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The relationship between person-organization fit, attribution theory, and psychological contract violations within organizational settings

Sarah Elizabeth Phillips

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT,
ATtribution THEORY, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT
VIOLATIONS WITHIN ORGANIZATIONAL SETTINGS

A Thesis
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Psychology:
Industrial/Organizational

by
Sarah Elizabeth Phillips
June 2003
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Date 6/2/03
ABSTRACT

This study makes a unique attempt at bridging the theory between the constructs of person-organization (P-O) fit and psychological contract violations, through attribution theory. Specifically, this study examines P-O fit’s relationship to the decisions employees make at the causal dimension level (locus of causality, controllability) during the attribution process. Furthermore, it examines whether the pattern of decisions made during the attribution process are capable of predicting an employee’s final attribution regarding a psychological contract violation (the organization’s fault, not the organization’s fault).

One hundred and forty-four participants responded to measures of P-O fit, causal dimensions, final attributions, and negative affectivity. Vignettes were used to induce the feelings associated with psychological contract violations. Results support the theoretical evidence linking these two constructs. A positive relationship was found between P-O fit and the decisions employees made at the causal dimension level regarding perceived psychological contract violations. Furthermore, support was found for the notion that the decisions employees make at the causal level during the attribution
process contributes to the final attribution made about the violation. These findings contribute to a greater understanding of P-O fit's relationship to the decisions employees make at the causal dimension level, as well as, contribute to a greater understanding of psychological contract violations. Future research and limitations to the study are addressed.
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How do I put into words the overwhelming feeling of gratefulness I experience when reflecting upon this two-year journey? I have been so blessed to have had so many special people, the rarest and truest, enrich my life. Certainly, this effort would not have been made possible without them.

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scholarly endeavors has never faltered. You have been my strength, and my inspiration. I love you!
DEDICATION

To my grandparents

Paul and Anita Robbins
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

Change is inherent within all organizations as the business environment becomes more dynamic from pressures such as globalization, competition, demographics and economics. The past two decades have illustrated the stresses of organizational growth and survival. These changes have forced employees to perform under altered conditions and situations that were not initially agreed upon in the employment agreement (Rousseau, 1995). These initial employment agreements are the premises from which psychological contracts are created. Psychological contracts consist of an individual’s perception and belief about reciprocal obligations between the individual and his or her employer (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Robinson, 1996; Rousseau, 1989, 1995). Changes in the employment relationship can be perceived by the employee as a failure by the organization to provide what was agreed upon in the initial employment relationship. In such cases, there is potential for the employee to view employment changes as a violation of their psychological contract.

Recently, in the midst of continuous organizational change, it has become impossible for organizations to
clearly state the exact conditions of employment upfront to their employees (Rousseau, 1995). Henceforth, organizations have been forced to modify psychological contracts with their employees, setting the stage for psychological contract violations (Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, & Bolino, 2002). Previous research (e.g., Robinson & Morrison, 1995; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994) has suggested that violations of the psychological contract are negatively related to outcomes such as extra-role behaviors (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior), job satisfaction, trust, and attrition rates. The relationships between psychological contract violations and behaviors are of particular importance, as the turbulent business environment has made organizations increasingly dependent on behaviors that contribute to gaining a competitive edge (Wagner & Rush, 2000). In addition, previous theoretical work (e.g., Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1995; Turnley & Feldman, 1999) and the empirical work of Lester et al. (2002) suggests that the attributions employees make as to why a psychological contract violation has occurred may play a critical role in determining how employees will respond to receiving less than promised.
The present study explicitly looks at how employees attribute psychological contract violations. Specifically, how do the decisions employees make during the attribution process affect how they perceive changes to their psychological contracts? In addition, what role does person-organization (P-O) fit play in this decision-making process?
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

Psychological Contracts

What is the Psychological Contract?

Psychological contracts have been conceptualized in numerous ways over the past forty years (e.g., Rousseau, 1995; Schein, 1978) with definitions including various descriptors such as perceptions, expectations, beliefs, promises and obligations (Anderson & Schalk, 1998). However, recent research (e.g., Morrison & Rousseau, 1997; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1989, 1995, 2001) has generally focused on Rousseau’s definition, conceptualizing the psychological contract as an individual’s perception and belief about reciprocal obligations between the individual and his or her employer. Rousseau’s definition of the psychological contract sets the boundaries of the construct to that of the employee’s belief about the mutual exchange relationship, “...the psychological contract is made up of the individual’s perceptions regarding what he/she has been promised by the organization (e.g., competitive wages, advancement opportunities, job security) and what he/she is expected to give the organization in return
(e.g., a fair's day work, loyalty)” (Lester et al., 2002, p. 40). Specifically, psychological contracts consist of an individual’s perceptions and beliefs about reciprocal obligations between the individual and his or her employer (Morrison & Rousseau, 1997; Rousseau, 1989, 1995, 2001). The formation of psychological contracts allows individuals to weigh their obligations against the obligations of the organization, and to adjust their behaviors accordingly. Perceptual changes to psychological contracts may or may not lead to behaviors aimed at negatively targeting the organization and its current state. It is this delicate balance between the perceptions of obligations, coupled with the organization’s dependency on various behaviors (e.g., extra-role behaviors) that make the process of how employees attribute alterations to psychological contracts important to study within organizational settings.

The employment relationship is complex; therefore, not all aspects of an employment relationship can be addressed or made explicit in formal, written contracts. As a result, the literature suggests that individuals create psychological contracts in an attempt to reduce feelings of insecurity (Rousseau, 1995). Psychological contracts are multidimensional, subjective, unique to
every individual, and give employees a feeling of control and influence over what happens in the organization (Anderson & Schalk, 1999). A qualitative approach by Robinson and Rousseau (1994) revealed common types of psychological contract violations to include: training and development, compensation, promotion, nature of the job, job security, feedback, responsibility, and change of management. Other violations were illustrated with employee comments such as, "[My] employer promised I would be working on venture capital projects. I was mainly writing speeches for the CEO" (p. 116), "[I did] not receive performance reviews as promised," and "I was promised more knowledge and control over my future" (p. 116). For example, an absence of training resulted in an employee stating, "Sales training was promised as an integral part of marketing training. It never materialized" (p. 116).

If employees perceive a discrepancy in the promises made by the organization and the actual fulfillment of those promises, they may adjust their behavior in accordance to what they perceive as being fair; hence influencing their overall contribute to the organization. This perceived discrepancy between what was promised and
what employees perceive as receiving is regarded as a psychological contraction violation (Rousseau, 1995).

Psychological Contract Violation

Rousseau (1995) states that, "In the strictest sense, violation is a failure to comply with the terms of a contract" (p. 112). As such, psychological contract violations appear to be quite common. Robinson and Rousseau (1994) conducted a longitudinal study of M.B.A. alumni, reporting that over half of the participants reported a psychological contract violation within the first two years of the employment relationship.

When individuals experience a discrepancy between the promises made by the organization and the actual fulfillment of those promises, there is potential for the perceived violation to have serious organizational consequences (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). "Broken promises produce anger and erode trust in the relationship and thus, are expected to have more significant repercussions than unmet expectations" (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994, p. 247). Research has shown that severe violations to psychological contracts have serious consequences, which have been shown to include decreased trust and job satisfaction (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994), high turnover
(Robinson & Rousseau, 1994), and decreased organizational citizenship behaviors (Robinson & Morrison, 1995).

In the literature, psychological contract violations are referred to as commonplace in today’s organizations (e.g., Morison & Robbins, 1997; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). However, as prevalent as psychological contract violations are, not all are fatal to the employment relationship, “Although potentially damaging to reputations, careers, and relationships, violations also appear to be both frequent and survivable” (Rousseau, 1995, p. 111). Whether a violation is interpreted as an adverse event may be a result of how employees attribute the causality of the perceived violation.

Psychological Contract Violation Attributions

Utilizing Rousseau’s theoretical framework, prior research on psychological contract violations (e.g., Morrison & Rousseau, 1997; Rousseau, 1995; Turnely & Feildman, 1999) have only discussed the attributions employees make in terms of the three categories proposed by Rousseau. According to Rousseau’s framework, causality of the violation is attributed to one of three categories: reneging, inadvertent or disruption. Reneging is always perceived as being the organization’s fault, whereas inadvertent and disruption attributions are not perceived
as being the organization’s fault. These three categories of attributions, as well as specific examples of such violations, are given below.

An inadvertent attribution is said occur when individuals perceive that the organization is capable and willing to uphold their end of the bargain; however, divergent interpretations, or a misunderstanding, leads the organization to act in a manner that is at odds with employee’s expectations (Rousseau, 1995). Given that contracts are continuously created and maintained, it can be assumed that employees frequently make accommodations for inadvertent violations (Rousseau, 1995). Employees decide that the cause of the violation was due to something within the organization; however, as the violation was perceived as a misunderstanding, employees may dismiss or rationalize the cause of the outcome. For example, an employee who is passed over for a promotion may rationalize that they will get the promotion the next time (Rousseau, 1995). Violations that fall within the inadvertent category are not interpreted to be intentional, rather due to a misunderstanding. Hence, they are perceived as not being the organization’s fault.

The second category refers to disruption. Violations attributed to disruption are interpreted as being beyond
the organization’s control. This includes any circumstance that makes it impossible for the organization to fulfill its end of the contract, despite the fact that the organization is willing to uphold the agreement. For example, a budget cut which is passed in a publicly funded organization and results in a reduction of employee benefits would be considered beyond control of the organization; therefore the reduction in employee benefits would be attributed to disruption.

Finally, the third category refers to reneging. Violations attributed to reneging are perceived very differently from inadvertent or disruption attributions. Attributions made towards reneging are consistently perceived as being the organization’s fault. A reneging attribution is made when a party, otherwise capable of upholding an agreement, however for reasons of its own refuses to honor the contract. A reneging attribution is always perceived as being internal to the organization. For example, an organization promises a specific type of training to an individual and later, for no apparent reason, fails to allow the individual to attend. A violation interpreted as such would be attributed to reneging, as the employee would perceive the organization
as able to follow through with what was promised, however was unwilling to do so.

These theoretical categories have enabled researchers to examine potential explanations of psychological contract violations (e.g., Lester et al, 2002). This approach, however, is limited. It is deficient in the ability to understand the underlying decision processes at work that precede the final attribution decision made about the psychological contract violation. Henceforth, the question remains, "Why are some alterations to the psychological contract perceived as actual violation of the employment relationship and are interpreted as being the organization's fault (reneging), resulting in negative behavioral outcomes (decreased organizational commitment, extra-role behavior, job satisfaction, etc.), while other violations are not perceived as being the organization's fault (disruption or inadvertent), and have not been linked to potentially adverse behavioral outcomes?" This question may be partially answered by examining the social psychology literature on attribution theory.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory has been one of the most researched theories in psychology (Heider, 1958; Kelly,
1967). Although attribution theory has its root in social psychology, the conceptual approach of attribution theory has been incorporated into virtually all aspects of psychology (Weiner, 1995). Attribution theory addresses how individuals make sense of the world around them. The process of forming an attribution includes retrospectively linking events that have taken place in the social world to plausible causes (Weary & Harvey, 1981). Forming these attributions, or causal explanations, enables individuals to attain control over the external world by foreseeing consequences of events, which in turn guides future behaviors. Understanding situational causes for various behaviors and events help individuals understand and predict situations in their social world (Lee, Hallahan, & Herzog, 1996). The cognitive process of forming attributions and behaving accordingly is inherent within the daily lives of individuals. Therefore, the attribution process can be logically extended and applied to the dynamic realm of organizational settings.

In the absence of one solidified attribution theory, there are many differing perspectives (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Heider (1958) is known as the originator of attributional thinking (Weiner, 1986), writing about the dyadic relationship, which made the fundamental
distinction among causes of events between the person-versus-environment. "In common sense psychology, the result of an action is felt to depend on two sets of conditions, namely factors within the person and factors within the environment" (Weiner, 1986, p. 82). Heider's basic premise was that people have an innate need to understand and predict their environments, henceforth developing causal explanations and expectations for all events. Weiner (1986) added to the theory by taking a slightly different perspective, lending a self-attribution theory of achievement motivation that is concerned with how individuals explain their success and failures. Furthermore, Kelley's (1967) ANOVA model focused on how bystanders assign responsibility to the outcomes of others (Martinko, 1995).

Within the numerous perspectives of attribution theory found in the literature, two very different approaches have developed. Some researchers have taken the trait approach to understanding attribution theory, while others have taken a strong situation approach. Still there are many who defend the position that both the trait and situational approaches have their merit, and contribute to our understanding of the attribution process depending on contextual variables.
Trait theorist (e.g., Peterson) claim individuals are predisposed to making certain types of attributions, and that this tendency is relatively stable across a myriad of situations. This attribution style is thought by some to be a personality characteristic (e.g., Abramson, Seligman, & Teasdale, 1978). The notion of an "Attributional Style" was first introduced by Abramson, Seligman, and Teasdale (1978) who postulated that individuals with a "depressive attributional style" tend to view the occurrence of adverse events as internal, stable, and global across other aspects of life. "Attributional Style" was later explored by others (e.g., Metalsky, Abramson, Seligman, Semmel, & Peterson, 1982; Peterson, Semmel, Van Baeyer, Abramson, Metalsky, & Seligman, 1982), and the Attributional Styles Questionnaire (ASQ) was developed by Peterson et al. (1982). Later research supported the notion that power to predict behavior is dependant upon both the specificity and the dimensions of the particular attributes that are being examined (Furnham, Sadka, & Brewin, 1992).

Others have proposed that the attribution process is not an inherent trait, but is rather situation specific (e.g., Weiner). This approach proposes that individuals cognitively examine numerous dimensions (e.g., stability,
controllability, locus of causality) regarding a given situation when making attributions about the cause of events within their environments. Specifically, it is the combination of numerous decisions on several relevant dimensions that lead individuals to make an attribution. Weiner’s (1979) attribution theory takes a situational approach, and has received much support in organizational settings (e.g., Martinko, 1995; Schaufeli, 1998), specifically in assessing an individuals’ perceived cause for decisions or outcomes (Ployhart & Ryan, 1997). Others have supported Weiner’s notions (e.g., Seligman) that individuals make specific attributions across a number of different dimensions.

Wiener (1979) proposed that there are infinite lists of possible explanations for all situations, and that all perceived causes can be categorized along three dimensions: locus of causality, degree of stability, and degree of controllability. Locus of causality refers to whether or not the “cause” of an outcome is perceived to be located within the organization or located externally to the organization. Stability refers to the degree to which an individual perceives the “cause” as changing over time. Stable “causes” do not change over time, and therefore the “cause” of the event is perceived as
consistently occurring within that given context. This is different for unstable "causes" which are not perceived as occurring consistently over time; rather, the individual does not identify a consistent pattern and perceives the "cause" to be something erratic. Controllability refers to whether the "cause" is within the organization’s control or is perceived as out of the influence of the organization’s control. Research suggests that individuals will search for causal ascription when the outcome is negative, unexpected or important, and will have a positive or negative reaction depending upon the attribution made (Kluger & Rothstein, 1993). Categorizing causal perceptions along these dimensions aid in the pursuit of cognitive mastery.

Applying attribution theory to organizational settings in an attempt to explore the role attributions play when alterations to psychological contracts occur, forces us to decide between the situational and trait approach. As the trait approach may lend explanation to a certain amount of variance in an individual’s personality (Henry & Campbell, 1995), the situational approach is deemed more appropriate for organizational settings, as organizational dynamics and endless situational variables may contribute more so to how an individual perceives an
alteration to their psychological contract, than what an individual's dispositional attribution style contributes. In applying this situational approach, it is reasonable to assume that people will be influenced by various occupational situations. As such, the theory lends itself well to phenomena within organizational settings.

Lester et al. (2002) examined supervisor and subordinate attribution outcomes when assessing how attributions about psychological contract violations are made. However, to better understand the causal explanations employees make, it is necessary to research the role causal dimensions play in the decision-making process about psychological contract violation attributions. Causal explanations are the actual attributions made by an individual (e.g., reneging, disruption, inadvertent), whereas causal dimensions are the actual structure of the decisions being made (e.g., locus of causality, stability, controllability). Although studies (e.g., Lester et al.) of specific causal explanations are interesting, this approach is greatly deficient in the ability to uncover causal dimensions. In order for research to advance theory, similarities and differences between causal explanations within the parameters of psychological contract violations need to be
identified. An examination of the causal structure of the decision making process, particularly examining the causal dimensions, would contribute to advancing this theory by transcending to a deeper level that has not yet been published to date within the literature.

In an attempt to transcend and explore a deeper level of the attribution processes, it is useful to probe further within the boundaries of attribution theory to the work of Weiner who provides a means of examining causal dimensions. Specifically, Weiner's causal dimensions of causality, stability, and controllability can be employed to tap into the cognitive processes of how individuals make decisions about specific attributions. This exploration at the causal dimension level will enable the examination of how employees attribute specific psychological contract violations in more depth than that of the current qualitative causal explanations that has been examined in the literature to date.

Heider's (1958) "naïve analysis of action" model states that attributions about specific causalities are influenced by both the subjective needs and wishes of the individual, as well as objective evidence at hand. Furthermore, literature on success and failure has shown
that generally, internal attributions are made when individuals succeed, and external attributions are made when individuals fail (Beckman, 1970; Schopler & Layton, 1972). Using this logic within organizational settings, we can equate the nature of a violation, receiving less than expected, to an organization failing. Therefore, we can expect that when an employee experiences a contract violation, by receiving less than expected, they will make a causal attribution about the organization's failure.

In light of attribution theory, Rousseau's theoretical framework and the subject nature of psychological contracts, it is reasonable to hypothesize that the final attribution employees make about how they perceive the causality of a contract violation will depend on the decisions they make at the causal dimension level during the attribution process. Employees who attribute the violation cause to be internal to the organization, controllable and stable will perceive the cause of the violation to stem from the organization, resulting in the belief that the violation was indeed the organization's fault. In contrast, employees who perceive the cause of the violation to be external to the organization, uncontrollable, and unstable, will perceive the cause of
the violation as being beyond the control of the organization.

Although these relationships between the causal structure of the dimensions and the casual explanations are believed to exist, there are a myriad of organizational factors that would be contributing to the decisions employees make about the attribution process, leading to a final attributional outcome. As research has indicated differences within the organizational hierarchy (Lester et al., 2002), it is appropriate to examine the literature on P-O fit, in an attempt to explain the differences in causal explanations that are made.

**Person-Organization Fit**

P-O fit has been defined as the compatibility between an employee and the organization in which he/she works (Kristof, 1996). Over the past two decades, there have been multiple ways of conceptualizing P-O fit as its emergence has sparked increased interest in both applied and academic settings (Kristof, 1996). Regardless of the numerous conceptualizations of P-O fit, research has directly linked the construct to important behavioral outcomes within organizations, such as extra-role behavior, turnover, intentions to quit, job satisfaction, and stress (e.g., Brez & Judge, 1994; Lovelace & Rosen,
1996; O'Reilly, Chatman, & Caldwell, 1991). Specifically, O'Reilly et al. have shown that P-O fit predicts organizational commitment and job satisfaction a year after fit was measured, and also predicts turnover two years after fit was measured. In addition, Vancouver and Schmitt (1991) supported the notion that goal congruence is positively related to job satisfaction and commitment, and is negatively related to intentions to quit. Moreover, Lovelace and Rosen (1996) reported a poor perception of P-O fit to be associated with job dissatisfaction, intentions to leave, and increased levels of stress.

The multiple conceptualizations and/or operationalizations of P-O fit can make research confusing and misleading (Rodgers, 2000). There are endless ways in which individuals might "fit" with an organization (Kristof, 1996). The mere existence of the myriad of ways in which an individual can achieve "fit" has left the field void of a conceptually agreed upon definition (Adkins, Russell, & Werbal, 1994).

Kristof (1996) identified four categories in which P-O fit has often been conceptualized in the literature including, needs/supply fit, value congruence, goal congruence, and personality/climate congruence. Specifically, needs/supply fit occurs when both the
employees and organization's needs are being met with what the other can supply. Value congruence occurs when the employee and organization hold the same values, for example they both might value the notion of a learning organization. Goal congruence occurs when the employee and the organization share the same goals. Finally, personality/climate congruence occurs when there is a match between the organizational climate and the employee personality. Value congruence and needs/supply fit are discussed below, as they are the most appropriate definitions in discussing the link between P-O fit, attribution theory and psychological contract violations.

Value Congruence

Most frequently the literature has employed value congruence between the individual and organization as a way to conceptualize P-O fit (Adkins, Russell, & Werbel, 1994; Cable & Judge, 1996; Chatman, 1991; Posner, 1992). In addition, research has often conceptualized value congruence and person-culture fit as interchangeable (Kristof, 1996; O'Reilly et al., 1991). The literature suggests that an individual's values, as well as the values of the organization are fundamental to the core of one's identity; therefore the values are deemed relatively stable (Chatman, 1991). This congruence between the values
of an individual and the organization is an essential component of P-O fit. Henceforth, value congruence may be critical to understanding why many psychological contract violations, however prevalent, do not lead to negative behavioral outcomes. Alternatively, a lack of value congruence might indeed lead individuals to perceive changes to their psychological contracts as threatening. In turn, this may result in negative behavioral outcome within the organization. If an employee perceives low value congruence, he/she may be more inclined to attribute psychological contract violations internally, as the organization’s fault, and would adjust their behavior accordingly. The discrepancy between individual’s values and the organization’s values may result in an increased chance that the psychological contract violations would be attributed internally to the fault of the organization. However, if an organization and an employee share similar values, then it is reasonable to assume, given their value congruence, that there may be less of a chance for the violation to be perceived negatively, internal to the organization. Moreover, the greater the discrepancy between an employee and organization’s values, the greater chance for psychological contract violations to be perceived as reneging.
Needs/Supply Fit

The needs/supply fit perspective exists under the assumption that both parties' needs are being met as a result of what the other party is supplying to the relationship. In the context of how one attributes a psychological contract violation, this perspective implies that if the needs of the employee are being satisfied, then changes to the psychological contract may be attributed external to the organization (inadvertent or disruption), and therefore may not have the consequence of negative behavioral outcomes as they are perceiving the change of their contract as not being the organization's fault. However, if this symbiotic relationship did not exist, individuals may be more inclined to attribute the source of the contract violation internally to the organization (reneging). In contrast, if an individual's needs are being met by the organization, the individual may be more tolerant or less sensitive to changes that occur to their psychological contract. This would lead to the individual making the final attribution decision that the organization's was not at fault (inadvertent or disruption), and might potentially avoid intentional behavioral consequences that would negatively impact the organization's current and future states.
Links between Person-Organization Fit, Attribution Theory and Psychological Contract Violations

Implicit in the literature on P-O fit and person-situation interactions is the logic that attributions influence the decisions individuals make within the workplace, resulting in various organizational outcomes, such as increased performance and extra-role behaviors (e.g., Diener, Larsen, & Emmons, 1984; O’Reilly et al., 1991). Both share the underlying premise: when there is person/environment compatibility, negative outcomes will be minimized. From an interactional psychology perspective, both the individual and situation influence an employee’s response to a specific situation, “In this regard, aspects of individual, such as values and expectations, interact with facets of situations, such as incentives systems and norms, to affect the individuals’ attitudinal and behavioral responses” (O’Reilly et al, 1991 p. 487-488). This link between P-O fit and behavioral outcomes can be indirectly related to the attributions employees make towards the endless list of events that happen within organizations on a daily basis. The degree to which an employee’s values are similar to the values of the organization’s will increase the tendency for the employee to attribute the violation to external causes,
beyond the organization’s control. The degree to which the employee’s values are incongruent with the organization’s value, the tendency for employees to make internal attributions will increase.

In today’s competitive business environment, P-O fit has become essential in maintaining a flexible and committed workforce capable of adapting to organizational changes (Bowen, Ledford, & Nathan, 1991; Cable & Parson, 2001; Kristoff, 1996). As such, the concept of P-O fit might provide a useful context in which we begin to further understand the attribution process; specifically, the decisions individuals make at the causal dimension level regarding prevalent alterations to their psychological contracts.

Hypotheses

Based on the collection of literature presented above, this study proposes two hypotheses. First, it will examine the relationship between P-O fit and the pattern of decisions individuals make when deciding how to attribute the cause of a psychological contract violation. The pattern of decisions made during the attribution process is particularly important to examine, as research to date has solely focused on categorical attribution
outcomes. The actual decisions that individuals are believed to make on various causal dimensions when attempting to make sense of a contract violation has yet to be examined within the literature. Moreover, literature on P-O fit supports the notion that individuals with higher levels of P-O fit may be more tolerant of alterations to their psychological contracts; therefore they may rationalize causal explanations as a result of value congruence with the organization. Contrary, individuals with low P-O fit, hence low value congruence, may be inclined to attribute the cause of the violation to the organization’s fault.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a relationship between P-O fit and the decisions employees make on the Causal Dimension Scale (locus of causality, controllability, stability).

Hypothesis 1a: P-O fit will be positively related to external locus of causality.

Hypothesis 1b: P-O fit will be positively related to controllability.

Hypothesis 1c: P-O fit will be positively related to stability.

Second, this study will examine if the decisions individuals make on the Causal Dimension Scale Revised
(locus of causality, controllability and stability) will predict the final attribution outcome individuals make (organization's fault, not the organization's fault) when attributing psychological contract violations.

**Hypothesis 2:** Individual's scores on the dimensions of locus of causality, controllability, and stability, together will predict individual's final attribution outcome (organization's fault, not the organization's fault) for perceived psychological contract violations.
CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Participants

This research utilized a total of 157 employees; 63.7% were female and 36.3% were male. Participant ages ranged from 20 to 59, with a mean age of 40 years. The ethnic composition of the sample included whites (88.5%), African Americans (2.5%), Hispanic Latinos (2.5%), American Latinos (1.3%), Asians (1.3%), and other ethnic backgrounds (3.8%). The majority of participants held a bachelor's degree (42.7%), followed by master's degree (19.7%), some college (16.6%), high school (11.5%), associate's degree (7.6%), and doctoral degree (1.9%). Participants were employed throughout numerous organizations across the United States, including California, Oregon, Idaho, Maryland, Virginia, Maine, New Hampshire, District of Columbia, and Arizona. The types of organizations participants worked for included, law firms, law enforcement, educational institution, research & development, medical, retail, transportation, financial, hospitality, communications & media, computer technology, county government, state government, federal government, etc. Organizational size also varied, (8.3%) small
organization with less than 30 employees, (7.6%) medium organization with 30-99 employees, (38.2%) large organization with 100-499 employees, and the majority of participants (45.9%) extra-large organization with 500+ employees. Department size varied, with a mean department size of 64 employees. Participants worked an average of 43 hours a week, and were employed within their organization for an average of 9 years and 2 months.

Measures

Person-Organization Fit

Participant’s P-O fit was assessed with a modified version of O’Reilly’s et al. (1991) Organizational Culture Profile (OCP). The modified P-O fit measure (Curry, 2001) consisted of fourteen items that use a seven point Likert-response scale with the following anchors: not at all (1), very small degree (2), small degree (3), moderate degree (4), great degree (5), very great degree (6), completely (7). The directions informed participants to carefully read each item and circle the appropriate number that represented their degree of agreement for each item. Sample questions include, “To what degree do your values of being achievement oriented match your organization’s value of being achievement oriented?,” “To what degree do
your values of being fair match your organization's value of being fair?,” and "To what degree do your values of opportunities for professional growth match your organization’s values of opportunities for professional growth?"

P-O fit was calculated by summing all items. Higher numbers indicated a greater degree of P-O fit. The internal reliability of this scale was \( \alpha = .89 \) (see Appendix B).

Psychological Contract Violation Vignettes

As it was not possible to induce or control for the same type of psychological contract violation in every organization, this study employed the use of two vignettes extracted from the qualitative work of Robinson and Rousseau (1994). Vignette one read, "When you began working for the organization, specific compensation benefits were promised to you. You did not receive the compensation you were promised." Vignette two read, "You were promised training that you felt was essential to your career development and job advancement opportunities. The training was later denied to you."

Participants were informed that there are endless causes for events that occur within the workplace. Some events the organization has control over, whereas other
events are beyond the organization's control. Participants were asked to think about the organization they work for and were asked to imagine that the event had just happened to them at their current place of employment, "If this event were to happen to you, what would have caused the event to happen?"

This process was designed with the end goal of inducing feelings of psychological contract violations. The vignettes were intentionally vague for two reasons. First, participants needed to be provided with as little information as possible about the event in order to transfer their organization's norms and behaviors to the situations described. Second, it was essential that the vignettes allowed the participants to form judgments about what caused the event, without creating a bias. Therefore, the vignettes forced participants to reflect upon their knowledge of the organization and existing beliefs about how the organization generally behaves, prior to making a series of attribution decisions (see Appendix C & D). 

Causal Dimension Scale Revised

The Causal Dimension Scale Revised (CDSII), developed by McAuley, Duncan, and Russell (1992), is a measure that captures how individuals' perceive causes of events. The CDSII quantifies attribution decisions along three causal
dimensions: locus of causality, controllability, and stability.

The controllability dimension comprised two separate dimensions: personal control and external control. The nature of the controllability dimension was to capture the decisions about controllability in terms of personal and external control. Given that it was beyond the scope of the study to examine any personal control that might play into the situation, it was necessary to modify the CDSII to be congruent with the present study's definition of controllability, as control that was either internal or external to the organization. Internal control referred to something the organization had control over, whereas external control referred to something that was out of the organization's control. The anchors of the CDSII were therefore changed to make it clear that a decision should be made about whether the cause of the event was a result of the organization's actions/inactions, or an event that was beyond the organization's control. An example of an original question required participants to respond to, "Is the cause": "manageable by you" or "not manageable by you." The modified version of the CDSII included changes such as, "Is the cause something that is manageable by the organization" or "Is the cause something that is not
manageable by the organization," and "Is the cause of the event something over which your organization does not have control" or "Is the cause of the event something over which your organization has control."

The modified CDSII was a paper-and-pencil test that allowed for the rating of causal attribution decisions on four dimensions: locus of causality, external control, internal control, and stability. The scale comprised twelve items, for which participants were instructed to code their responses along a series of nine-point semantic differential scales. The instructions read, "Think about your current job and the organization you work for. Imagine that the vignette printed above has just happened to you at your current place of employment. If this event were to happen to you at work, would you feel that the organization was at fault, or would it have been out of the organization’s control?" A sample of anchors included, "Is the source of the event inside of the organization" or "Is the source of the event outside of the organization," "Is the cause of the event unchangeable" or "Is the cause of the event changeable," "Is the cause of the event due to something about the organization" or "Is the cause of the event due to something other than the organization."
The internal reliabilities for the dimensions were as following, locus of causality (items 1, 6, 9) $\alpha = .83$; external control (items 5, 8, 12) $\alpha = .89$; internal control (items 2, 4, 10) $\alpha = .88$; and stability (items 3, 7, 11) $\alpha = .47$. For the analyses included in this study, only external control was used to assess controllability, as there was overlap in the definitions of the controllability dimensions (internal/external). In addition, the stability dimension was deemed unreliable and was therefore dropped from all analyses. This decision was made, as its inclusion would only introduce additional measurement error.

The scores for each dimension were calculated separately by summing all three items. High scores indicated decisions that were perceived as external, unstable, or uncontrollable (see Appendix C & D).

**Final Attribution Measure**

The final attribution measure asked participants to indicate their overall feelings about the vignettes. Participants were instructed to mark the box that best represented how they felt about the event described to them which were consistent with Rousseau's three categories of attribution outcomes (reneging, disruption, inadvertent). The options included, "The organization WAS
at fault: The organization was able to change the outcome but was unwilling" (reneging), "The organization was NOT at fault: The organization was willing to change the outcome but was unable to for reasons beyond the organization’s control" (disruption), and "The organization WAS at fault: However, the event was due to a MISUNDERSTANDING: The organization was able to change the outcome and willing to change the outcome" (inadvertent).

In order to test the second hypothesis, it was necessary to dichotomize the final attribution outcome categories explained above. Therefore, the reneging choice was retained to represent the perception of "the organization’s fault." The categories of inadvertent and disruption were combined to represent "not the organization’s fault" (see Appendix E).

Positive Affectivity, Negative Affectivity Scale

The literature suggests that P-O fit may be influenced by personality variables. To explore the effect personality might have on attribution decisions, we added the PANAS to assess participant’s negative affectivity.

Negative affectivity was measured with the Positive Affectivity Negative Affectivity Scale (PANAS) short form. Positive affectivity was not examined or used. Five questions (items 2, 4, 6, 7, 8) made up the negative
affectivity scale. Participants were asked to use the 5-point scale to indicate to what extent they feel that way on average (1 = very slightly/not at all, 2 = a little, 3 = moderately, 4 = quite a bit, 5 = extremely). Negative affectivity scores were calculated by summing the values of all 5 items; internal consistency α = .66 (see Appendix F).

Demographic Questionnaire

A demographic assessment measure included questions regarding gender, racial/ethnic composition, age, average number of hours worked per week, highest level of education completed, number of years and months employed with their organization, the type of organization they work for, and participant’s occupational category (see Appendix G).

Pilot Study

A pilot study of students currently employed (n = 64) was conducted in two upper level undergraduate psychology classes in order to select the two vignettes that would be used in the study. The pilot study packet included 11 measures: P-O Fit, CDSII with 7 vignettes (see Appendix I), final attribution measure, PANAS, and a demographic questionnaire.
It was imperative to examine the behavior of each vignette, as the quality of the research depended on the vignettes inducing the feelings associated with experiencing psychological contract violations. When deciding on which vignettes should be included in the study the following components were taken into account: spread of variance, correlation coefficients, and final attribution outcomes. In particular, variation in participants' responses to the final attribution outcome regarding each vignette was of interest. Vignettes without variation in the attribution outcome would have been an indication that the vignettes were not vague enough to allow for variation in the responses. After considering the above criteria, vignettes B and D were ultimately selected for use in the study (see Appendix J).

The pilot study also ensured that all survey instructions and items were clear and understandable. An example of how to use the CDSII was included in the instructions to aid participants in understanding how to use the scale.

Procedure

Data collection preceded the conclusion of the pilot study. A total of 350 surveys were distributed in various
organizations through contact personnel. This convenient sampling yielded a 55% response rate. Participants were invited to voluntarily participate; the consent form provided an overview of the study including the requirements of participation, potential benefits etc. (Appendix A). Participants were encouraged to fill out the survey in its entirety, and were informed that their answers would remain anonymous and used for research purposes only. In addition, participants were reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time. All participants were treated in accordance with the "Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct" (American Psychological Association, 1992).

The survey packet consisted of six measures to examine the proposed hypotheses: 1) Person-Organization Fit, 2) CDSII for Vignette One, 3) CDSII for Vignette Two, 4) Final Attribution Decision, 5) Negative Affectivity, and 6) Demographic Questionnaire.

A correlational design was employed with the use of vignettes to assess the hypothetical relationship psychological contract violations have to decisions individuals make on the dimensions of locus of causality and controllability. It was not possible to employ a field experiment, as psychological contract violations are
believed to be unique to every individual; hence experimental control could not have been maintained.

Participants were instructed to return the survey packet to the researcher via mail. A debriefing form was attached at the conclusion of the survey, which informed all participants of the purpose of the research and where to direct questions regarding the study and/or the results (see Appendix H).
CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

Data Screening and Analyses

Prior to testing hypotheses, the data set was screened with SPSS FREQUENCIES, SPSS REGRESSION, and SPSS MVA for data entry errors, anomalies, and evaluation of assumptions. Table 1 shows the calculated means and standard deviations for the variables.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics for Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>P-O Fit</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>60.22</td>
<td>12.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>8.85</td>
<td>2.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vignette 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Causality</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>13.24</td>
<td>6.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>12.90</td>
<td>6.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>15.91</td>
<td>4.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vignette 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Causality</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>11.96</td>
<td>5.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>11.15</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stability</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>16.34</td>
<td>4.55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One case was deleted from the data set as a result of indicating a self-employed status. Three cases with extremely high scores on hours worked per week were found
to be univariate outliers; 1 individual reported working 80 hrs a week, and 2 reported working 70 hours per week. However, after an examination of the individuals' other variables, the decision was made to retain the three cases, as it was plausible that these individuals worked excessive hours with their medical field professions. In addition, examinations of their ratings on all of the other variables were within normal range. Multivariate outliers were investigated using Mahalanobis distance with a criterion of $p < .001$. There were no multivariate outliers.

Scatterplots of residuals and predicted scores revealed that the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were met; therefore no transformations were warranted. Furthermore, there was no evidence of multicollinearity or singularity.

There were 13 individuals (8.3%) missing one or more questions on the P-O fit scale; however, none of the individuals' P-O fit items were missing more than 5% of the data. For vignette one, 2 participants (1.3%) were missing data on controllability. Cases with missing data were excluded from analyses, $N = 144$. 
Hypothesis One

To test hypothesis 1, correlational analyses were employed using SPSS REGRESSION. Correlations between the variables are in Table 2. Analyses were performed separately for vignettes one and two; however, all analyses performed on vignettes one and two were identical.

Hypothesis 1 proposed that there would be a significant relationship between P-O fit and the decisions employees made on the CDSII (locus of causality, controllability). As stated earlier, the stability dimension was dropped from the analyses as a result of low reliability. Therefore, separate regression analyses were employed to examine the relationship P-O fit had with other dimensions of locus of causality and controllability. Support was found for hypothesis 1a in both vignettes one and two; P-O fit was significantly positively related to external locus of causality. Participants with high levels of P-O fit perceived the cause of the event to be external to the organization. Vignette one revealed, $F (1,142) = 6.160, p = .014$, $R = .204$. $R^2$ was .042, indicating approximately 4.2% of the variance in locus of causality was accounted for by P-O fit. Vignette two revealed similar results,
F (1,140) = 6.476, p = .012, R = .204. R² was .044, indicating that approximately 4.4% of the variance in locus of causality was accounted for by P-O fit.

Hypothesis 1b was also supported in both vignettes one and two. People with high levels of P-O fit perceived the violation as being beyond the control of the organization. Vignette one revealed, F (1,140) = 7.068, p = .009, R = .219. R² was .048, indicating that approximately 4.8% of the variance in controllability was accounted for by P-O fit. Vignette two yielded similar results, F (1,142) = 7.036, p = .009, R = .217. R² was .047, indicating approximately 4.7% of the variance in controllability was accounted for by P-O fit.

Hypothesis 1c was unable to be tested. As previously mentioned, the stability dimension was dropped from all analyses as a result of low reliability (α = .46).

Hypothesis Two

Two identical binary logistic regression analyses were performed on the dichotomized final attribution outcomes for vignette one and two. The dependant variables were "the organization's fault" (reneging) and "not the organization's fault" (inadvertent/disruption). The CDSII dimensions of locus of causality and controllability were
entered as predictors. There were no cases missing more than 5% of the data. N = 154 cases were available for analyses for vignette one. Of the 154 cases available, 42.9% selected "the organization's fault", and 57.1% selected "not the organization's fault." N = 155 cases were available for vignette two, 49.7% selected "the organization's fault" and 50.3% selected "not the organization's fault." Analyses were performed using SPSS LOGISTIC REGRESSION.

Using vignette one, a test of the full model with the two predictors against a constant-only model was statistically reliable, $\chi^2 (2) = 44.982$, $p < .001$, indicating that the predictors, as a set, reliably distinguished between attributions of reneging and attributions of not the organizations fault. The variance accounted for in the final attribution is moderate, with Cox's and Snell $R^2 = 25.3\%$. Prediction success was mediocre, with 63.6% indicating a reneging attribution and 77.3% indicating the attribution not being the organization's fault, for an overall success rate of 71.4%.

Table 2 shows regression coefficients, Wald statistics, odd ratios and 95% confidence intervals for odds ratios of each of the two predictors. According to
the Wald criterion, only controllability reliably predicted the final attribution outcome, Wald (1) = 1.263, p = .019, odds ratio = 1.149.

Table 2. Vignette One: Logistic Regression Analysis of Final Attribution Outcome as a Function of Causal Dimension Scale Revised Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Wald Test</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Causality</td>
<td>.067</td>
<td>1.263</td>
<td>1.070</td>
<td>1.051</td>
<td>.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability</td>
<td>.139</td>
<td>5.507</td>
<td>1.149</td>
<td>.977</td>
<td>.775</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-2.276</td>
<td>22.316</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Using the data from vignette two, a test of the full model with the two predictors against a constant-only model was statistically reliable, $\chi^2 (2) = 26.109$, p < .001, indicating that the predictors, as a set, reliably distinguished between attributions of reneging and attributions of not the organizations' fault. The variance accounted for in final attribution was moderate, with Cox's and Snell $R^2 = 15.5\%$. Prediction success was mediocre, with 67.1% indicating a reneging attribution and 67.1% indicating the attribution not being the
organization's fault, for an overall success rate of 61.7%.

Table 3 shows regression coefficients, Wald statistics, odd ratios and 95% confidence intervals for odds ratios of each of the two predictors. According to the Wald criterion, only locus of causality reliably predicted the final attribution outcome, Wald (1) = 5.903, p = .015, odds ratio = 1.172.

Table 3. Vignette Two: Logistic Regression Analysis of Final Attribution Outcome as a Function of Causal Dimension Scale Revised Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>Wald Test</th>
<th>Odds Ratio</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>Lower</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Causality</td>
<td>.159</td>
<td>5.903</td>
<td>1.172</td>
<td>1.332</td>
<td>1.031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability</td>
<td>.002</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>1.002</td>
<td>1.127</td>
<td>.890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>-1.850</td>
<td>17.671</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional Analyses

Sequential Regression Analyses

A sequential regressions were employed to determine if negative affectivity accounted for the variance in attribution decisions, and if P-O fit improved the
prediction of decisions made on the locus of causality and controllability dimensions for both vignettes one and two. All of the analyses were performed using SPSS REGRESSION and SPSS FREQUENCIES for evaluation of assumptions. Table 5, 6, and 7 display the intercorrelations between the variables, $R^2$, $R^2$ change, and the significance of $F$ change after entry of each the IV's for vignettes one and two.

Table 4. Intercorrelations for Vignettes One and Two

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vignette One</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Causality  (1)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability (2)</td>
<td>.880*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affect (3)</td>
<td>-.027</td>
<td>-.032</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-O Fit (4)</td>
<td>.204*</td>
<td>.219*</td>
<td>-.177*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vignette Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Locus of Causality  (1)</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Controllability (2)</td>
<td>.875*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affect (3)</td>
<td>-.009</td>
<td>.012</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-O Fit (4)</td>
<td>.210*</td>
<td>.217*</td>
<td>-.177*</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*p &lt; .05</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Locus of Causality**

Vignettes one and two both revealed $R$ to be significantly different from zero at the end of step 2. After step two, with negative affectivity and P-O fit in
the equation, vignette one resulted in, \( R = .204, \)
\( F (2,141) = 3.065, p = .05. \) Vignette two yielded similar
results, \( R = .213, F (2,139) = 3.314, p = .039. \)

In the 1st step (Block 1), a model containing
negative affectivity was not significantly related to
locus of causality, \( R^2 = .001, F (1,141) = .102, p > .05. \)
In the 2nd step (Block 2), addition of P-O fit to the
equation with negative affectivity, resulted in a
significant increment in \( R^2 = .042 \) (adjusted \( R^2 = .028),
\( F_{change} (1, 141) = .015, p = .05. \) P-O fit accounted for 2.8%
of the variance in locus of causality above and beyond

Table 5. Sequential Regression of Person-Organization Fit
on Locus of Causality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R</th>
<th>( R^2 ) change</th>
<th>Sig F change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vignette One</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
<td>.750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-O Fit</td>
<td>.041*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vignette Two</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P-O Fit</td>
<td>.046*</td>
<td></td>
<td>.011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05
what was accounted for by the personality variable, negative affectivity.

Similar results were found with vignette two. In the 1st step (Block 1), a model containing negative affectivity was not significantly related to locus of causality, $R^2 < .001$, $F (1,139) = .001$, $p > .05$. In the 2nd step (Block 2), addition of P-O fit to the equation with negative affectivity resulted in a significant increment in $R^2 = .046$ (adjusted $R^2 = .032$), $F_{\text{change}} (1,139) = .011$, $p < .05$. P-O fit accounted for 3.2% of the variance in locus of causality above and beyond what was accounted for by personality.

Controllability

$R$ was significantly different from zero at the end of step 2 for both vignettes. After step two, with negative affectivity and P-O fit in the equation, vignette one resulted in, $R = .222$, $F (2,139) = 3.589$, $p < .05$. Vignette two yielded similar results, $R = .227$, $F (2,141) = 3.823$, $p < .05$.

The analysis for vignette one revealed that in the 1st step (Block 1), a model containing negative affectivity was not significantly related to controllability, $R^2 < .001$, $F_{\text{inc}} (1,139) = .007$, $p > .05$. In the 2nd step (Block 2), addition of P-O fit to the
equation with negative affect resulted in a significant increment in $R^2 = .222$ (adjusted $R^2 = .035$), $F_{\text{change}} (1, 139) = 7.171, p < .05$. P-O fit accounted for 3.5% of the variance in locus of causality above and beyond what was accounted for by the personality variable, negative affectivity.

Table 6. Sequential Regression of Person-Organization Fit on Controllability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>$R^2$ change</th>
<th>Sig F change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vignette One</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.934</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>P-O Fit</td>
<td></td>
<td>.049*</td>
<td>.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vignette Two</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Negative Affectivity</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td>.761</td>
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<tr>
<td>Step 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>P-O Fit</td>
<td></td>
<td>.051*</td>
<td>.007</td>
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<tr>
<td>*p &lt; .05</td>
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Similar results were found with vignette two. In the 1st step (Block 1), a model containing negative affectivity was not significantly related to controllability, $R^2 = .001, F (1,141) = .093, p > .05$. In the 2nd step (Block 2), addition of P-O fit to the
equation with negative affectivity resulted in a significant increment in $R^2 = .051$ (adjusted $R^2 = .038$), $F_{\text{change}} (1, 141) = 7.548, p < .05$. P-O fit accounted for 3.8% of the variance in controllability above and beyond what was accounted for by the personality variable, negative affectivity.

**Independent t-Tests Analyses**

Next, to examine whether there were differences between employees' attribution decisions as a function of whether or not they had experienced the violation specified in the vignettes, independent t-test were run. Results indicated that for vignette one and two, there was not a significant mean difference in the decisions individuals made about locus of causality or controllability, as a function of whether or not they had ever experienced the vignette event. For vignette one, locus of causality, $t (152) = -.607, p = .545$; controllability, $t (150) = -.201, p = .841$. For vignette two, locus of causality, $t (146) = -.046, p = .964$; controllability, $t (148) = -.394, p = .694$. For vignette one, 36.4% of participants had experienced the violation, whereas 63.6% had not. Vignette two revealed similar results with 34% experiencing the violation and 66% had not.
The finding is impressive, as the majority of the participants did not experience the event, however they were still able to respond to vignettes accordingly. This suggests that the vignettes were successful at inducing the feelings employees experience when a contract violation has occurred within the workplace.

In addition, gender differences were examined for both vignettes one and two. There were not significant mean differences between male and female participants regarding the decisions they made at the causal dimension level. For vignette one, locus of causality, 
\[ t(155) = -.385, p = .701; \] controllability, 
\[ t(153) = -.534; p = .594. \]
For vignette two, locus of causality, 
\[ t(153) = -.952, p = .342; \] controllability, 
\[ t(155) = -1.78, p = .078. \]

Regression Analyses

Finally, separate regressions analyses were employed to determine whether or not organizational diversity (organization size/department size) were predictive of the decisions individuals made about the psychological contract violations on the dimensions of locus of causality and controllability. Organization size was measured using an ordinal scale (small = 8.3%, medium = 7.6%, large = 38.2%, extra large = 45.9), and was
not discovered to be a significant predictor for decisions made regarding vignettes one and two (vignette one, F (2,152) = .759, p = .470, R² = .01; vignette two, F (2,152) = .437, p = .647, R² = .006). Furthermore, department size was not discovered to be a significant predictor for the decisions made for either vignettes one or two (vignette one, F (2,148) = .674, p = .511, R² = .009; vignette two, F (2,148) = .008, p = .992, R² < .001).
CHAPTER FIVE
DISCUSSION

This study makes a unique attempt at bridging theory between the constructs of P-O fit and psychological contract violations, through attribution theory. This study’s results support the theoretical evidence linking the two constructs. Intuitively, it seems logical that the degree of value congruence between an individual and the organization may indeed influence how an employee perceives and responds to events that occur in the workplace. Specifically, this study examines the relationship P-O fit has with the decisions individuals make during the attribution process at the causal dimension level (locus of causality, controllability). Furthermore, this study examines whether the actual decisions made at the causal dimension level (locus of causality, controllability) are capable of predicting an individual’s final attribution regarding psychological contract violations (the organization’s fault, not the organization’s fault).

The theoretical foundation presented suggests that P-O fit may be positively related to the decisions individuals make during the attribution process. General
support was found for hypothesis 1; there was a significant relationship between P-O fit and the decisions employees made on the causal dimensions of locus of causality and controllability. P-O fit was positively related to both external locus of causality (hypothesis 1a) and controllability (hypothesis 1b). It was not possible to test hypothesis 1c (P-O fit will be positively related to stability), as the internal consistency of the stability dimension was found to be unreliable and subsequently was dropped from all analyses.

Findings support the belief that individuals possessing high levels of P-O fit tend to perceive the cause of a psychological contract violation as external to the organization, whereas individuals exhibiting lower levels of P-O fit tend to perceive the cause of the violation as internal to the organization. Furthermore, findings indicate that high P-O fit is related to decision that the violation was beyond the organization’s control, whereas low P-O fit is related to decision that the organization had control over the violation.

These relationships are important to examine when expanding our knowledge about P-O fit and psychological contract violations constructs. To date, research has solely focused on examining psychological contract
violations in terms of the categorical attribution outcomes (reneging, inadvertent, disruption) proposed by Rousseau (1995). The actual decisions individuals are believed to make on various causal dimensions when attempting to make sense of a contract violation contributes to our understanding of how P-O fit might influence employees' perceptions to changes that occur in the workplace. These findings support the notion that individuals with higher levels of P-O fit may be more tolerant of alterations to their psychological contracts; therefore, they may rationalize causal explanations as a result of value congruence with the organization. Contrary, individuals with low P-O fit, hence low value congruence, may be inclined to attribute the cause of the violation to that of the organization's fault.

Although the direction of the relationship remains speculative, "Does P-O fit contribute to the decisions individuals make at the causal dimension level?" or rather, "Do the decisions individuals make at the causal dimension level during the attribution process contribute to an individual's perception of P-O fit?" These findings support that a relationship exists between P-O fit and the attribution process. Theoretically, these findings significantly contribute to a greater understanding of P-O
fit and psychological contract violations constructs. In advancing theory, it is necessary to determine the relationships constructs have with other variables, as well as other constructs. Whereas P-O fit has received a considerable amount of attention in the literature within the past decade, the areas of psychological contract violations are still very new. These findings add to the development and refinement of each construct, and further aids in understanding of the relationship between the two and how they might operate together. From a practical application perspective, these results suggest that organizations high on value congruence with their workforce may have an organizational advantage over organizations exhibiting less value congruence with employees.

Research has examined the role personality has to the relationships of organizational and individual variables (e.g., Organ & Konovsky, 1989). Relationships between the personality variable affectivity and job satisfaction have been established throughout the literature. It has been found that P-O fit is positively related to job satisfaction, which in turn, is negatively related to negative affectivity.
Varying degrees of strength for the relationship have been noted in the literature. Furnham, Petrides, Jackson, and Cotter (2002) concluded that personality did not strongly or consistently predict job satisfaction in a longitudinal study. Turnley and Feldman (2000) concluded the relationship between psychological contract violations and employee behaviors was not eliminated after controlling for job dissatisfaction. Moreover, Heller, Judge, and Watson (2002) found that when controlling for trait affectivity, the relationship between job and life satisfaction was not eliminated. As a negative relationship appears to exist between negative affectivity and job satisfaction, and because P-O fit is positively related to job satisfaction, a decision was made to include the PANAS to measure participant’s level of negative affectivity.

Results did not find negative affectivity to be a confounding variable, as its relationship to the decisions individuals made on the CDSII were not significant. Moreover, P-O fit was found to significantly contribute to the decision made on the CDSII, above and beyond that accounted for my negative affectivity. These findings are consistent with the recent literature.
Indeed, these results support that P-O fit may influence the decisions that are made during the attribution process regarding workplace changes that alter individuals' psychological contracts. However, these results need to be further examined and replicated in future research. The results support that decisions regarding the causality and control over a violation might influence employees' perception of violation. The confirmation of these results, as well as future research examining the quality and quantity of information passed onto employees regarding organizational changes would significantly contribute to practitioner’s knowledge about how to approach and mitigate alterations to psychological contracts in a constantly changing organizational context.

In addition, although significant differences between organization size and department size as a function of the decision made on the CDSII was not found, recent literature suggests that psychological contract violations specific to diversity issues may have a strong impact on minority employees' perception (e.g., Chrobot-Mason, 2003). As psychological contracts are multifaceted and perceptual, various employee groups may differ in their workplace expectations (Chrobot-Mason, 2000). As it was not possible to look at between group differences as a
result of significant differences in the sample group compositions, it will be important for future research to examine organizational and individual variables including workforce demographics, family-work conflict, and emerging diversity initiatives, and their relationships to psychological contract violations. Future research designs should focus on examining the between-group differences for demographics and public/private sector in psychological contract violation perceptions.

In addition to expanding our understanding of P-O fit and its relationships to attribution theory, this study explores the relationship attribution theory has with the causal dimension decisions that employees make about psychological contract violations. Past research on psychological contract violations have primarily focused on the conceptualization of the construct and establishing a relationship with behavioral outcomes and organizational antecedents alike. Although psychological contract violations are in the early stages of construct development, a noted strength of this study was that it strived to extend our understanding of how employees attribute the cause of a violation by examining the decision patterns made at the causal dimension level.
In an attempt to further the understanding of these phenomena, this study proposed that the decisions individuals made on the CDSII (locus of causality, controllability) would be capable of predicting an individual's final attribution for a given violation (organization's fault, not the organization's fault). As previously stated, the stability dimension was excluded from the analyses as a result of measurement error.

Results supported the hypothesis. In both vignettes, although statistical support was found, the models indicated that there was only a slightly greater than 50/50 chance the final attribution outcome can be predicted. Although informative, this mediocre prediction may be a result of the difficulty this study had with the stability dimension. Past research has reported solid reliability coefficients ($\alpha = .86$) for the stability dimension of the CDSII (e.g., McAuley et al., 1992). The significant discrepancy in reported reliabilities for the stability dimension suggests that there may be opportunities to improve measurement of the dimension. Consequently, the exclusion of the stability dimension might have lowered the predictability power of the decisions made at the causal level when attempting to predict a final attribution outcome for a psychological
contract violation. If this were true, then the support that was found for hypothesis 2 would be strengthened.

The primary impact of these results may provide insight into how organizations can influence the way employees perceive and make decisions about changes that occur within the workplace. This study directs our attention to the various communication patterns that exist in organizations. Support for P-O fit’s relationship with causal dimension decisions suggest that during times of transition and change, organizations may have the ability to alter employees’ perceptions of the changes. For example, if organizations are forced to alter the training contracts with their employees, they need to be explicit about why the change is occurring. An organization that is forced to reduce its spending budget by 30%, and as a result is no longer able to provide developmental training to their employees, need to be explicit in communicating the root cause in the decision to eliminate developmental training program opportunities. Although this too is speculative, as this was beyond the study’s scope to examine the extent of communication occurring within the organizations regarding organizational changes, it is consistent with the organizational change and change management literature.
Overall, this study contributes to our understanding of how psychological contract violations decisions are made (attribution theory) and what variables might be operating in contributing to the overall final attribution decision made regarding the cause of the contract violation. These findings contribute to a greater understanding of the cognitive processes that precede negative behavioral outcomes, after the occurrences of psychological contract violations.

Moreover, the situational approach to attribution theory is strengthened, as it appears that the situational context is important in understanding employees' reactions to situational variables. The trait approach, tested by the addition of negative affectivity to the analyses, did not significantly account for the variance in the decisions employees made on the CDSII. The reliability for negative affectivity, as measured by the PANAS, was lower than expected. Thus, taking a situational approach when attempting to understand psychological contract violations and the attribution process in organizational settings may be warranted; however the effects of personality should be considered.
Limitations

Clearly, this study was posed with several limitations that must be addressed. First, psychological contract violation measures are in the early stages of development. To date, most research on psychological contract violations has relied on single-item, global assessments of an individual’s psychological contract violation (Turnley & Feldman, 1999). Recognizing the extreme challenges researchers face when attempting to study this individualistic phenomena while maintaining control over the type of violation experienced, this study took an indirect approach of studying psychological contract violations by attempting to assess the decisions individuals make about psychological contract violations during the attribution process. By directly quantifying the patterns of decisions, we were able to indirectly examine psychological contract violations. However, this method is not free from its limitations.

First, this research employed vignettes to induce feelings associated with psychological contract violations. This approach was aimed at capturing natural feelings that occur when an employee experiences a contract violation. In an attempt to test the effectiveness of the vignettes inducing real work feelings
associated with contract violations, a pilot study was conducted. Although the vignettes were statistically examined in order to select two vignettes to employ, it is possible that the vignettes did not induce the same feelings that employees experience when an actual psychological contract violation occurs within the workplace. However, the results of independent t-tests suggest that there were not significant mean differences in the decisions that were made between participants who had previously experience the violations presented in the vignettes, and those who had not. This suggests that the vignettes were successful in engaging participants, as the majority of the participants had not experience the described violation, however were still able to respond.

Second, the elimination of the stability dimension also needs to be mentioned. The CDSII has been used in numerous research studies and has reported adequate reliabilities (e.g., McAuley et al, 1992). Although our measure did not alter the stability items from previous research, we obtained $\alpha = .47$. It is possible that the measure's directions affected participant's responses; however, this is unlikely as the remaining two dimensions reliabilities were adequate. Dropping the dimension from the analyses introduced several limitations to our
research. First, stability is known to be an important dimension during the attribution process. It is possible that the perceived stability of an event might alter the final attribution outcome for a violation. For example, an employee may perceive the cause of the event as internal to the organization, however out of the organizations control. Stability might be the deciding dimension as to whether the individual perceives the violation as the organization’s fault or not. Someone who perceives the violation as something stable, might attribute the violation to the organization’s fault as they might foresee the event occurring again, whereas an employee who perceives the violation as something unstable and not likely to occur again, might decide that the organization was not at fault. Future research must include the stability dimension as it is deemed by social psychologist as an important component of the attribution process.

In addition to the measurement limitations, several other limitations must be noted. The nature of the self-report survey design might have influenced individual responses to the measures. It is possible that cognitive dissonance deflated the correlation between the variables. All participants were instructed to respond to the P-0 fit measure first. Participant with large discrepancies
between their values and the values of the organization might experience cognitive dissonance. Therefore, it is possible that participants experiencing this phenomenon may respond favorably to the P-O fit measure, influencing their responses to the vignettes. This in turn may have lead to more lenient decisions about the violations in order to be consistent with their desired value congruence with their organization. Related to self-report, is the threat posed by the common method variance. Therefore, we examined the role negative affectivity played in the significant findings. A global negative affectivity response was not found after accounting for the variance in the decisions on the CDSII.

Additionally, the current economic climate in the general United States may have been a limitation in this study. It is plausible that the current depressed job market has affected employees’ tolerance to psychological contract violations. Therefore, the results found may be very conservative. The current environment may have influenced how employees’ perceive receiving less than promised. Research should be replicated in the future when the market improves; the positive relationships between P-O fit and decisions at the causal dimension level indeed may be stronger than what this study suggests.
Although this study had a 55% response rate, it too is not exempt from criticism. As always, there may be difference in perceptions of psychological violations within the group that did not respond. It is also possible that employees with lower levels of P-O fit and employee with little tenure may not have responded. These limitations affect the generalizability of the results.

Moreover, it should also be noted that although several organizations across the United States were included in this sample, the total percent of the surveys that were returned within each organization is unknown. This would be important to know, as a very high return rate within one organization would bias the data towards the culture and norms of that organization affecting the generalizability of the results. However, the various organizations and geographical locations from which the sample was drawn is a noted strength. Other studies examining psychological contract violations have been limited to student samples or one organization.

Also affecting the generalizability of the results was the biased ethnic composition of the sample. The sample is disparate, comprising 88.5% white participants. This is not representative of organizations in the 21st century, and indeed limits our generalizability. In
addition, the mean age of participants was 40 years, and the average length of tenure was 9 years and 2 months. These results indicate that our sample was older, and given that the average tenure was only 9 years and 2 months, it is likely that participants have held several positions within other organizations. It is possible that there are differences in the perceptions of individuals whom have only been with one organization and others who have been employed within several. Individuals who have been employed within several organizations might compare past experiences and expectations against their current organization. It would be interesting for future research to collect information on prior organization history as to compare groups.

Finally, it was necessary to dichotomize the outcomes for the logistic regression analyses to test hypothesis 2, which examined whether the decisions employees made at the causal dimension level were capable of predicting the final attribution outcome decision. By dichotomizing the outcome, the information gathered tends to lack the richness that it potentially could have had from performing a multinomial logistic regression employing three outcomes (reneging, inadvertent, disruption). However, as this type of question has not been addressed
before in the literature, and hypothesis 2 was supported, the information we received from performing the binary logistic regression gives researchers enough information to further examine the question in future research.

Future Research/Conclusion

It is quite apparent that the theories of P-O fit and psychological contract violations have further developed within the past decade. It is through research, encompassing both significant and non-significant results, that we advance the development of these constructs.

This study presented several opportunities for future research. Specifically, a strong theoretical foundation was laid, linking the theories of P-O fit, attribution theory and psychological contract violations together. The significant contribution this study makes is a theoretical one. The mere support of our hypotheses again only strengthens the potential this theory has for explaining antecedents of psychological contract violations.

Although this study made a significant contribution in attempting to quantify psychological contract violations, measurement techniques are still in dyer need of advancement, and new ways of isolating the phenomena must be identified. In addition, future research should
examine other variables that may contribute to decisions made regarding psychological contract violations.

To date, this is the only study that has examined the decisions individuals make at the causal dimension level regarding psychological contract violations. Research must continue to examine the decisions that are made at the causal dimension level, as the causal explanations that have previously been used are only capable of revealing the overall attribution that an individual makes, and is unable to tap into the actual decision-making process that is involved in arriving at the final attribution decision.

Moreover, with a greater understanding of the variables that contribute to individuals' perceptions and attributions of psychological contract violations, organizations will be able to take back much of the control they have lost due to dynamic changes in the workplace. As P-O fit is individualistic perception and not under the control of the organization, this research suggests that organizations may have the ability to influence employees' attribution decisions about changes that occur within the workplace by communicating the root cause of the changes to employees. If employers can communicate that the changes occurring are beyond the control, and due to factor outside of the organization,
the probability increases that employees will attribute the change to their psychological contracts as something beyond the organization’s control. In turn, this may minimize the negative behavioral outcomes (e.g., increased absenteeism, decreased extra-role behavior, decreased job satisfaction) document in the literature.

Finally, psychological contract violations are tremendously difficult to capture as they are thought to be unique to each individual. As complex as the human mind and cognitive processes are which are responsible for decision-making, so are the variables that contribute to our cognitive processing of the attributions of psychological contract violations.

Taken overall, these results add to a greater understanding and development of P-O fit and psychological contract violation constructs. Given the current business environment, employers should focus on influencing employees’ decisions about the controllability and causality of workplace changes as these dimensions are significantly correlated with P-O fit. Specifically, employers should focus on ensuring that employee’s with lower levels of P-O fit understand the reasons for organizational changes, as they may be more susceptible to perceiving changes as being the organization’s fault. How
an organization communicates the reasons for current changes may have a significant effect on how individuals' attribute changes to their psychological contracts. If organizations are able to clearly articulate that psychological contract violations are beyond the organization's control, then employees are more likely to attribute the violation to reneging or disruption (not the organization's fault). These attributions will have significant positive implications for future work behaviors.
APPENDIX A

INFORMED CONSENT
INFORMED CONSENT

Thank you for taking your time to participate in this study. Your contribution is greatly appreciated. Sarah Phillips, Masters Student of Industrial Organizational Psychology, California State University, San Bernardino, is conducting this study in part for her Master’s Thesis on Person-Organization Fit, under the supervision of Dr. Janelle Gilbert. The purpose of this research is to assess people’s perceptions of compatibility or “fit” with their current organization, and how these perceptions may affect their reactions to changes that might occur within the workplace.

To be a qualified participant, you must be at least 18 years old and employed within an organization. Self-employed individuals are not eligible to participate in this study. Furthermore, all individuals must be employed for a minimum of 6 months with their current organization prior to involvement in this study.

Your participation includes filling out the attached survey. The survey should take about 10-15 minutes to complete. Please complete the survey in the exact order in which it is presented. Completed survey should be returned in the envelope provided. All of your responses will remain anonymous and will be used for research purposes only. You are strongly encouraged to respond to all items honestly; yet if you are unable or unwilling to respond to a particular item, please skip it. Your participation is this study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

This research has been approved by the Department of Psychology Human Subject Review Board of California State University, San Bernardino. There are no foreseen immediate or long-range risks involved by the procedures used in this study. Benefits include contributing to the greater understanding of employee reactions regarding organizational changes.

If you are interested, you may request a report of the overall results of this study upon its conclusion. Results will be available in the summer of 2003. If you have any questions, or would like to request the results of this study, please contact Dr. Janelle Gilbert at (909) 880-5587.

Thank you again for your participation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Phillips
Master’s Student
California State University, San Bernardino

I have read the above description and understand the study’s nature and purpose. I understand that by placing an “X” on the line provided, I am giving my consent to participate in this study. ________

Today’s Date: _______________
APPENDIX B

PERSON-ORGANIZATION FIT
Instructions:

The items below are designed to assess the degree to which your "values" match that of your place of employment. "Values" is defined as what you believe to be important or desirable in the workplace.

Please read through each question and circle the appropriate number, using the scale given below, to indicate your degree of agreement for each item. Please use your best judgments in assigning ratings to each question. There are no right or wrong answers.

1 = not at all 2 = very small degree 3 = small degree 4 = moderate degree 5 = great degree 6 = very great degree 7 = completely

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<th>Question</th>
<th>Scale</th>
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<td>1. To what degree do your values of being achievement oriented match your</td>
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<td>2. To what degree do your values of being team oriented match your</td>
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<td>organization's value of being team oriented?</td>
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<td>3. To what degree do your values of high pay for performance match your</td>
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<td>organization's value of high pay for performance?</td>
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<td>4. To what degree do your values of working in collaboration with others</td>
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<td>match your organization's values of working in collaboration with others?</td>
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<td>5. To what degree do your values of being supportive match your</td>
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<td>organization's value of being supportive?</td>
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<td>6. To what degree do your values of being competitive match your</td>
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<td>organizations value of being competitive?</td>
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<td>7. To what degree do your values of being results oriented match your</td>
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<td>organization's value of being resulted oriented?</td>
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8. To what degree do your values of risk taking match your organization’s value of risk taking?  

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9. To what degree do your values of being fair match your organization’s value of being fair?  

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10. To what degree do your values of being precise match your organization’s value of being precise?  

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11. To what degree do your values of tolerance match your organization’s value of tolerance?  

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12. To what degree do your values of opportunities for professional growth match your organization’s values of opportunities for professional growth?  

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13. To what degree do your values of placing an emphasis on quality match your organization’s value of placing an emphasis on quality?  

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14. To what degree do your values of being rule oriented match your organization’s values of being rule oriented?  

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<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX C

VIGNETTE ONE
Vignette 1:

When you began working for the organization, specific compensation benefits were promised to you. You did not receive the compensation you were promised.

Instructions: Think about your current job and the organization you work for. Imagine that the vignette printed above has just happened to you at your current place of employment. If this event were to happen to you at work, would you feel that the organization was at fault or would the cause of the event have been out of the organization's control?

The 12 items below ask you to make decisions regarding your perception of the "cause" of the event. Using the scale, please circle only one number for each of the 12 items to represent how you would perceive the "cause" of the event if it were to occur to you at work.

Example: If you felt that the "cause" of the event was within the organization's control, you might circle a number between 1 and 4. If you felt that the organization did not have control over the "cause" of the event, you might circle a number between 9 and 6. Please note that both ends of the scale represent stronger feelings than the numbers located towards the middle of the scale.

Is the "cause" of the event:

1. Something the organization did not cause to happen; rather the "cause" reflected an aspect of the situation 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Something that the organization caused to happen

2. Something that is not manageable by the organization 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Something that is manageable by the organization

3. Temporary 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Permanent

4. Something the organization cannot regulate 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Something the organization is able to regulate

5. Something over which the organization does not have control 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Something over which the organization has control

6. Outside of the organization 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 Inside of the organization
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Is the “cause” of the event:</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Something that does not happen often within the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>987654321</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Something that happens often in the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Under the power of something outside of the organization</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>987654321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under the power of the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Due to something other than the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>987654321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Due to something about the organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Something the organization does not have power over</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Something the organization has power over</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>987654321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Unchangeable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Something that individuals external to the organization can regulate; however the</td>
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<tr>
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<td>organization itself can not regulate</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>987654321</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Something that the organization can regulate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please answer the question by placing an “X” in the correct box.

Have you experienced this event at your current place of employment? Yes □ No □
APPENDIX D

VIGNETTE TWO
### Vignette 2

You were promised training that you felt was essential to your career development and job advancement opportunities. The training was later denied to you.

### Instructions:
Think about your current job and the organization you work for. Imagine that the vignette printed above has just happened to you at your current place of employment. If this event were to happen to you at work, would you feel that the organization was at fault or would the cause of the event have been out of the organization's control?

The 12 items below ask you to make decisions regarding your perception of the "cause" of the event. Using the scale, please circle only one number for each of the 12 items to represent how you would perceive the "cause" of the event if it were to occur to you at work.

Example: If you felt that the "cause" of the event was within the organization's control, you might circle a number between 1 and 4. If you felt that the organization did not have control over the "cause" of the event, you might circle a number between 9 and 6. Please note that both ends of the scale represent stronger feelings than the numbers located towards the middle of the scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is the &quot;cause&quot; of the event:</th>
<th>1. Something the organization did not cause to happen; rather the &quot;cause&quot; reflected an aspect of the situation</th>
<th>2. Something that is not manageable by the organization</th>
<th>3. Temporary</th>
<th>4. Something the organization cannot regulate</th>
<th>5. Something over which the organization does not have control</th>
<th>6. Outside of the organization</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
<td>9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1</td>
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<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Under the power of something outside of the organization</td>
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<td>Due to something other than the organization</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Something that individuals external to the organization can regulate; however the organization itself can not regulate</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Please answer the question by placing an “X” in the correct box.

Have you experienced this event at your current place of employment? Yes □ No □
APPENDIX E

FINAL ATTRIBUTION MEASURE
**Instructions:** The vignettes you read on the previous pages are listed below. Again, please imagine that this event **has happened** to you at your current place of employment. **Please read the vignettes and mark the appropriate box to indicate your overall feeling about what happened.**

We recognize that it may be hard to choose only one. **Please choose the one that you feel best fits your feelings about what happen.** These are your feelings; there are no right or wrong answers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignettes</th>
<th>What role did the organization play making this event happen?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>When you began working for the organization, specific compensation benefits were promised to you. You never received the compensation you were promised.</td>
<td>□ The organization <strong>WAS</strong> at fault: The organization was able to change the event but was unwilling to so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ The organization <strong>WAS</strong> at fault; HOWEVER the event was due to a MISTAKE: The organization was able to change the event and willing to change the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ The organization <strong>WAS</strong> at fault; HOWEVER the event was due to a MISTAKE: The organization was able to change the event and willing to change the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You were promised training that you felt was essential to your career development and job advancement opportunities. The training was later denied to you.</td>
<td>□ The organization <strong>WAS</strong> at fault: The organization was able to change the event but was unwilling to so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>□ The organization <strong>WAS</strong> at fault; HOWEVER the event was due to a MISTAKE: The organization was able to change the event and willing to change the event.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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APPENDIX F

POSITIVE AFFECTIVITY NEGATIVE AFFECTIVITY SCALE
Instructions: This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to the word. Indicate to what extent you generally feel this way, that is, how you feel on average. Use the following scale to record your answers:

<p>| | | | | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very slightly or not at all</td>
<td>a little</td>
<td>moderately</td>
<td>quite a bit</td>
<td>extremely</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. _____ interested
2. _____ distressed
3. _____ excited
4. _____ upset
5. _____ strong
6. _____ guilty
7. _____ scared
8. _____ hostile
9. _____ enthusiastic
10. _____ proud
This section includes DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS about you. Please answer the questions by placing an "X" in the correct box.

Gender:
- □ Male
- □ Female

Age: ______

Ethnic Background (please only select one):
- □ African American
- □ Hispanic Latino
- □ American Latino
- □ Asian
- □ White
- □ Other

Education (please select the highest level achieved):
- □ Some high school
- □ High School degree
- □ Some college
- □ Associates Degree
- □ Bachelors Degree
- □ Masters Degree
- □ Doctorate Degree

On average, how many hours do you work in a typical week? ______

How long have you been employed within your current organization?
# of years ______ and # of months ______

Are you self-employed?
- □ Yes
- □ No

Please indicate the type of organization you work for (e.g., school district, law firm, retail chain). __________________________

To the best of your ability, please indicate the size of your organization.
- □ Small (less than 30) □ Large (100-499)
- □ Medium (30-99) □ Extra Large (500+)

To the best of your ability, please indicate the size of the department in which you work (e.g., 25 people). _________
APPENDIX H

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT
DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this study. The purpose of this study is gain a greater understanding of employee reactions to organizational changes. The Psychology Department Human Participant Review Board of California State University, San Bernardino has approved this research. If you have any questions regarding the nature of this study, or wish to receive a copy of the results, please feel free to contact Dr. Janelle Gilbert at (909) 880-5587. Results will be available by the summer of 2003, and will only be reported in aggregate.
APPENDIX I

PILOT STUDY VIGNETTES A-H
**Vignette A:**

Last year, you perceived a promised that you had a very good chance of a promotion this year. You have received excellent performance reviews. You arrive at work one morning and are informed that you did not receive the promotion.

**Vignette B:**

When you began working for the organization, specific compensation benefits were promised to you. You did not receive the compensation you were promised.

**Vignette C:**

You were promised performance reviews for developmental purposes. You never received a performance review.

**Vignette D:**

You were promised training which you felt was essential to your career development and job advancement opportunities. The training was later denied to you.

**Vignette E:**

Your benefit package has been changed.

**Vignette F:**

You do your homework and research procedural steps that must be taken within your organization to move forward with career advancement opportunities. You later discover that the stated procedure is not the actual process.

**Vignette G:**

The organization promised you the opportunity to work on something that is of tremendous value to you. You are not given the opportunity to work on it.

**Vignette H:**

You were promised more responsibility than you actually receive.
APPENDIX J

PILOT STUDY RESULTS
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vignette</th>
<th>Decision Dimension</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Reliability Coefficient</th>
<th>Correlations Coefficients with P-O fit</th>
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REFERENCES


