recognized but sharing their success stories encouraged other teams to share.

Middle Management

Another employee expressed that she felt encouraged to voice her ideas at such forums:

Respondent 04: 'If you had any ideas, I mean they would take them on board. It doesn't matter if it's a good idea or bad idea, but you know if you did have any ideas

of changing things and stuff you know, it would all be looked at. And it is good to have a bit of you know something better to make that change. So yes, they would help you that way." [Lisa]

Lisa expressed that the leadership is easy to get in touch with, and employees can openly share their thoughts with them. Morrison (2011) suggests that if managers are easy to approach, it can show their openness to voice. Another respondent confirmed Lisa's perspective by agreeing that leaders were encouraging and easy to reach. However, the respondent also expressed concerns: "whether they're actually following through is a different story." I think given the sensitivity of any matter, the employees may not be able to see the immediate results, but what I learned from their communication channels and feedback mechanisms in place is that they have made many improvements. This is evident from interviews and documents. It was observed that in addition to having these daily, weekly, and monthly meetings, they had a variety of other voicing channels, namely internal web portal (to share news and collect feedback) and periodic surveys.

A team leader shared that they collect feedback on every matter irrespective of whether it is related to success or not:

Respondent 02: "We give feedback on everything whether it is a success or failure. If there is a critical decision about a product, we involve all and everyone from production, quality, technical, so that there is no chance of getting things wrong in that sense. This is also to ensure that one person is not completely swamped over. It is also about being fair." [Larry]

This inclusive approach to gather all feedback at the same time was another communication channel being used across the facility.

Senior Management

One of the senior managers expressed that:

Filed note: "Five years ago, internal communication was one of our significant problems. But when we started allowing people to voice their concerns through a variety of mechanisms, there was a substantial improvement in terms of employee involvement and participation" [Observation, Post interview discussion, November 2017].

This resonates well with Vandekerckhove et al.'s (2016) findings that blending voice channels at a variety of levels permit the leadership to nurture a voice climate.

Communication channels and styles

It appears from the interviews, the available documents, and my field notes that the organisation has a variety of communication channels in place. The sensitivity of their products and services necessitates frequent communication across the organisation. I have listed some of their frequently used communication channels which they utilise at different levels, and how they are perceived by employees at different levels in the organisational hierarchy. I have also made notes of the responses collected for each channel in the table below.

Table 4. 3: Communication channels

Communication Channels	Shop-floor employees	Middle management	Senior Management
Daily board meeting	The workday begins with the board meeting at 8 a.m. to discuss orders to produce, any issues or problems in general, any requirements, and feedback is shared.	Work of the day, health and safety issues, any other concerns and progress check on the delivery of orders.	All issues and concerns are discussed every day.
Weekly meeting	N/A	Customer complaints, general issues and problems.	N/A
Monthly meeting	N/A	Progress and achievements of the month, risk areas, and serious issues.	Overview of the entire month at the factory, serious concerns are highlighted.
Open-door	Senior management is helpful and available to provide quick advice and support.		

Internal web-portal	The organisation frequently updates the news section of their internal web portal. The purpose is to share achievements, success stories, significant changes in a policy, health & safety concerns, and to address compliance-related practices.
General feedback and surveys	The organisation conducts surveys to collect general feedback and suggestions for improvement. This is done across all levels of employees and provides valuable insight into the current issues and opportunities for further development.

Daily board meetings

Daily board meetings are conducted every morning. The meeting aims to discuss the work of the day briefly and if there are any issues in getting the work done. Senior management attends this meeting and engages with the shop-floor employees. A participant from production mentioned that:

Respondent 18: "If there's something happening or if you have a problem or issue, you can sort of say you know what the problem is and then it gets fed back through. That's the whole idea of the board meetings so that it would be carried through." [Anna]

Daily board meetings were valued and considered an important medium to engage employees from all levels. The purpose was to bring issues to the table and voice concerns. I attended one of their daily board meetings and observed that there were directors, managers, and team leaders from all departments. They had a dialogue on a range of topics, including issues at hand, production targets, and quality checks,

and asked for any other concerns or suggestions. The atmosphere was rather friendly, and all employees were encouraged to speak.

Weekly meetings

Weekly meetings are conducted to engage with team leaders and line management employees. The focus is to troubleshoot issues at hand and get a status update on the work-in-progress.

Respondent 1: "First of all it would be more or less the work for the week. What's ahead um, health and safety, any health and safety issues. Have there been any accidents, what was done in the accidents." [Peter]

In comparison with daily board meetings, the aim of the weekly meeting is to get a quick update on the production schedule, have a dialogue about what's coming next, and ensure the health and safety of all employees. I also attended one of their weekly meetings and observed that most of the participants were middle managers, and they shared high-level updates on what was happening across the factory. They did not speak to the details of everything.

Monthly meetings

Every month senior leadership sits with the middle management to learn the past month's performance in terms of production, deliveries, sales, compliance, and any significant issues or bottlenecks at the facility. I attended one of their monthly meetings as a silent observer to get an overall sense of the meeting.

Field notes: "All department heads and their representation were present at the meeting. Managing Director moderated the meeting, and his secretary recorded the minutes. The environment was friendly, and everyone had a fair chance to deliver a brief presentation featuring their achievements, challenges, problems and targets.

They also cracked jokes on each other, and it was a great atmosphere."

[Observation, Monthly Meeting, October 2017]

During the meeting, each department head gave an update about last month and briefly discussed what was coming the next month. The main topic of discussion was orders, deliveries and compliance. Overall, the atmosphere in the meeting room was relaxed, and it was adjourned in a timely fashion.

Open-door policy

The organisation appeared to be strictly following the open-door policy. Employees were able to approach the senior management team any time of the day. This is something I observed at the initial stages of my data collection.

Field notes: "The work atmosphere appears to be really good. All the Directors and the VP seems easily approachable by the staff. They have a common Secretary, who is always welcoming and ready to help walk-ins. Whenever I needed to meet with their HR leadership team to discuss interview schedule and company policies, I felt welcome. I noticed the same treatment being given to other visitors." (Observation, Site visit, September 2017).

One of the middle managers compared his communication experience at this organisation with one of his previous employers (a known name in the aerospace industry). He appreciated that senior management was involved in almost all communication channels listed in this section.

Respondent 11: "The senior management is here for more than 25 or 26 years, and what gives them popularity and such respect is that you can knock the door, and go and speak to [Name], and say '[Name], I have got a problem' or '[Name], I have

got a question'. I have worked in other companies where you don't get near the boss." [Terry]

Terry believed that the senior management was easy to approach and that he could discuss any topic of concern. This understanding of an open-door policy was noted by many other interviewees, and all of them regarded this as a valuable aspect of working at the organisation.

Toolbox Talk

Most of the respondents talked about a communication technique called 'tool-box talk'. Through this technique, employees were briefed on any new policy or procedure and, in the end, they were required to sign-off to confirm that they had been informed and understood. It appeared to work quite well, especially in the manufacturing setup where everyone may not have access to emails.

Policy document: "Toolbox talk is a formal meeting that emphasises on sharing of policy related new information with those employees who do not have access to their emails. Toolbox talk meeting duration should not exceed 15 minutes. Team Leader are required to read the new policy or changes in an existing policy, and all attendees are expected to sign-off showing that they have received the information…" [Policy excerpt]

This communication technique was to ensure that policies were made available to everyone across the factory, and they were required to sign-off declaring that they have read the new policy or any amendment to an existing one.

4.2.6 Willingness to internal speak up

Willingness to internal speak up is no easy task, and this takes a long time to cultivate among employees. This is the sixth theme that emerged. As discussed in the above sections, when people are engaged in the habit of voicing concerns, it becomes an everyday norm and everyone's job. I did not initiate a discussion on speaking out with most of the research participants until the end of the interview. See the interview guideline in Appendix 4 for a sequence of concepts. My aim was to address key organisational aspects which encompass the speaking up atmosphere and understand their pre-speak up landscape before diving into the delicate subject.

Some of the participants from the shop-floor did not know if there was any formal policy or procedure available to report organisational misconduct.

For example, two of the respondents expressed that they are not aware of this:

Respondent 8: "No. Nothing like that anywhere." [Anna]

Respondent 19: "There is no speak up channel that I'm aware of." [Simon]

Despite a variety of communication channels and employee involvement across the organisation, for some reason, the shop-floor staff did not know if there is any speak up policy or specialised arrangements. Although they said they were not aware of these, I noticed an A3 size page in the cafeteria and production floors displaying an advertisement about the hotline number being outsourced to a third party called EthicsPoint. In addition to a phone number to dial in, it included the content below:

*Filed notes: "*** is proud of its Values and its reputation for integrity…Your concerns or questions about possible wrongdoing or activities that put our Company's reputation at risk, are important to us. And it is always better to raise*

concerns, request guidance, or ask question clearly, rather than let a situation go

worse…" [Observation, Site visit, December 2017]

The same was also reflected in their speak up policy.

Policy handbook: "*** is committed to an environment of open, honest

communication and where you can ask a question or raise a concern without fear of

retaliation. Where you wish to lodge a concern, raise a question, ask for guidance or

provide feedback, suggestions or stories, you are encouraged to speak to your

supervisor, HR or Legal and Compliance. However, if you are unable to do so or

you prefer to make your report in confidence or on an anonymous basis, you are

invited to use this *** Hotline, which is hosted by a third-party hotline provider,

EthicsPoint. The Hotline is available to you every day, including weekends and

holidays, and at any time of the day or night." [Policy excerpt]

To initiate discussion on this topic, and to understand if the respondents were aware

of the speak up policy and learn how they would react if they witness organisational

wrongdoing. They were asked a hypothetical question at the end of the discussion:

"Given the nature of the business, if you run into a situation where a stakeholder is

involved in organisational misconduct jeopardising others (e.g., employees and

public in general) health and safety, how you would react? And how you will

address this matter?"

One of the interviewees added that there is an onsite union, and such cases may be

reported to the Union Representative for him to report to the organisation. But when

Anna and Simon were asked how they would react if they witnessed misconduct,

they responded:

Respondent 8: "I will approach the individual directly. Otherwise, I'll be happy to report. We are making lifesaver equipment, and you know things can't go wrong." [Anna]

Respondent 19: "I'll obviously report it to the manager or in our daily board meeting or quality supervisor". [Simon]

Reporting of misconduct was standard for all employees. Anna and Simon were not very clear on speaking up policy, but they affirmed taking action to mitigate the wrongdoing. Anna has a preference for confronting the wrongdoer. They both reflected on what they felt they should do in that situation and, when probed why they would do so, they both responded that this is the right thing to do. They have to step up and stop this act. They were not familiar with their Code of Conduct. I had already collected a copy of their Code of Conduct and Business Ethics. It is a detailed document that encourages displaying ethical values, how to speak up, how to use the hotline, and how to help in eliminating bribery, corruption, and money laundering. It also instructed how to deal with gifts and hospitality, conflict of interest, and much more.

Respondents from middle management and senior management were well informed, and they were aware of the speak up policy and related procedure requiring them to raise the concern to the Compliance Department. If they preferred not to disclose their identity, a third-party hotline number was made available. They were also given training by the Compliance Department addressing speak up measures.

Terry confidently stated his point of view:

Respondent 11: "This is our employer; this is our organisation, and this is our name getting out there. So, I wouldn't make anybody disrespect who puts bread and butter

on their table, so you can't do that. You don't cut-off a hand that feeds you. Yeah, so if I thought anybody was doing anything wrong to disrespect the company, I would challenge it." [Terry]

Many respondents knew the sensitivity of their business and roles. They showed a willingness to confront the individual involved in the wrongdoing and talk to the line manager about their misconduct.

Respondent 05: "Yes, I'm aware about the whistleblowing policy and have attended EthicsPoint training programmes. I will certainly take the matter to the folk who is involved in the mess and talk it though. My next step would be to speak with the team leader about it." [Jason]

Jason was clear about the speak up policy, and he also sounded confident while sharing his thoughts on this aspect. Like Sam, he also spoke about the family-like atmosphere by saying that "we all are family and if someone is choosing a bad thing to do, it is my responsibility to report this behaviour." He was with the organisation for quite a few years and grew in his career from shop-floor to further up in the hierarchy.

Respondent 14: "There is a whistleblowing policy and a number to phone through to. There is also a procedure that anything you're concerned about you take it to your compliance officer." [Bernhard]

Respondent 15: "it's a confidential hotline that you can phone, and you share the detail, but you will not be named or shamed." [Antonio]

Bernhard and Antonio both suggested the availability of speak up policy and how to report misconduct. They also mentioned the option of communicating via a third-party hotline which is meant for the entire organisation. This hotline is a way to

report concerns anonymously so that those reporting the misconduct could experience safety and their names could be protected.

The following excerpt on speaking up is from their policy handbook:

Policy handbook: "We all have an obligation to speak up about potential suspected or actual violations of company policies or applicable laws. We encourage a culture of open and honest communication, to share concerns and promote integrity. All managers are responsible for maintaining an "open door" for their direct reports and any others who may wish to reach out to them... "[Policy excerpt]

The organisation considers speaking up as everyone's obligation. There is a debate in the literature on employees who are obligated to be loyal to their employers (Paeth, 2013), but here the obligation is to voice concern instead of holding the wrongdoing in confidence. Further to their focus on making internal speaking up obligatory, and at the same time, they were observed to be encouraging voice across all levels of employees.

Antonio further added that:

Respondent 15: "I have a relationship with all the senior teams that I can just discuss with them. I'd ask them if this is a concern, here is what I have seen. Their doors are always open." [Antonio]

Antonio mentioned that his relationship with the leadership team was based on trust, and that's why he would just go to the management team and tell them the situation. It was up to them to decide if that scenario should be acknowledged as a concern.

Simon's idea of reporting wrongdoing to the management appeared to be echoed in all levels of employees, irrespective of their position in the organisation, and the same was advocated in their documents. For Simon and others, connecting with

management and raising concerns was easy because they were available to discuss any matter.

Respondents from middle management and senior management were well informed, and they were aware of the speak up policy and related procedures that required them to raise the concern to the Compliance Department and, if they prefer not to disclose their identity, a third-party hotline number was made available. They were also given training by the Compliance Department that addressed speak up measures and using EthicsPoint.

These periodic training programs on ethical conduct kept management up to date on what they are expected to do, and the same appeared to trickle down to most of the employees.

If all the key salient themes discussed above are observed through an integrative lens, they all appear to add value to creating an open culture that may advocate ethical conduct. The organisation is developing good relations with most of its employees at all levels. Senior managers seem to be taking interest through frequent communication across the organisation and are easy to reach, except in a couple of cases where employees did not have complete knowledge about the application of a policy (e.g., bonus for sales staff and lottery from shop-floor employees, and promotion practices).

4.3   Conclusion

In this chapter, I discussed the salient themes addressing the critical aspects of the study, including work and emotional support, perception of fair treatment and trust, adherence to policies and procedures, ethic centric workplace, voice friendly culture, and willingness to internal speak up. Frequent communication appears to be

promoted across the organisation. Several research participants reflected on this aspect. Most of the research participants appeared well connected, using a range of communication mechanisms, including the open-door policy, daily meetings, weekly meetings, monthly meetings, satisfaction surveys, and the frequent general feedback system. All of this was complemented through their documents and my observations. Work and emotional support was another major factor in enhancing their bonding with the leadership. Few of the participants showed their willingness to confront the wrongdoer. Others emphasized raising the concern directly with the supervisor or senior management as they were both easy to approach. In the next chapter, I present my analysis along with the discussion for a nuanced understanding of how it relates to existing literature and where it contributes.

Chapter 5: Analysis and Discussion

5.1 Introduction to the chapter

In the previous chapter, I explored a range of emerging themes and elaborated on employee perception of leadership. Specifically, their perception of leadership on work and emotional support, fair treatment and trust in the workplace, compliance with organisational policies and regulations, ethical conduct, formal and informal communication, and lastly, willingness to internal speak up. When these findings are taken together and observed from an integrative lens, it appears that the habit of voicing concerns is likely to be developed in the presence of supportive leadership.

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse significant findings, reflect on the insights this study presents in relation to existing literature and theories discussed in the review of literature, where they overlap with current studies, and where they offer a different perspective. I also propose a conceptual framework of the culture of ethics and internal speak up and discuss the novelty this study presents as well as how it contributes to the current scholarships. In the end, I outline limitations and recommendations for future research.

5.2 Analysis of findings

In this section, I synthesise my findings discussed in Chapter 4 and critically analyse them for a nuanced understanding of how they fit together towards developing the conceptual framework.

5.2.1   Work and emotional support

Work and emotional support is one of the integral themes which emerged in the findings that show how employees who feel valued by leadership are more likely to speak up. Some respondents shared their personal stories about how they were supported by their leadership when facing personal challenges and described its impact. For example, Antonio, a line manager, told a story about when his wife got seriously ill after delivering the baby. His boss called him every day asking about her health and reassuring him that he should not be worried about work. Stories like this help enhance the understanding of how an act of kindness extended by someone in leadership capacity can make employees feel valued and, potentially, can have a long-term impact on an employee because of their gratitude for the gesture. In another similar example, Jason, a relatively new employee in the organisation from shop-floor, also felt highly valued when he was buying a property, and his manager served as a 'pillar of support'. While discussing with Antonio and Jason both about their intentions for speaking up, Antonio expressed his interest in raising the issue with the management. Similarly, Jason knew the speaking up protocol and showed his willingness to take the matter to his supervisor. Research has shown that if employees are supported well, they feel comfortable voicing concerns and reporting unethical behaviour. Several other similar examples showed how leadership developed an emotional attachment with employees by encouraging a family-like environment in the organisation where all members were treated alike, whether from the senior management or shop-floor.

Additionally, a strong presence of an atmosphere of collaboration among employees was noted. Alice, a shop-floor technical employee, explained that most of her

colleagues were supportive. If they ran into a situation where a colleague was not in a position to assist, respondents expressed that they would be directed to the most appropriate employee who could help. Sam, a senior manager, indicated that the overall atmosphere across the organisation was family-oriented and conducive to knowledge sharing. Alice's story shows the benefits of familial, or family-like, reciprocity at work. Reciprocity at work is when a favourable attitude is extended to another employee and, in return, similar behaviour is expected (Balu, 1964). Establishing a family-like work environment and extending support complements the findings of Klaas, Olson-Buchanan & Ward (2012), who argue that reciprocity enhances trust and encourages prosocial voice. This also resonates with Victor and Cullen's (1988) organisational norms: warmth and support to peers. These norms play a crucial role in establishing the foundation of employee commitment with the employer.

I consider this work and emotional support concept as foundational factors. After all, they appear to drive employee engagement from the ground up. Establishing a workplace where there is an emotional connection between employees and their managers can positively influence the leader-follower relationship. This aspect of being valued through support and putting employees first appeared to be encouraging in the organisation. Cheng, Bai and Yang (2017) argue that potential whistleblowers will voice their concerns internally if they feel that they are valued in the organisation. Another crucial element of developing this feeling is the employee perception of fair treatment and trust, which is discussed next.

5.2.2 Perception of fair treatment and trust

The perception of fair treatment and trust is another prominent aspect discussed in the findings. Findings show that some of the research participants expressed their satisfaction with fair treatment from leadership. For example, David, a line manager, said that the organisation's hiring procedures, both internal (from within the organisation) and external (outside the organisation), were fair and based on merit. Caley, a senior manager, said: "there was a lot of work done on our policies, and I think they are very fair". Steven, another manager, highlighted that being "open and honest" has helped the senior leadership enhance trust in the workplace. There were also a couple of exceptions where two of the participants showed dissatisfaction with the fairness of policies. For example, Melissa, a shop-floor employee, added that she has been working towards promotion for some time, but the outcome has not been in her favour. There were three other participants who vouched for 'promotion from within', as they had personal experiences of growth. Another respondent from the shop-floor articulated that "there is no transparency over bonuses" and he never got one. When I looked at the policy documents collected for analysis, I learned that bonuses were meant for the sales team only and not for shop-floor employees. Larry who started his apprenticeship on the shop-floor, and is now a Team Leader, expressed his gratitude for being treated fairly and the encouragement he received to finish his technical education at a local community college. Most of the examples and observations discussed here show that the leadership is promoting fair treatment. As discussed in the preceding chapter, fair workplaces seem to enhance the likelihood of having this understanding that the organisation does not discriminate and is supportive of equal treatment and thus encourages voicing intentions (Seifert, Stammerjohan & Martin, 2014).

Trust in the organisation was another factor that made an impact. The business was a century old, and the site where I conducted my research was operating for more than 60 years. I met employees whose parents retired after serving 30 to 35 years, and they were hoping to follow the same path. The general perception about the business's longevity appeared to contribute to its positive reputation in the community. Most of the shop-floor employees were from the surrounding areas. Trust in the organization is considered an essential factor in developing a reliable employee-organisation association. In this process of trust development, employees continuously scan the work environment to decide if the organisation is to be trusted or not (Xu, Loi and Ngo, 2016). While talking about fair treatment and trust during the interviews, I learned from some participants that employees who left the organisation then returned because of the organisation's fair policies and treatment. For example, David left the organisation and then returned after five years because his career got stagnant in the new company, and many of the policies existed for display only, such as promotion. Sam returned to the organisation after three years because the organizational hierarchy in the new company was so complicated that he wasn't able to meet his manager when he needed to. Apparently, the factors of fair treatment and trust in the organisation and its leadership were motivators that brought them back to where they would be valued and supported.

Leadership behaviour can influence employee perception of fairness and trust and has, therefore, emerged as another key theme adding value to the overall perception of work culture. The factors of fairness and trust discussed here resonates with the work of Weeks et al. (2004), that when employees perceive the presence of fairness in organisational policies involving recruitment, compensation, and employee wellness, they are likely to develop good relationships with managers and therefore

engage in voicing behaviour (Morrison, 2014). Connected to leadership influence is the question about how serious the organisation is in terms of following its procedures and code of conduct across multiple levels of employees. In the next section, I briefly discuss this aspect and highlight its importance in developing an ethical work culture.

5.2.3   Adherence to organisational policies and regulations

Adherence to policies and procedures appears to be another key factor echoed among many respondents and documents. The Findings Chapter showed that the organisation had different policies for employees working at the production site and another set for their products and services. Those working at the production site further had two levels of policies; one for employees at the shop-floor (i.e., those who were directly involved in the manufacturing process), and another for the managerial and senior leadership team. The Group's Head Office controlled more than one business and their policies were designed for the management team (see Section 4.2.3 in Chapter 4) - Adherence to policies and procedures). Given the sensitivity of their products, it appeared in the findings that they were strictly required to follow internal policies, customer requirements, and industry regulations. This was also observed in the document analysis and resonated during discussions with employees at different levels.

Document: "We design, manufacture, market and sell products which save lives. This responsibility demands excellence in everything we do and this means that each of us must comply with applicable internal policies and legal requirements concerning all of our products and services, as well as internal quality controls and standards." [Excerpt – Policy Handbook & Newsletters]

Focus on complying with the policies and guidelines was also echoed in their daily board meeting.

Filed notes: "Daily board meeting – everyday at 8 a.m. is part of their morning ritual. Everyone was reminded about the importance of the work they are doing. There were two employees who mainly led the meeting; one was from Quality Assurance and another I was told from Compliance. In addition to the tasks of the day, they kept reiterating to 'follow the instructions', 'follow the policy' and that's all we are here to do." [Observation, Daily Board Meeting, October 2017]

As discussed in the Findings Chapter, daily board meetings were conducted on each product line's shop floor. Participation in the meetings was mandatory for those who were on duty that day and for the team leader, who could then pass on the message to those who came late. This daily reminder to 'do what you are expected to do' was perhaps keeping them focused on policy adherence.

In terms of adherence to the policies, the organisation appeared to have less tolerance of non-compliance to the product-related policies and procedures but were a bit flexible with their adherence to employee-related policies and procedures. I also observed that most employees were clear on product-related instructions and quality standards, whereas there was little confusion about some employee-related policies. For example, some employees at the shop-floor and middle management had a slightly different perception and interpretation of policies involving a bonus scheme which was designed for the sales team. Some of the respondents shared their perception that the organisation is not strict with the fair implementation of overtime or sick leave policies.

From my analysis, they were stringent on product-related policies because of the pressure from their clients and the nature of the products. Some of their clients were from the military and aerospace fields and had a plethora of regulations and safety standards to meet. The organisation had major contracts with these clients. An issue with any of their products was considered riskier than showing some flexibility to employees. I heard many respondents repeatedly saying that they are 'audited to death' or 'heavily audited' on their products, and there is rigorous testing in place before a product leaves the production floor. Organisational wrongdoing involving production or sale was likely to be taken more seriously and immediately triggered the alarm. This drove the organisation to adhere to a wide range of people and product-related policies and regulations, and likely contributed to establishing a culture of discipline and ethical conduct. This appears to be in line with Victor and Cullen's (1988) law and code-based work climate and complements Rothwell and Baldwin (2006) finding that a work climate where regulations and policies are adhered to may lead to internal speak up. Here I argue that establishing this kind of work climate may not be achieved alone. Employees' involvement and perception of fair treatment and trust play a key role in their adherence to regulations and fair application of organisational policies. As discussed in previous chapters, developing a culture of ethical conduct trickles down from the top, and ethical behaviour needs to be promoted and role modelled to enhance the propensity of voicing concerns. This is discussed in the next section.

5.2.4 Ethic centric workplace

This section shows what happens when ethical conduct becomes the norm across the workplace. From the findings discussed in the previous chapter, it appears that most

of the employees displayed confidence in getting the appropriate guidance from their line managers about ethical conduct. For example, Hilary's faith in her supervisor's direction and support is valuable in creating an ethics-oriented environment. Hilary gave an example of a potential life-threatening ethical issue on the production floor. She mentioned that 'cutting corners on a life-jacket' is quickly done to save time so they could move onto the next unit, but it is not the right thing to do. The motivation to rush from one unit to the other is to maximise daily production. However, this is neither correct nor ethical. This example was corroborated by another respondent, Angelique too. She further added that all employees are informed about product assembly, and manufacturing-related short-cuts are told to refrain from doing so. Findings also show that the line management was trained at handling ethical situations and followed a principled approach (attention to details and role modelling) to address ethical concerns. This ethical drive was echoed among many participants at all levels. Due to the daily work-related training programme, the overall work atmosphere became conducive to ethical behaviour. From observational data, it was noted that middle managers and the senior leadership team ere periodically trained to encourage and model ethical conduct. Research shows that organisations prefer to protect their reputation and want employees to use internal communication channels to report concerns and hence aspire to establish an ethics-driven work environment. As discussed in the literature review, ethical leaders are pivotal to encourage internal speak up. According to Brown et al. (2015), ethical leadership demonstrates ethical conduct through actions and interactions. My study confirms their findings and argues that the ethical behaviour displayed by the managers and leaders has the potential to set the ethical tone across the organisation.

The same kind of support was expressed from other respondents. A senior

management member further explained how they had transformed their workplace

from a blame culture to a problem-solving mindset. She added that five years ago if

an employee had reported a problem or concern then he was the one blamed for it.

She gave an example of an incident of a sinking boat that caused three causalities:

"One of our client's fishing vessel sank, and three people lost their lives. Poor souls

tried to launch the life-raft, but for some reason, it did not work. Later they were

found dead with their life jackets on. When one of our folks learned the news and

conveyed to his boss in the sales team and asked that this matter needs to be

investigated. The immediate response from his boss was to keep quiet otherwise, this

will bring very serious trouble. Meanwhile, they started checking who was involved

in the production of their life raft and life jacket! This was like we already had made

our mind that it was our fault. Nevertheless, when the Marine Accident Investigation

Branch (MAIB) intervened and contacted, then we had to respond and assist them in

the investigation. Later the investigation committee found that the reason life raft did

not work was because there was no gas in the cylinder, and neither of the life jackets

was serviced for a while … every product needs to be serviced by their date".

[Caley]

Although this is not a whistleblowing example where the organisation was engaged

in wrongdoing and the issue was raised internally or externally. The incident took

place because the boat was overloaded and was in bad material condition. The

liferaft available on the boat was not properly stored and failed to deploy. However,

Caley made some key points relating to the situation they had a few years ago: first,

an employee wanted to act proactively and was discouraged; second, the

management team started looking into the production batches as if there was a fault

in their product which caused chaos among employees; third, the incident showcased lack of leaders' trust on the teams involved in the production and quality of products. Caley's concern was it would have been helpful if the concerned supervisor would have encouraged his team member to reach out to Marine Accident Investigation Branch and offer our support. The employee was hoping for this, instead of staying quiet and creating chaos. Sooner or later, everyone would know that they were using their products, and there was nothing to hide. The way employees are responded to when they voice a concern matters in terms of promoting that their concerns are acknowledged. From the findings chapter, see Section 4.2.5 in Chapter 4, it appears that a lot has changed since this incident. The organisation has improved their voicing culture by promoting and establishing a range of communication channels. Chapter 4, Section 4.2.6 tells us how the leadership actively encourages a culture of honest and open communication.

As discussed in the literature review, employees continuously scan the work environment to look for clues if their leadership responds to their concerns. From this experience, the organisation entirely changed their approach of looking at concerns and became more focused on responding to situations more ethically. Further to this, researchers have acknowledged that an ethical work climate has the potential to influence the ethical behaviour of employees (Victor & Cullen, 1988; Lu & Lin, 2014). Ethical leadership embedded with an ethical climate has the tendency to promote ethical behaviour among employees (Schaubroeck et al., 2012). My study aligns with these findings or, put simply, this qualitative study confirmed what we know from quantitative research. My argument here is that in order to establish an ethic centric work environment, advocating ethicality may not be most effective until there is a strong work and emotional bond in management-employee relations,

along with the belief that the organisation can be trusted, and organisational policies are fairly applied. An ethic centric workplace is another key factor that seems to be driving and setting an ethical tone across the organization. In the next section, I introduce the importance of regular voicing channels to this argument.

5.2.5 Voice-friendly culture

Voice-friendly culture is another factor and one of the salient themes which resonated in the findings. Most of the respondents expressed their satisfaction and a high level of confidence in the way management support them and engage them through the use of a variety of communication channels on a regular basis.

The findings of this study reinforce other research showing that employees usually consider two things when deciding to voice concerns; if their voices will be compelling and achieve anticipated outcomes, and if it will be even safe to speak up (Morrison, 2011, 2014). The perception of internal speak up relies on the availability of formal and informal voice channels. The availability and effectiveness of these channels were evident from respondents and other documents. Formal voice channels are structured and include things like grievance processes, one-to-one meetings, emails, a feedback system, or an ombudsman. Informal voice channels are unstructured and include informal discussion or word of mouth. The availability and effectiveness of these channels were evident to respondents. They appeared to be happy with the open-door policy, meaning that they could voice concerns at any time. Terry, a shop-floor employee, articulated that it was common in the industry for technical staff to find it challenging to meet with management. In his current organisation, senior leadership was serving for more than two decades and respected everyone equally. One just needed to knock on the door or go and say 'hi'. The rest

of the discussion would automatically happen without realising it. An employee would be more motivated after the talk. This reflects with Kaufman (2015) and Mowbray et al. (2015) work which found that employee voice appears to have a positive impact on their morale. When employees perceive they are to be treated fairly by their leader, they may engage in ethical voice (Paterson & Huang, 2019). Van Dyne and LePine's (1998) version of employee voice resonates with Huang and Paterson's ethical voice in that they all aim to bring constructive change. As discussed in the Literature Review, see Chapter 2 for details; when this voice involves a report of wrongdoing, it transforms into a whistleblowing voice. The organisation appeared to encourage the use of their regular voice channels to share opinions and feedback, as well as report concerns internally.

As discussed in the Findings, see Chapter 5, a variety of communication channels are identified, namely daily board meetings, weekly meetings, and monthly meetings. These periodic meetings were meant to share information with employees, consult with them and seek their opinion on various matters (i.e., quality, production, compliance). Lisa, a line manager, shared her thoughts on these meetings by saying that everyone is allowed to have their say. This shows that employees were encouraged to communicate, and that leadership had an openness to concerns, feedback, and opinions. They also had various other voicing channels, including other less formal meetings, formal reporting to the compliance team, employee feedback boxes, employee satisfaction survey, toolbox talk, and a dedicated third-party hotline to raise concern confidentially and pulse surveys to keep everyone engaged. Morrison (2014) articulates that an employee's decision to voice concern depends on two factors: a) efficacy – if the voice will bring desired outcomes, b) safety – if the act of voicing is safe will not attract negative

consequences. The emphasis on promoting candid communication was also evident from their policies.

Policy handbook: "We encourage a culture of open and honest communication, to share concerns and promote integrity. All managers are responsible for maintaining an "open door" for their direct reports and any others who may wish to reach out to them... "[Policy excerpt]

This is what the organisation was aiming for in most of its policies. I noticed this in many of their employees' related policies, reassuring the importance of open communication and encouraging employees to reach out to their leaders.

During the discussion with respondents and in the document analysis, it was observed that the sensitivity of their products and services were the underlying reason to have a range of voicing channels across the organisation. Their openness to encourage the voicing of concerns was noticed as the centre of gravity for the organisation. In connection to establishing a voice-friendly work culture and all other salient organisational aspects, I discuss their impact on establishing a safe space for internal speak up.

5.2.6   Space for internal speak up

All of the factors discussed above, including work and emotional support, perception of fair treatment and trust, adherence to policies and procedures, ethic centric workplace, and voice friendly culture, are likely to provide a base for speaking up. If employees are treated fairly and respected, and supported, they are more likely to engage in voicing behaviour and speak up internally.

As discussed in the findings chapter, most of the shop-floor employees did not know if there was a whistleblowing policy. However, they had a clear understanding that

in case of organisational misconduct, it must be reported to the line manager, union representative, or with the Department of Human Resources. Middle management and senior leadership were reasonably familiar with the policy and how to make a report, such as to the compliance department and a dedicated third-party whistleblowing hotline. From the analysis of documents and interview transcripts, it was clear that most of the employees were aware of the ethical dilemmas they were expected to encounter at work, and how to address those by asking rhetorical questions to reflect: For example,

Document: "What I am doing or asked to do, is it legal, fair and ethical?

If I see or overhear something that is illegal, unfair or unethical, how will I feel if I don't take any action about it?... Would I be comfortable explaining what I did or didn't do in the court of law? How my family is going to feel about my actions or inactions if they know about it?" [Code of conduct - Excerpt]

Bernhard, a senior manager, added that they were planning to include more work-related potential ethical situations along with their product instructions so that the technical staff could make sense of them in relation to the work they were doing. Antonio mentioned that they have been given a list of sensitive phrases to watch for: "For example, 'no one will notice', 'everyone does this', 'it is the norm here to get this done' and, in case if we see this or overhear, we are expected to talk to the concerned directly or report to the supervisor". He further added that "it's a small company and everyone knows everyone, and people like to talk so there are not many chances to hide anything under the table".

In addition to having detailed guidelines on being attentive to ethical situations and formal and informal reporting channels, the exciting part of the discussion was when

most of the employees showed a solid willingness to speak directly to the individual involved in indiscretion in the first place. If it was not possible, they expressed that they would discuss it with the management. Most of the participants were confident in the availability of their managers and senior leadership team to pay attention to their concerns. When probed, if they foresee repercussions of such reporting, they showed complete faith and trust in their leadership. They didn't mention if they knew about anyone who was retaliated against for speaking up at work, as they hadn't witnessed in the past. Their policies and code of conduct were also clear on supporting internal speak up. For example:

Document: "*** takes all reports seriously, treats them with respect and makes every effort to protect the confidentiality of those who raise concerns. Where carrying out an investigation means it is impossible to maintain confidentiality, please remember that *** does not tolerate any form of retaliation against anyone who makes a report, raises a concern or helps with an investigation in ..." [Code of conduct, FAQ's Excerpt] *** Represents organizations name

This complements Kaptein's (2011a) findings that ethical organisation also needs speak up policies and arrangements in place. The same is echoed in the findings of Brown, Dozo and Roberts (2016) Survey of Organisational Processes and Procedures involving 702 organisations from Australia and New Zealand where 89% of the respondents had formal speak up policies and procedures.

Employees who felt well supported both at work and emotionally when they were struggling in their personal lives were firmly in favour of confronting the wrongdoer. I noticed this during my interviews as well as observations.

Filed notes: "Those employees who gave an example of how they were valued due to the additional support extended to them by the organisation especially at a time when they were struggling to balance both work and life – their response on internal speak up was strong. They had family-like attachment with their managers and the business. This was also visible in their body language and tone (confident) when they spoke about confronting their colleagues or report to the supervisor"
[Observation- Interview Reflections, January 2018]

There were many factors at play which appear to be setting up the internal speak up landscape and were encouraging employees to voice concerns. In the next section, I propose a theoretical framework comprising of all of the factors impacting the organisational dynamics discussed in the above sections, aiming to support a culture of ethics and internal speak up.

5.3   Culture of ethics and internal speak up pyramid

In this section, I argue and propose that based on the findings and the discussion in the preceding sections, if the factors of work and emotional support, perception of fair treatment and trust, adherence to policies and procedures, ethic centric work environment, voice-friendly culture, and willingness to internal speak up are integrated, they make a strong base to nurture internal speak up.

The framework depicted below portrays this kind of culture through a multi-layered approach in the form of a pyramid. 'Culture of Ethics and Internal Speak up Pyramid'. In this framework, I discuss the six levels of key organisational factors presented in the previous sections as critical for establishing a culture of ethics and internal speak up. Working from the bottom-up from Level 1 to Level 6, Level 1

carries the most weight. Or in other words, from the discussion in section 5.2, Level 1 appears to play the most crucial role in terms of strengthening leader-follower bonding and employees' comfort in sharing concerns. In order to achieve the highest level, Level 6, it is expected that all levels of the pyramid are met. Every level is adding value to the ultimate aim of enhancing internal speak up. For example, Level 1 is the foundational level in this framework. Without foundation, the rest of the pyramid or levels may not be fully realized. The emotional attachment established at the foundational level tends to enhance employee engagement and trust in leadership and the organisation. There is no one-size-fits-all approach. All other levels have been ordered with regard to how they influence internal speak up. Level 2 comprises of employee perception of fairness and trust (both of leadership and of the organisation). Employees may relate their experience learned from level 2 of perception of fair treatment and trust, or Level 3, showing commitment to adherence to policies and procedures, or any other level up in the hierarchy. Leadership plays a pivotal role at each level, and every level is likely to impact speak up behaviour. Once all framework levels are met, there is a considerable chance that a culture of ethics and internal speak up will flourish.

Level 1 – Work and Emotional Support:

The bottom level of the pyramid shows that the perception of work and emotional support is the most important organisational aspect of the framework. This level works as the foundation for pro-social behaviour, such as internal speak up. When employees are supported more than they expect, it enhances their commitment to the organisation. When personal concerns are acknowledged, and employees are supported at work, there tends to be a long-lasting positive impact because employees feel indebted to their leaders.

Due to the family-like work culture, there appears to be strong emotional attachment among employees and managers. Work and emotional needs supported by leadership are likely to leave a positive impact on employee voicing behaviour.

Safe Space for internal speak up

Level 6

Voice-friendly culture

Level 5

Ethic-centric workplace

Level 4

Adherence to organisational policies and regulations

Level 3

Leadership

Perception of fair treatment and trust

Level 2

Work and emotional support

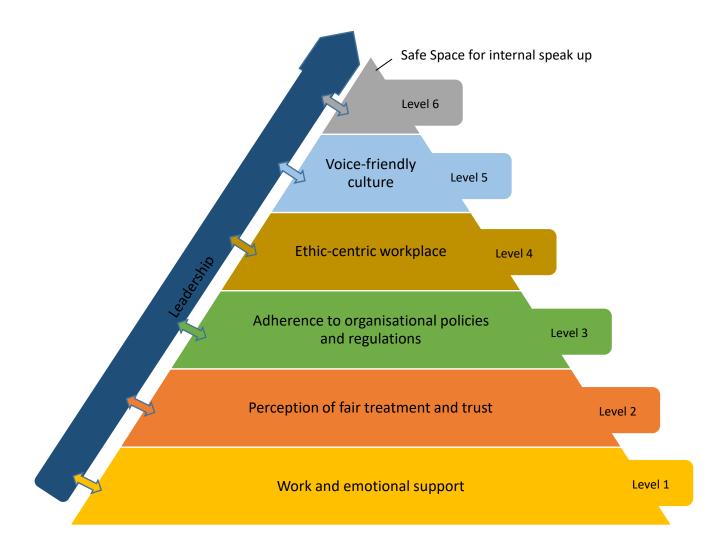Level 1

Figure 5. 1: Culture of ethics and internal speak up pyramid

Leadership plays a crucial role in developing this bond. Walumbwa and Schaubroeck (2009) argue that people's perception of psychological safety mediates voicing behaviour. As discussed in the literature review, psychological safety is a perception that it is safe to engage in interpersonal risks, such as internal speak up at

the workplace. From the findings and the discussion in this chapter, it appears that work and emotional support has the potential to do more than just enhancing their psychological safety. This bottom level of the pyramid can potentially encourage employees to step up, knowing that leadership will not undermine their intention and are supportive of voicing concerns. This level is likely to impact the understanding of how supportive the organisation is perceived and, consequently, can enhance voicing behaviour. This is in line with Lavena's (2016) claim that a leader's support is likely to increase the willingness to internal speak up because employees know that their voicing behaviour will be 'backed-up' (see also Miceli, Near & Schwenk, 1991).

Level 2 – Perception of Fair Treatment and Trust:

It is clear from the literature review and based on the discussion in the preceding sections that the perception of fair treatment at work may increase the chances of voicing either directly with the wrongdoer or through a suitable voicing or speak up channel (Seifert, Stammerjohan & Martin, 2014). Trust is equally as critical, and is considered an important factor to employee's overall attitude at work as well as voicing behaviour (Deconinck, Deconinck & Moss, 2016). Trust is associated with fairness and transparency displayed by ethical leaders, and the findings discussed in the previous chapter show that it positively influences the voicing of concerns. Working bottom-up on the pyramid, from Level 1 to Level 2, I acknowledge that a preliminary foundation of trust and bonding is established at Level 1 due to the family-like work environment. Emphasis on employees' perception of fair treatment and trust at Level 2, treating everyone fairly can further strengthen leader-follower attachment as well as trust in the organisation. Findings suggest that the longevity of the businesses, being one of the oldest in the community, was also a key reason for

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trusting the organisation because it showed the business was not going anywhere. There were some research participants who replaced their parents after retirement.

Level 3 – Adherence to Organisational Policies and Regulations:

Adherence to organisational policies and regulations acts as a reference point for employees, showing them if the organisation takes their policies seriously. This leaves a considerable impact on the employees' perceptions of applying internal policies equally and fairly. Here I argue that if employees are also involved in the making of such policies, this may result in an open and trustful culture. Further to this, as discussed in the Findings Chapter, since this particular high-tech organisation is involved in the production of lifesaving products for the marine, aerospace and defence sectors, they are mandated to follow their product standards. They are also heavily audited to ensure compliance and the safety of the end-users. This leaves them with no or maybe little choice but to comply with product-related policies and regulations. Some flexibility was observed and noted in terms of following employee-related policies and procedures. Overall, this level is holding the pyramid structure tall and strong in terms of promoting a rule-based work environment. Most of the employees were not mandated to speak up due to their role, but their emotional attachment with the organisation did not allow them to keep quiet. It sounded like they have self-imposed voicing concerns when they arise.

Level 4 – Ethic-Centric Workplace:

As discussed in the literature review, leaders play a critical role in promoting and encouraging ethical conduct across the organisation. They are in a position to set an ethical direction. Findings suggest that there was a common understanding among most of the employees about what is right and generally accepted behaviour at the

workplace. Most importantly, what is the right way to produce products. Ethical behaviour needs to be echoed at every level of the organisation. Further to this, when employees perceive that the element of 'ethics' is in everything they do, including organisational policies throughout the employment lifecycle, starting from hire to retirement (hiring, vacation, promotions, compensation, bonuses, training opportunities, recognition, separation process), they are likely to be more vocal on organisational issues (Lu & Lin, 2014). To reiterate, the levels in the pyramid are sequenced based on the value they appear to add to encourage the voicing of concerns in this study.

Level 5 – Voice-Friendly Culture:

At this level of the pyramid, voicing concerns appears to be unique for different levels of employees. I have thoroughly discussed employee voice in the literature review. In this section, I recommend employee voice as a behaviour to suggest improvements, highlight problems, raise concerns, and share opinions formally or informally (Morrison, 2011, 2014; Kwon and Farndale, 2020). Morrison (2011, 2014) claims that when deciding to voice, there are two considerations which an employee usually takes; firstly if voicing behaviour is expected to be effective and can attract desired outcomes and secondly if voicing would be safe. One can engage in voicing through formal or informal channels, and research shows that a variety of safe voicing options gives rise to voicing behaviour. The findings in this study suggest that frequent and effective use of a range of available channels enhance the propensity to develop a voice-friendly culture.

Level 6 – Safe Space for Internal Speak up:

Lastly, the interplay among the first five levels discussed in the preceding sections appears to be the foundation for providing a safe space for internal speak up. As discussed in the literature, employees are likely to voice concerns as long as they believe that their voices will be heard (Tan et al., 2019) and that they will not be retaliated against at any level. The role of leadership stems from the principles of having two-way communication and lending an attentive ear to followers. The same is echoed throughout the findings of this study. In addition to multiple voicing channels, findings suggest that the organization's speak up policy and dedicated whistleblowing channels also provide more options to speak up internally.

Overall, the sense of attachment from the organisation's family-like culture, perception of fairness, and the commitment to follow policies in an ethics focused organisation tend to elicit a voice friendly workplace, which in turn enhances willingness to speak up internally.

This novel pyramid canvasses cross-fertilisation of ideas from a range of key theories to create a culture of ethics and internal speak up. Leadership is central to this framework, which is also evidenced in Schein's (2010) argument that culture is developed through leaders' actions. This framework can be advanced to study the possibility of preventing unethical behaviour and wrongdoing at the workplace.

5.4 Discussion

The research questions considered for this study evolved over time as the analysis took place, findings were critically reviewed, and feedback collected from the research committee and supervisor was incorporated throughout the project. The overarching question driving this study has been: 'How can an employee be encouraged to speak up internally?' With this high-level question, I investigated the

key organisational aspects of the topic and highlighted the need for framing the findings in an integrated conceptual framework. While investigating this through a qualitative case study, a range of themes emerged, highlighting leadership's role in strengthening leader-follower attachment and establishing a culture of ethics and internal speak up in the organisation. This answers the following two questions:

Research Question 1: How and when can leadership facilitate the development of an ethic-centric and voice-friendly work culture?

Research Question 2: How can willingness to internal speak up be nurtured?

Willingness to speak up internally or externally requires a lot of courage. From a whistleblower perspective, whether to blow the whistle or not is indeed a tough choice to make. Should I speak up? To whom should I voice my concern? How will I be perceived? These questions are imperative and play a great deal around the speak up process. There is extensive literature available on speak up (Miceli, Near & Dworkin, 2009; Mayer et al., 2013; Kenny, Vandekerckhove & Fotaki, 2019). In the Literature Review, see Chapter 2, I discussed the scholarships related to promoting internal speak up and how leadership can facilitate the process.

The framework proposed in this chapter comprises of six levels, and each level directly or indirectly impacts the other levels, as well as the overall perception of the culture of ethics and internal speak up across the organisation.

In Chapter 2, I also explained that there are two primary reasons which can hinder an employee from speak up: a) the act of speaking up will not be acknowledged by the leaders (Miceli, Near & Dworkin, 2009; Near & Miceli, 2016); b) the fear of retaliation (Kenny, Fotaki & Scriver, 2018). This galvanises the need for trusted leadership, voice-friendliness, and an ethical work environment. Research shows

that if leaders are trusted, employees are more likely to engage in voicing behaviour, and the absence of trust could silence them (Gao, Janssen & Shi, 2011). Culture is another facilitative factor that is likely to influence voicing behaviour. If not managed properly, this may cause a culture of silence: "widely shared perceptions among employees that speaking up about problems or issues is futile and/or dangerous" (Morrison & Milliken, 2000 p.708). A culture of silence further leads to the withholding of information about potential issues. The role of leadership is crucial here in terms of displaying and encouraging ethical behaviour and how it can potentially develop a culture of ethics and openness to voicing concerns.

Among many leadership theories and styles, a few have been found more conducive to encouraging employee voice. Research of leadership styles shows transformational leadership, authentic leadership, and ethical leadership have a positive influence on employee voice. Hsiung (2012) finds authentic leadership more propitious to employee voice than ethical leadership and transformational leadership. In his theoretical model, Hsiung shows that authentic leadership impacts an individual's positive mood (enthusiasm, optimism), leader-member exchange relationship (LMX), and influences the perception of a procedural justice climate. In comparison, the current study suggests a more nuanced multi-level framework involving ethical leadership as the core driving force, along with other key underlying factors needed to help a voice friendly work culture flourish. Ethical leadership not only encourages employee voice but also promotes extra-role behaviour.

This study enhances the perception that the intent of ethical leadership, as well as ethical climate, is not only to encourage ethical behaviour but to develop a bond with employees. Ethical leadership, embedded within an ethical climate, has the

tendency to promote an understanding among employees that may encourage them to display ethical behaviour. The Culture of Ethics and Internal Speak up Pyramid discussed in this chapter highlights the underlying importance of voice-enabled ethical culture.

Work and emotional support at Level 1 is paramount to all other levels in the pyramid because it impacts all other levels in the framework. It emerged from my empirical analysis that emotionally connected, and family-like culture is an extension to Rhoades and Eisenberger's (2002) perceived organisational support (POS), where the employer shows concern about the contribution and well-being of their employees. Well-being is a broad term, and Rath and Harter (2010) define it as "all the things that are important to how we think about and experience our lives" (p.142). This study builds on this, that when employees feel supported by their leadership in managing both work and family matters either formally or informally, they are more engaged and feel valued at work. As discussed in the preceding sections, most of the employees perceive that their high-tech organisation promotes a family-like work environment where managers and senior leadership are supportive and flexible with both work and family situations. This additional support on the family or personal front, by way of letting employees spend time during work hours to handle personal commitments, enhanced their emotional attachment with their supervisors and with the organisation. Studies on internal speak up show that perception of being valued at work is likely to encourage employees to speak up internally (Wang & Hsieh, 2013; Cheng, Bai & Yang, 2019). This also enhances their trust in leadership and the organisation.

Perception of fairness and trust at Level 2 is the next important aspect of the pyramid. At an individual level, employee's emotional attachment with their

managers is enhanced once they feel that they are valued and supported in matters other than work. As discussed in the findings, employees continuously scan the work environment and look for cues to learn how an organisational matter is addressed. Organisational policies are not meant to be implemented in secret. Their fair implementation is being noticed by all. If an employee speaks up, he expects a fair and transparent investigation of the matter. Further to this, during the speak up experience, interaction with the whistleblower recipient can sabotage the process or develop a trustful atmosphere. This pyramid level confirms Seifert et al. (2010) quantitative study about internal auditors and management accountants, that fair policies enhance the chance of speaking, that adding an element of trust at both the managerial and organisational level can further promote the voicing of concerns. The next layer of the pyramid furthers the need for following and implementing organisational policies and rules, where necessary. Again, leadership is central to ensure that organisational policies and regulations are met at Level 3 of the pyramid. The current study goes beyond the leadership landscape and incorporates a range of other organisational dynamics involving trust, transparency, and culture to the current debate. This also resonates with Mayer's et al. (1995) findings discussed in their 'An Integrative Model of Organisational Trust' paper. They proposed a model of trust comprising of few factors on trustworthiness, including the ability (set of skills, competencies and attributes that may influence others), benevolence (trustee has some attachments to the trustor), and integrity (trustor's perception that trustee follows a set of acceptable principles).

The ethic-centric workplace at Level 4 re-shifts the focus to the value ethical culture appears to add to the organisation. Leadership is widely acknowledged to influence employees and the overall behaviour accepted in the organisation (Trevino, Brown

& Hartman, 2003). They further discuss that senior leadership can potentially set the "tone at the top," which in turn appears to shape the ethical climate and culture of the organisation. In the study, the perception of this family-like atmosphere seems to be trickling down from the top. As discussed in the literature review, ethical climate is "the shared perceptions of what ethically correct behaviour is and how ethical issues should be handled" (Victor & Cullen, 1988, p.51). Ethical culture is part of the climate. Kaptein (2011) defines this as "those aspects of the perceived organizational context that may impede unethical behaviour and encourage ethical behaviour" (p.846). In simple words, ethical climate refers to the overall feel (what is right and what is wrong) of the workplace, whereas ethical culture refers to the way things are done at the workplace to promote ethical behaviour. In this study, my findings resonate with Walumbwa and Schaubroeck's (2009) work. They argue that ethical leadership supports an environment where employees speak freely to address issues and recommend solutions and potential opportunities for improving the way an organisation works. They further highlighted that leaders' agreeableness (tendency to be accommodative, cooperative, and trusting) and conscientiousness (dependable and self-disciplined) could help them be seen as ethical. Overall, there seems to be a focus on getting things done ethically through awareness of potential ethical dilemmas and potential ethical touchpoints while assembling products and general training programs on ethical conduct for managers and senior leaders by EthicsPoint, their whistleblowing hotline partner.

The voice-friendly culture at Level 5 is one step away from the top of the pyramid. Findings suggest that multiple communication channels and dedicated internal speak up systems provide a handful of voicing options at multiple avenues. As discussed in the literature review of Detert and Treviño (2010), involving 89 interviews in a high-

tech corporation, in addition to the immediate supervisors, skip-level leaders (or distal leaders) are also likely to influence employee voice either directly through interaction or indirectly through organisational climate or structure and policies. The findings of the current study show Detert and Trevino's work in that the research participants had easy access to their immediate managers, skip-level leaders, and senior leadership team to voice their concerns. Frequent voicing opportunities provided through different platforms, coupled with built-in voicing mechanisms with routine operations, encouraged employees to select a recipient of their choice and speak up.

A safe space for internal speak up at Level 6 is the highest level of the pyramid. Employees who showed their willingness to speak up internally without any reluctance were mostly those who clearly understood each level of the pyramid, and were emotionally attached to the organisation. A clear speak up policy and various avenues to voice concerns further ensured the provision of a safe voicing space. Put simply, all the discussed levels of the pyramid inform employees that they are valued in this family-like work culture; that the organisation is fair in what they do; and the organisation values ethical conduct and encourage all to raise concerns in this safe voicing space.

Overall, the culture of ethics and internal speak up framework builds on Kaptein's (2011) model of Corporate Ethical Virtue (CEV), which examines 'organisational virtues' at a micro-level comprising of seven dimensions and five possible responses of people who, upon witnessing the misconduct, would possibly react by inaction, confronting the wrongdoer, reporting to the management, calling an internal hotline, and external whistleblowing. The framework proposed in this study complements Kaptein's CEV model in that ethical culture does influence speak up behaviour. I

take a step back and look at the organisational factors making up the culture, or the pre-speak up landscape, from an integrative lens and argue the actual rationale behind establishing a culture of ethics and internal speak up in the organisation is based on the employees' emotional attachments and leaders' ability to positively influence each level of the pyramid.

In the pyramid, the incremental bottom-up movement from Level 1 to the next is smooth and logical in a sense that when a level establishes the ground for the essence of a concept, it also provides a hint of what is coming in the next level – ultimately progressing to the final level of provision of a safe voicing space.

This framework contributes to voice and whistleblowing research from the perspective of how leadership can influence the development of a culture of ethics and internal speak up where employees are encouraged to voice concerns. This also emphasises that how organisations can foster ethical conducts that eventually may lead to more ethical behaviour.

5.5 Conclusion

The study began with the idea of exploring internal whistleblowing through key organisational factors, which appeared to play an important role in recent scholarships. The findings did not focus on whistleblowing incidents, nor was that the intention. However, they led to a set of salient, emerging themes, which were then incorporated into a conceptual framework, depicted in the form of a pyramid. The purpose of this conceptual framework is to enhance the willingness to speak up internally by providing a safe voicing space where employees can raise concerns without worrying too much about the consequences.

From the analysis and discussion in this chapter, the role of leadership is central in achieving all levels of the pyramid: family-like work environment enhancing employees emotional attachment; perception of fairness and trust reassuring employees that they can speak of their mind without thinking of repercussions; adherence to polices and regulations showing employees that policies and rules are prioritised; ethic-centric workplace signalling to employees that their business is rooted in ethics and ethical conduct; voice-friendly culture showing that the organisation is voice-rich and offers a range of avenues and recipients to raise concerns; and lastly, a safe space for internal speak up means that there is a speak up policy in place along with a detailed code of conduct and a range of internal speak up mechanisms encouraging employees to step up and voice concerns internally.

In the next chapter, I summarize how this empirical study has answered the research questions identified, what novel contributions it offers to whistleblowing research, and limitations, followed by practical implications of this study and ideas for future research.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

6.1   Introduction to the chapter

In this chapter, I present the importance and contribution this research study makes to enhance willingness for internal speak up in a multinational U.K. based high-tech organisation. I begin by summarising the justification for this study, existing scholarships, the research questions I have addressed, and the research approach I took to answer the questions. I also briefly revisit the key findings and analysis discussed in the preceding chapters. While analysing findings and situating them in the existing scholarships, I propose a theoretical framework for a culture of ethics and internal speak up pyramid. The chapter concludes with limitations, practical implications, and future research ideas.

Existing research shows that when employees observe unethical behaviour, they are 'caught between conscience and career'. My research opens new directions for the study of ethical disclosures and how it might be possible to navigate the decision-making process without risking an individual life and career.

As discussed in Chapter 1, I initiated working on this research study with the idea of investigating the promotion of internal speak up through integrating few key sensitising concepts in the whistleblowing literature, namely ethical climate, ethical leadership, employee voice, ethical voice, organisational justice, and organisational trust. I selected this topic because the existing scholarship focuses more on the whistleblowing experience and its aftermath. Instead of going with the current trends, I aimed to investigate a pre-speak up work environment and explore how an employee can be motivated to voice concerns intentionally and with confidence. When I analysed my data, the role of leadership emerged as a salient theme in

facilitating employee voice in a way that speaking out appeared as a norm within the organisation.

In Chapter 2, my review of the literature summarises key scholarships available on whistleblowing and focuses on those studies, which are related to promoting internal disclosures. Because this lens offers insights about how internal whistleblowing can be helpful in solving misconduct before it becomes problematic. Internal whistleblowing is also important because research shows that most of the issues raised externally are first reported within the organisation. After getting an unsatisfactory response, they may go to an external party: a regular, or the public via the media. This may not only put the individual at risk due to reprisal, but it can also damage the organisation's reputation. Creating an internal safe voicing space has become the necessity of today's organisation. Since speaking up is considered an ethical behaviour, the study takes ethics into account and then looks at it from the lens of Victor and Cullen's (1988) ethical climates, followed by ethical leadership. After that, I shed light on employee voice literature and how this differentiated from ethical voice. Taking inspiration from the existing scholarships, I also looked at internal speak up from the perspective of organisational justice and trust.

In Chapter 3, I discuss my research approach taken, an inductive and in-depth qualitative case study, to answer the research questions. My analysis focuses on data collected through detailed semi-structured interviews from all levels of employees, a variety of documents, and observations. The explorative nature of my research questions led me to take guidance from Charmaz's (2006) constructive grounded theory. This chapter highlights the characteristics of research participants and shows how they were inducted, ensuring participation from all hierarchical levels of the organisation. In the end, I discussed the use of NVivo to organise my interview

transcripts, documents, and field notes, followed by coding approaches involving initial coding and focused coding to observe emerging themes.

6.2   Key Insights

In Chapter 4, I present that the findings indicate salient themes which emerged from data showing: the significance of family-like work environment – where managers and senior leaders show concern for their employees and are supportive and flexible with both work and personal situations, and henceforth developing leader-follower emotional attachment; perception of fairness and trust in terms of policies and interactions – reassuring employees that they can speak freely without thinking of repercussions; adherence to organisational policies and regulations – showing employees that policies and regulations are always prioritised; having an ethic-centric workplace - most of the employees including organisation's leadership and the documents were found to be advocating ethical conduct; provision of a range of voicing channels – showing that the organisation is voice-rich and offers multiple formal and informal voicing opportunities to employees to raise concerns; and lastly, enhancing willingness to internal speak up – means that there is a speak up policy in place along with a detailed code of conduct and, a range of dedicated mechanisms to encourage employees to step up.

In Chapter 5, the analysis and discussion show that the chances of voicing concerns internally are high in the organisation where leadership is easy to approach and provides ample opportunities to speak out. The conceptual framework of a culture of ethics and internal speak up proposes a novel insight and may work as a new tool to guide organisations to develop a safe voicing space to optimize internal speak up. The pyramid shows six levels: Level 1 - foundational layer at the bottom,

strengthening employee emotional attachment with leaders; Level 2 – second most important layer clarifying perception of fairness and trust; Level 3 – the third layer highlighting the need for supremacy of policies and regulations (related to the business); Level 4 – the fourth layer showing the importance of ethical conduct through an ethic-centric workplace; Level 5 – the fifth layer which is offering a variety of voicing opportunities and enables a voice-friendly culture; and Level 6 – top layer providing a space for internal speak up. I argue that establishing a safe speak up space is important and, more importantly, how we change employees' perceptions of it? Introducing a well-crafted whistleblowing policy and launching state of the art speak up mechanisms may not work well unless a genuine connection exists between employees and their leaders. After that, it progresses to the next levels leading to a situation where this safe voicing space can be truly acknowledged.

6.3   Contribution to knowledge

It is widely acknowledged that most of the external whistleblowing happens due to unsuccessful internal whistleblowing, and there are a variety of organisational aspects at play in the process ranging from the urge to voice a concern to how it is managed. This study offers key contributions to the internal whistleblowing research. First, I contribute to enhancing employees' willingness to speak up internally. In doing so, I introduce a six-layer integrated conceptual model of Culture of Ethics and Internal Speak up Pyramid for enhancing internal speak up.

Kaptein's CEV model measures organisational culture by looking at seven organisational virtues (see Chapter 2, Section 2.5) and shows how ethical culture influences speak up and how people respond to wrongdoing. This pyramid

complements Kaptein's research and addresses some of the gaps (see Section 2.5), for example: the CEV model finds that people prefer to remain silent or raise concerns externally irrespective of an ethics-related code and training in place, whereas Level 3 -Adherence to Organisational Polices and Regulations and Level 4 – Ethic Centric Workplace of the pyramid explains that in addition to the availability of ethics-related codes, ethical behaviours need to be echoed in all organisational matters and at every level of the organisation. Kaptein did not combine his organisational virtues, but this pyramid provides an integrative approach to providing safe space for internal speak up by focusing on key organisational aspects (aka pre-speak up landscape) independently at each level when they are implemented holistically. The six levels are ordered in the pyramid based on their significance and value addition to the overall employee perception about the organisation and speaking up experience.

Second, I propose the role of leadership and focus on ethical conduct as central to the pre-speak up landscape which have been acknowledged as helpful in internal speak up. I contribute to the literature by integrating these aspects and extending a nuanced understanding of how leaders can facilitate a safe voicing space that promotes internal speak up.

Third, my findings contribute to the literature that employees' emotional attachments with their leaders can be fruitful in developing a genuine affiliation with the organisation – leading them to be concerned about organisational issues. This can be seen as a novel contribution to the whistleblowing motivation research strand. It also encourages employees' loyalty in another sense – being true to the organisation and protecting it by reporting wrongdoing.

Fourth, one of the strengths of this research study is the use of an innovative approach to the qualitative case study by complementing in-depth semi-structured interviews with document analysis and participant observations. Previous research on whistleblowing has been mainly quantitative, using survey tools and has rarely applied this methodology to the area of whistleblowing. This study has used purposive sampling and showcased employees' perception of the pre-speak up landscape using multiple data collection methods. This method can be usefully used in further studies aiming for a more holistic approach to this topic.

Moreover, whistleblowing retaliation can be severe. Through this in-depth qualitative case study, I contribute to the literature by showing how the perception of fairness at work can enhance reporting of concerns, and the added element of trust can further improve internal reporting. This answers the call from Seifert et al. (2014), that the addition of trust to fairness may bring improvements in the voicing of concerns.

To the best of my knowledge, this is the first study to provide empirical evidence of a culture of ethics and internal speak up in the context of a multinational organisation that is producing life-saving products for marine, aerospace, and defence sectors in the U.K.

6.4   Limitations

I have highlighted some limitations of the study in Chapter 3, where I explain my research methodology. Further to those, I would like to add that this study is based on a small number of semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and observations of a single organisation, at a limited point in time. Due to time constraints, I was not in a situation to visit their head office or any of their service

stations. Therefore, the research findings may not be completely generalized beyond this single organizational social context with unique interactions and experiences. However, there are some settings in which this research might be helpful, for example a manufacturing business with similar geographic and economic settings. There are insights and areas for future research that this study offers, which are beyond this empirical setting.

6.5   Practical Implications

The conceptual framework proposed in this study is helpful to promote internal speak up. First, the Culture of Ethics and Internal Speak up Pyramid offers a novel way of looking at the pre-speak up landscape leading to the provision of a safe space for internal speak up. Each level of the pyramid offers a unique lens and establish a baseline standard to incorporate improvements, and a cohesive implementation of the pyramid may lead to a safe speak up culture. Different sectors can follow the pyramid, and it can be more beneficial for manufacturing businesses to make an informed decision about where and how to improve the pre-speak up landscape.

Second, this framework does not necessarily need to be considered as a six-step pyramid. As discussed earlier, there is no one-size-fits-all approach. An organisation with a rich leader-follower association may skip Leve 1 and start from level 2 of the pyramid, or an organisation that is already perceived as fair and trusted by their employees may proceed with what is missing from their organisational dynamics. It might be difficult for organisations to operate effectively if the policies and rules are not adhered to, primarily those which serve as guiding principles to act and behave at the workplace. Such organisations are likely to focus on Level 3, and then progress to the top. I also would like to clarify that movement from one level to the

other is not necessarily sequential; an organisation can move along the pyramid in whatever way it works for them. The key takeaway is that it is ideal to meet all levels of the pyramid to get the best out of the framework and support those who speak up intentionally and are accidental whistleblowers.

6.6   Future Research

This study explores some of the organisational factors that are considered part of the pre-speak up landscape. Firstly, the study can be advanced by evaluating the overall performance of the pyramid. Secondly, while investigating this study, a range of communication channels and internal speak up mechanisms emerged. I did not have time to measure their effectiveness and efficiency. Further research on this aspect may help us understand and elaborate on which channel or mechanism was working well and which was not. Lastly, this leader-follower emotional connection is leader dependent, so there remains the question about how employee voicing behaviour could be influenced when a leader departs from the organisation. Is there a need to make this emotional attachment more systematic and institutional? I was not able to capture this, but I think that this will add value to the framework along the way and may further enhance our understanding.

From this study, I have learned that a step taken in the direction of providing safe voicing space can be encouraging for all parties involved in the speak up process, and that this holistic approach might help address the whistleblowing complexities.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Project Brief – Basis for detailed discussion

Date: August 1, 2017

Dear ***,

I am a doctoral candidate at Queen's Management School, Queen's University Belfast and am undertaking a research study entitled: *'Promoting internal speak up measures by nurturing ethical climate and organisational justice'*. Work ethics and organisational justice are becoming increasingly important in today's business climate. In addition to adding value to corporate social responsibility initiatives, they help to increase organisational effectiveness, and nurture an air of trust among employees.

I am writing to you in relation to carrying out research at your organization. *** Group Limited, being pioneer of survival and safety products spanning marine, aviation, defence and offshore sectors is highly regarded internationally. *** truly recognises the need to focus on its people and operate a sustainable business. This commitment is evident in its successful operations since 1920, The Queen's Award for Enterprise: Innovation 2012 and as recently as the recent Safety & Training Innovation Award at Seawork International 2017. Furthermore, your association with Business In The Community (BITC) shows strong commitment with corporate social responsibility programmes. For these reasons, carrying out research into your flagship marine business in Belfast would enhance my learning of highly successful work cultures. In addition to providing insights for business and management studies, the research will offer useful feedback and suggest ways to take organisational effectiveness to the next level.

In this study, I aim to analyse how employees approach a typical work situation and how they experience the phenomena of fairness at work. This would involve interviews, observations (where possible) and document analysis. With your permission, I would like to conduct approximately 20 semi-structured interviews. The research will focus on the above concepts. Full confidentiality and anonymity are ensured, and I will share my Ethics protocol and interview schedule in advance. At the end of the research, I will deliver a report addressing how the findings might help you to strengthen internal processes.

Lastly, this study fully complies with QUB Research Ethics Policies and I can assure you that I will make every effort to ensure the study does not disrupt the working environment in any way. My research is supervised by Professor Kate Kenny (Queen's Management School) and Dr Denise Currie (Lecturer, Queen's Management School), both of whom are very experienced in conducting empirical research in organizational settings.

Thank you for considering this request and I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Muhammad Irfan

Postgraduate Researcher

Appendix 2: Research Participant Consent Form

2 x copies: 1 with participant; 1 with researcher

Study Number:

Participant Identification Number:

CONSENT FORM

Title of Project: Promoting internal speak up measures by nurturing ethical climate and organisational justice.

Name of Researcher(s): Muhammad Irfan

1. I confirm that I have read the information sheet dated........................... for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.	
2. I am satisfied that I understand the information provided and have had enough time to consider the information.	
3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason.	
4. I agree to take part in the above study.	

Name of Participant:

*** Group Ltd.

Date: Signature: Researcher: Date: Signature:

Appendix 3: Participant Information Sheet

3 x copies: 1 with participant; 1 with researcher; 1 to be kept with research notes

Participant Information Sheet

Study Number:

Date:

Copy to be retained by participant, along with signed consent form.

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. This Participant Information Sheet will tell you about the purpose, risks and benefits of this research study. Please take as much time as you need to read it and contact me with any questions.

Study title: Promoting internal speak up measures by nurturing ethical climate and organisational justice.

Background to the study:

Work ethics and organisational justice are becoming increasingly important in today's business climate. In addition to adding value to corporate social responsibility initiatives, they help to increase organisational effectiveness, and nurture an air of trust among employees.

*** Group Limited, being pioneer of survival and safety products spanning marine, aviation, defence and offshore sectors is highly regarded internationally. *** truly recognises the need to focus on its people and operate a sustainable business. This commitment is evident in its successful operations since 1920, The *** Award for Enterprise: Innovation *** and as

recently as the recent Safety & Training Innovation Award at Seawork International 2017. Furthermore, *** association with Business In The Community (BITC) shows strong commitment with corporate social responsibility programmes. For these reasons, carrying out research into your flagship marine business in Belfast would enhance my learning of highly successful work cultures. In addition to providing insights for business and management studies, the research will offer useful feedback and suggest ways to take organisational effectiveness to the next level.

In this study, I aim to analyse how employees approach a typical work situation and how they experience the phenomena of fairness at work. This would involve interviews, observations (where possible) and document analysis. I will conduct approximately 20 semi-structured interviews. Interview transcripts will be provided to participants for their feedback. Full confidentiality and anonymity are ensured, and I will share my Ethics protocol and interview schedule in advance. At the end of the research, I will deliver a report addressing how the findings might help *** to strengthen internal processes.

About Researcher: I am Human Resources Practitioner with years of experience in facilitating employees and help them excel at work. I have conducted interviews with people from different businesses to understand their work ethics, organisational processes and performance improvement strategies with the idea of enhancing organisational effectiveness.

I would be delighted if you would agree to take part in this important research. This would involve meeting you for an interview/ discussion. This would typically last 45 minutes approximately. I would be grateful to follow this up with a further interview, if you were amenable to this.

The results will be published in dissertation and in an article form. A detailed report on findings of this study would be provided to your organisation. You will not be identified in

any such publications unless you wish this.

Taking part: It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to participate you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. You will be free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect your rights in any way. You are welcome at any point to ask for more information.

There are no risks in taking part in this study. If problems arise during the study, I will be able to supply details of people that can help.

All information that is collected about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with anyone else. It will be stored in a way that protects your identity.

Please contact me if you have any queries about this.

Thank you sincerely for taking the time to read this document.

Muhammad Irfan

Postgraduate Researcher in Management

Appendix 4: Interview Guideline

Introduction:

Thanks, so much for taking the time to attend this interview today. My name is Muhammad Irfan, and I am a PhD student carrying out this research study. This meeting may last about 30 minutes to an hour.

- The aim of the interview is learning your views and how you reflect on few topics from your work experience at the organisation.
- Do you have any question before we proceed with the interview?

Confidentiality:

- Can you please return me the signed Consent Form?
- This interview will be recorded and then transcribed for analysis.
- Pseudonyms will be used to protect your anonymity and every effort will be made to keep your personal identity safe.
- You do not have to answer all questions. We can stop the interview at any stage. If you need to elaborate a question for understanding, feel free to let me know.

Ethical leadership:

Can you please share your understanding on ethical leadership in relation to your work at this organization?

1. Please tell me how you find the leadership in the context of facilitating ethics at work? [Further probing - are they people oriented, are they fair and do they advocate ethics?]SEP

2. How frequently do they engage or take suggestions from subordinates on various organisational matters?SEP

   [Further probing - Can you elaborate how flexible they are in involving subordinates when it comes to critical decision making or strategic matters? Do they delegate challenging responsibilities? How do you find their promises, and can they be trusted?]

Ethical work climate: Can you please share your understanding on ethical work climate?

3. Can you explain how ethical situations or behaviours are handled in the

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organisation? [SEP]

[Further probing - how ethical decisions are made, considering what is best for few or for everyone or for the organisation? Can you explain how cooperative colleagues are? What could be the driving force for such collaboration? (Personal values/ beliefs, due to certain polices and rules etc.)]

4. How flexible organisation is when it comes to adherence to policies and regulations?

Organisational justice: Can you please share your understanding on organisational justice?

5. Can you please tell me how fairly employees are treated in the organisation?

   [Further probing - in terms of let say compensation, workload, general treatment like respect or dignity.]

6. Is the outcome justified and ethical, given your performance or contribution?
7. How fair organisational processes are designed to award or decide a promotion? How transparent do you find such processes?

Organisational trust: Can you please share your understanding on organisational trust?

8. What makes you trust the fairness of organisational processes and categorise it justified?
9. What makes you trust your supervisor?
   [Further probing: role model, integrity, caring, protective, respectful etc.]

Questions around speak up measures:

10. How do you find the implementation of internal speak up measures policy and procedures? Is it transparent and efficient? Is there any room for improvement?
11. If you witness a wrongdoing, what factors could make you feel comfortable raising the concern? What would make you comfortable in raising the concern internally? With whom you would prefer to disclose the concern and why?

Appendix 5: Organisation's Achievements

The timeline below shows how the organisation evolved and progressed over a period of time.

1932 - "The first inflatable liferaft was launched, and which was used in World War II."

1940 - "Original floatation life preserver named, "Mae West" was issued by Beaufort and used during World War II."

1950 - "Beaufort designs and manufactures the world's first fast jet anti-g trousers.

1954 – "Beaufort subsequently introduces the world's first submarine escape suit."

1976 – "RFD Ltd produces the first welded liferaft as well as introducing the infant version of the latest adult lifejacket."

1979 – "RFD Ltd manufactures the world's first Marine Evacuation System (MES)."

1983 – "RFD New Zealand is established and shortly after, RFD Australia acquired."

1996 – "Eurovinil S.p.A. and RFD Beaufort Inc. (formerly Inflatable Survival Systems Inc.) were both acquired."

1999 – "RFD Ltd launch the first-generation Marin-Ark Marine Evacuation System (MES)."

2000 – "The Group was formed and acquired Lifeguard Equipment Ltd."

2001 – "Acquires rescue and fast boat specialists, DSB Deutsche Schlauchboot GmbH & Co KG; RFD Japan is also established."

2002 – "Acquires WH Brennan and Co. in Singapore."

2003 – "RFD and Beaufort merge to become RFD Beaufort Ltd."

2007 – "Acquired Survival-One Ltd and Shark Sports Ltd."

2010 – "Private Equity firm, Warburg Pincus, based in New York acquires *** Group Ltd. The Group goes on to acquire Seaweather Ltd. in the U.K. and Revere Supply Inc. in the USA."

2011 – "Acquires the marine division of Cosalt, including Crewsaver and Zodiac Commercial SOLAS Liferaft and MES business."

2012 – "Launches its 'Global Liferaft Hire Programme' at SMM 2012, offering customers highly competitive and flexible hire and servicing contracts, as an alternative to liferaft purchase. Over 7,000 out on hire with customers worldwide."

2013 – "Acquires Brude Safety AS, adding three Norwegian facilities as part of its expansion and growth plans into Scandinavia."

2015 – "Based in Toronto, Onex Corporation, one of the oldest and most successful private equity firms, acquires The Group from Warburg Pincus."

2016 – "Creates a market leader in safety and survival solutions by merging with Wilhelmsen Maritime Services AS Safety Business."

Appendix 6: List of Products and Services

The organisation offers a range of safety and survival products and solutions:

Categories of products and solutions				
Marine safety	**Offshore**	**Defence**	**Aviation**	**Industrial**
Marine Evacuation System	Offshore evacuation	Lifejackets	Lifejackets	Height safety
Liferafts	Liferafts	Liferafts	Liferafts	Lifting
Lifeboat and Rescue Boats	Personal lifesaving appliances	Immersion and survival suits	Immersion and survival suits	Tooling
Personal Lifesaving Appliances	Personal protection	Pilot flight equipment	Fixed Wing	Hydraulics
First Aid & Medical	First aid and medical	Submarine escape	Rotary Wing	
Emergency Communications	Emergency communication	Military boats	Coveralls	

Fire Extinction	Fire extinction	Pre-hospital care		
Fire Protection and Detection	Fire protection and detection	Inflatable systems		
Tracking and Navigation	Tracking and navigation	Sonics CBRN		
Transfer and Escapes	Turbine Evacuation	Aircrew Load Carriage		
Ropes	Transfer and Escape	Maritime Load Carriage		

Appendix 7: Initial Coding Grouped for all Transcripts and Documents

The initial coding produced a range of codes. The table below shows their description along with the number of files it is taken from as well as the number of times that code appeared to be discussed at different places. It is important to note the way these codes are grouped and later turned into salient themes. This is also discussed at the end of Chapter 3: Methods for reference. The emergence of themes and sub-themes are explained in Appendix 8 and the detailed discussion is available in Chapter 4: Findings.

Codes	Description	Files	References
Board	This term is widely used for communication (both internal and external) across the organisation	12	15
board meetings		4	5
communications board		1	1
daily board		1	2
daily board meetings		2	3
information boards		1	1
metric boards		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
notice boards		1	1
story board wall		1	1
Compliance	Compliance in the context of following internal rules and policies as well as regulatory requirements	5	14
always compliance team		1	2
certain compliance		1	1
compliance department		1	1
compliance issue		1	1
compliance officer		1	1
compliance policy		1	1
compliance procedure		1	1
compliance rules		1	1
compliance side		1	2

Codes	Description	Files	References
compliance training		1	1
ethics compliance thing		1	1
international compliance		1	1
Decision making	Decision making process in terms of operations, policy and employee behaviour	12	17
critical decision		3	4
critical decision making		8	12
decision making		1	1
decision		15	22
critical decision		3	4
critical decision making		8	12
decision making		1	1
decision quality		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
hard decision		1	1
joint decision		1	1
making decisions interns		1	1
right decisions		1	1
policy making		1	1
supportive		6	13
Ethics	Doing things right and advocating ethical conduct through role modelling	21	56
advocate ethics		5	5
ethical behaviour		4	4
ethical challenge		1	1
ethical issues		11	6
ethical problem		1	2
ethical situation		7	9
ethically training		7	10
ethically wise		10	8

Codes	Description	Files	References
ethics compliance thing		1	1
ethics point		1	1
ethics procedure		1	1
ethics terms		1	1
facilitating ethics		11	11
promoting ethics		13	16
Fair	Treating employees fairly and with respect	11	19
fair chance		1	1
fair employer		1	1
fair honour		1	1
fair share		2	2
fair system		1	1
fair treatment		4	4
fairly employees		2	2
fairly fair		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
fairly good		1	1
fairly strict		1	1
fairness point		1	1
Organisational Issues	Issues faced on a regular basis involving business operations and compliance	15	33
attendance issues		1	1
Easy access		3	7
behavioural issue		1	1
burning issues		2	2
certain issues		1	1
communication issues		1	1
compliance issue		1	1
equipment issues		1	1
ethical issues		1	2
issues whatsoever		1	1
lagging issues		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
major issue		1	1
minor issues		1	1
personal issue		1	1
quality issue		1	2
real issues		1	1
related issues		1	1
safety issues		2	3
serious issues		1	1
similar issue		1	1
small issues		1	1
specific issue		1	1
talent issues		1	1
technical issues		1	1
torqueing issue		1	1
training issue		1	2
wide issue		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
work issue		1	1
Team Leader	Role of team leader at the shop floors	9	14
leading hand		1	1
team leader		9	11
easy to get along		8	6
helping		7	7
Loyalty	Loyalty of employees with the employer	9	6
loyalty		9	6
Management	Perception of senior management in various organisational context	15	57
bad management		1	1
certain management		1	1
direct line manager		1	2
European performance management		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
respect		3	2
dignity		1	1
good manager		2	2
group sales manager		1	1
individual manager		1	1
line manager		7	9
management kind		1	1
management level		1	1
management point		1	1
management scale		1	1
management structure		2	2
management training program		1	1
manager director		2	2
managing people		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
middle management meeting		2	3
middle manager		3	3
production managers		1	1
project manager		1	1
quality management system		1	1
quality manager		1	1
regular people managers		1	1
senior management group		1	2
senior management meetings		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
senior management right		1	1
senior management team		3	8
supervisors managers		1	1
top management		2	2
training managers		1	1
upper management		1	1
word management		1	1
senior management team		3	8
senior management		7	14
Meeting	This is related to 'Board' meetings code discussed in the beginning of this appendix - communication and frequency of meetings	16	35

Codes	Description	Files	References
board meetings		4	5
communication meetings		1	1
daily board meetings		2	3
daily meeting		3	3
fortnightly team meeting		1	1
main meeting areas		1	1
meeting deadlines		1	1
middle management meeting		2	3
monthly meeting		1	1
monthly review meeting		1	1
morning meeting		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
multi review meeting		1	2
natural team meeting		1	1
operations meetings		1	1
operations production meeting		1	1
performance review meetings		1	1
positive meeting		1	1
score card meeting		1	2
senior management meetings		1	1
team meetings		1	1
weekly meetings		3	3

Codes	Description	Files	References
People focused	Prioritising people interest over business	11	29
allowing people		1	2
bad people		1	1
coach people		1	1
company people		1	1
developing people		1	1
different people		1	1
lovely people		1	1
managing people		1	1
nurture people		1	1
people day		1	1
people forum		1	2
people safety		1	1
people's opinions		10	9
quite people		1	1
reason people		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
regular people managers		1	1
rewarding people		1	1
sales prevention people		1	1
shop floor people		1	2
sometimes people		1	1
taking people		1	1
technical people		1	1
thought people		1	1
training people		1	1
treating people		1	1
usually people		1	1
Policy	Use and perception of policies	11	19
absence policy		1	1
whistleblowing policy		12	18

Codes	Description	Files	References
company policy		1	1
compliance policy		1	1
open door policy		5	5
policy making		1	1
promotion policy		1	1
workplace policy		1	1
Process	Use of different work-related processes	9	20
Whistleblowing process		9	10
case process		1	1
classical process		1	1
communication process		1	1
created process teams		1	2
critical process		1	1
lean process		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
organisational processes		1	1
problem-solving process		1	1
production processes		1	1
rigorous inspection process		1	2
robust processes		1	1
strict processes		1	1
training process		1	1
Promoting ethics		13	16
promoting ethics		13	16
Quality	Focus on quality in most of the organisational situations	9	23
came from quality		1	1
decision quality		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
good leadership qualities		1	3
quality defect		1	1
quality department		2	3
quality fault		1	1
quality inspectors		1	1
quality issue		1	2
quality management system		1	1
quality manager		1	1
quality product		1	1
quality record		1	1
quality requirements		1	1
quality seals		1	1
quality team		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
top quality products		1	1
whole quality system		1	2
senior management right		1	1
situation right		1	1
Role modelling	Focus on role modelling	9	15
definitely role modelling		1	2
fantastic role model		1	2
manufacturing engineering role		1	1
planning role		1	1
previous role		1	1
role model		3	4
caring		11	15

Codes	Description	Files	References
morality		6	9
role model perspective		1	1
sales director role		1	2
strategic role		1	1
understanding		6	9
Service stations	Service stations are important part of the business where the products are serviced. Majority of the service stations are outsourced to third parties.	10	24
average service		2	2
large service stations		1	1
service building		1	1
service desk		1	2
service engineers		1	1
service manuals		1	1
service network		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
services station advice		1	2
servicing side		1	1
servicing something		1	1
sixty service stations		1	2
large service stations		1	1
services station advice		1	2
Shop floor	Shop floor is the main production floor where the products are produced. Majority of the workforce is part of the shop floor. That's why they were referred frequently in most of the transcripts and documents.	13	28
factory floor		2	5
production floor		1	1
shop floor		7	11

Codes	Description	Files	References
shop floor guys		1	1
shop floor people		1	2
shop floor workers		1	3
shop floor workforce		1	2
Situation	Work situation covering ethical conduct as well other business necessities.	13	19
certain situations		1	1
courage		3	5
reporting		6	8
critical situation		1	1
different goal situation		1	1
difficult situations		1	1
ethical situation		7	9
hypothetical situation		2	2

Codes	Description	Files	References
improved situation		1	1
life situation		1	1
medical situation		1	1
situation right		1	1
Teamwork	Teamwork was used in several contexts including group of people working in different domains of the business, collaboration and communication. This is one of frequently used term in my qualitative data.	19	67
always compliance team		1	2
big team		1	1
created process teams		1	2
disciplinary team		1	1
engineering team		1	1
fantastic team		1	1
football team		1	1

Codes	Description	Files	References
fortnightly team meeting		1	1
functional teams		2	3
good team		1	1
great team		1	1
involving team members		2	2
legal teams		2	4
natural team meeting		1	1
purchasing team		1	1
quality team		1	1
sales team		1	3
senior management team		3	8
small team		2	2
structural team		1	1
team coordinator		3	4

Codes	Description	Files	References
team leader		9	11
team meetings		1	1
team members		7	7
team player		1	1
whole team		3	3
Training	Training is another widely used term by research participants in the context of ethics and compliance as well as usual business operations.	8	15
compliance training		1	1
development training		1	1
ethically training		1	1
management training program		1	1
training course		1	1
training issue		1	2

Codes	Description	Files	References
training managers		1	1
training metrics		1	1
training part		1	1
training people		1	1
training police officers		1	1
training process		1	1
training program		1	1
training scale		1	1
Whistleblowing channel	Whistleblowing or speak channel were used to identify the medium to report organisational wrongdoing	6	9
channel		6	9

Appendix 8: Emerging Themes

The table below shows the process of using initial codes, constantly comparing this to the literature, grouping of sub-themes and clustering them into major themes. Initially I kept all sub-themes separate but after researching the literature I reorganised and changed my approach to make more sense out of all emerging themes. This was helpful in many ways; first I was able to avoid using preconceived theories, second, I kept open and referred back to the literature frequently and read more literature along the way, third, clustered similar themes together which emerged throughout the process. Few of the key themes which emerged from my data resonate with the cited literature, and I find them salient and that's why they appear here. Themes are discussed in the Findings chapter (see Chapter 5) and their analysis and discussion is available in Chapter 6.

Theme	Sub-theme	Coding	Example of Data
Ethic centric workplace	- Ethical guidance	- Ethically wise - Promote ethic	*"'My boss would put you in the right direction, and if you're doing something wrong, he'll let you know. It's not as if you know you're left on your own, there's always help and guidance to help you through your job."*
	- Walk the talk	- Ethics training - Advocate ethics - Role modelling behaviour	*"Recently we have had training on ethics addressing what we can do, what we can't do and what we can accept, what might not be acceptable."* *"We are working in collaboration with our partner EthicsPoint to launch another training programme for our shop-floor employees in the coming years. This will help them understand the seriousness of our business, and importance of ethical conduct."* *"The language on modelling good behaviours, walk the talk, follow through on your commitments, do not promise what you cannot deliver, and be consistent with the team in everything you do was observed to be used frequently..."*
	- Problem solving	- Organizational issues - Ethical issue	*"A shift from blame culture to an inclusive approach to problem solving."*

Voice friendly culture	- Consistent communication	- Board meetings - Continuous Communication - Feedback - Morning meetings	*"We have board meetings every morning… We'd have bosses at our meeting and then any information or anything else we'd give feedback to our workers as such to see any issues. So, we are well communicated that way."* *"Continuous and consistent communication is sometimes challenged due to volume of other internal and external priorities causing frequent last-minute cancellation of meetings and touch points. But then there is a mandatory debrief with the leadership team before any order is delivered, and there we get a final chance to have a say about anything which might have went wrong"*
	- Open door policy	- Open door approach	*"Senior management was found to be helpful and available to provide quick advice and support."* *We encourage a culture of open and honest communication, to share concerns and promote integrity. All managers are responsible for maintaining an "open door" for their direct reports and any others who may wish to reach out to them... "*

	- Easy to approach	- Easy access - Available - Easy to get along	*"The senior management is here for more than 25 or 26 years, and what gives them popularity and such respect is that you can knock the door and go and speak to them and say I have got a problem, or I have got a question. I have worked in other companies where you don't get near the boss."*
	- Feedback-rich environment	- People opinion - People forum - Communication meetings - Encourage ideas	**"***If you had any ideas, I mean they would take them on board…"* *There are no visible barriers to stop anyone from sharing their feedback…"* *"Here they ask for feedback on almost everything, whether it is a failure or success – you get to learn how things can be improved next time."* *"In all of our meetings, we keep some time aside for 'Kudos and Bravos' to encourage good work. Our monthly meetings involve showcasing of work done by different teams. This does not end here, recognition at the department level occurs regularly. This is the nature of the work and also a desire to stay connected and be engaged. There are also group emails sharing the same with everyone at the factory."*

Work and emotional support	- Caring leadership	- Caring - Understanding	*"I was recently buying a property, he was a pillar of help and support… if I needed to meet my lawyer or you know any other banks whatever he was like "just go on you know sort yourself out and come, take your time…"* *"Each of my managers have fairly high emotional intelligence – they connect to their teams really well and build trust easily. They listen to them and offer help despite the fact that their plates are already full."*
	- People focused	- Supportive - Helping	*"If you go to someone with a problem, they will try to help they don't just pass it out and say, "oh just go see Joe up the stairs." Or yea where they say "oh what's the problem? How can I help?"* *"The leadership team is fostering a motivating, supportive and empowering workplace. They are transparent and respectful and give plenty of time to each team member."* *"We are enhancing ongoing support across the factory to ensure staff has a clear sense of purpose and feel supported in their work."*

	- Emotional support	- Loyalty - Family support - Recognition	*"We had a child, my wife went into intensive care after it, very ill in fact we didn't think she was going to make it. And he phoned me every day…with that kind of support, you build up loyalty!"* *"Acknowledging work of people who have done the work – some areas are giving employees the opportunity to present the work to larger audiences"*
Adherence to policies and procedures	- Rule-based work environment	- Rules - Specialized policies - Eager to change - Clarity of direction	*"There are rules… we've got three different sets of people all working with three different sets of rules. For example, look if you don't get a day off (for a time period) on the shop floor, you go and do a lottery and you could win a hundred pounds but that's only for the shop floor."* *We have organized our factory resources into units and teams that are aligned to support business priorities and are supported by special rules and policies, which makes it easy for everyone to follow."* *"Clarity of strategic vision and direction and being able to help shape that vision is what our senior leadership team advocates, and this connection can be seen in all of our policies. "*

	- Internal compliance	- Company policies - External regulations - Compliance	*"We are approved by a number of external bodies…we are in the life-saving business. So, to be quite honest with you, we are audited to death. We have a number of policies and procedures that are all aligned to fit our particular business needs or change in legislation."*
	- External compliance	- Local compliance - International compliance	*"Some of the big contracts that we have are military so again they're very much, they're very stringent on what they want and what they expect from the product and we have to sort of, we're very heavily audited and we have to ensure that we comply with everything."*
Perception of fair treatment	- Treating with respect	- Respect - Dignity - Recognize	*"I get a lot of respect, I get a lot of dignity…"* *"There is always time to talk about how to best recognise efforts of our team members."*
	- Inclusive decision making	- Merit - Equal treatment - Fairness	*"In terms of fairness when we were recruiting people, I don't make any difference between men or women or age profile… some of the rules are quite physically demanding so, you know, it would be very easy to just pick young fit men and just let them do it but it's not fair."* *"We follow fair and equitable hiring practices through normal recruitment channels. We hire with no discrimination, and our people are diverse."*

	- Fair leadership	- Fair policies - Training on fairness	*"I think they're fair. There was a lot of work done on our policies and procedures by a middle management team. I think they're very fair actually…"* *"I see a long-term focus on getting things right on the shop-floor. There are detailed instructions and workshops by the leadership team showing 'how to do it?' This demonstration by our own leaders is working well…"*
Perception of trust in the workplace	- Sense of trust on the organisation	- Trust on the organisation - Recognition	*My mom worked here for forty years. She was an inspector on the shop floor...so look like I'm going same direction, same way, hopefully I'll be here another ten years."* *"In all of our meetings, we keep some time aside for 'Kudos and Bravos' to encourage good work. Our monthly meetings involve showcasing of work done by different teams. This does not end here, recognition at the department level occurs regularly. This is the nature of the work and also a desire to stay connected and be engaged. There are also group emails sharing the same with everyone at the factory."*

	- Sense of trust among employees	- Trust on leadership - Trust on colleagues	*"It's a busy factory, but if somebody came to me and said, "I have too much to do", it's my responsibility as their manager to do something about that. Nobody should be under so much pressure that they feel they can't cope. It's also about having that relationship with your colleagues to understand that and take some of the pressure off…"* *"At team level, we both formally and informally show some flexibility in sharing capacity across different teams. This is to provide support to more urgent needs of other teams, as they are identified and discussed as part of our regular management team agenda."*
	Engagement	- Cooperation - Teamwork - Engagement	*"Here everyone knows everyone, and most people are working for years. So, there is a strong sense of teamwork and cooperation at every level…"* *"Our department has numerous engagement activities, and we are constantly working to keep them up. I think one of my biggest struggles is to keep our engagement at such a high level."*

Willingness to speak up	- Motivation to report wrongdoing	- Courage - Willingness - Values and reputation	*"I will approach the individual directly. Otherwise, I'll be happy to report. We are making lifesaver equipment, and you know things can't go wrong."* *"We are also working on motivating our people to do the right thing - there are some areas where we may need to think creatively around how best to develop this courageous behaviour."* *"We are proud of our Values and reputation for integrity…Your concerns or questions about possible wrongdoing or activities that put our Company's reputation at risk, are important to us. And it is always better to raise concerns, request guidance, or ask question clearly, rather than let a situation go worse…"*
	- Ownership to voice concerns	- Motivation - Morality - Values	*"This is our company, and this is our name getting out there. So, I wouldn't make anybody disrespect who puts bread and butter on their table, so you can't do that. You don't cut-off a hand that feeds you…"* *"Is what I am doing, or being asked to do, legal, fair, ethical and honest? How will I feel about myself afterwards if I do it? If I see anything or overhear anything that is immoral, unjust, unethical or fraudulent, how will I feel if I do nothing about it?"*

	- Speak up policy - Speak up channels	- Report to manager - Report to compliance - Policy - Whistleblowing channel - *Hotline*	*"There is a whistleblowing policy and a number to phone through to. There is also a procedure that anything you're concerned about you take it to your compliance officer."* *"I'll obviously report it to the manager or in our daily board meeting or quality supervisor"* *"I will pass the information on to our Compliance team, so that they can look into this and take action. There is also a hotline for more serious stuff…"* *"Where you wish to lodge a concern, raise a question, ask for guidance or provide feedback, suggestions or stories, you are encouraged to speak to your supervisor, HR or Legal and Compliance. However, if you are unable to do so or you prefer to make your report in confidence or on an anonymous basis, you are invited to use this *** Hotline, which is hosted by a third-party hotline provider, EthicsPoint. The Hotline is available to you every day, including weekends and holidays, and at any time of the day or night."*