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The Line in the Sand: Understanding Customer Sexual Harassment Through a Psychological Contract Framework

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**THE LINE IN THE SAND:
UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER SEXUAL HARASSMENT
THROUGH A PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT FRAMEWORK**

by

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B.A. December 2004, University of Connecticut

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Old Dominion University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirement for the Degree of

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ABSTRACT

THE LINE IN THE SAND: UNDERSTANDING CUSTOMER SEXUAL HARASSMENT THROUGH A PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT FRAMEWORK

Valerie J. Morganson
Old Dominion University, 2007
Director: Dr. Debra A. Major

Research has demonstrated that customer sexual harassment (CSH) is a frequently occurring phenomenon and an apparent barrier to the career development of women (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Morganson & Major, 2008). The current study applies psychological contract theory toward understanding how CSH leads to adverse outcomes, which affect individuals and organizations. A sample of 420 working women including both students and full-time non-student workers from various organizations were recruited to participate in this online study. CSH and perceptions of employer obligation did not interact to predict psychological contract breach. As hypothesized, psychological contract breach and CSH interacted to predict affective organizational commitment. Contrary to expectations they did not interact to predict mental or physical health. Research implications, limitations, and future directions for research are discussed.

This thesis is dedicated to my brother David.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Sexual harassment has been recognized as a barrier to the career development of women in the academic literature for nearly three decades (e.g., Till, 1980). While the body of research has grown to be vast and is credited with catalyzing social change (e.g., Hughes & Tadic, 1998), it has generally limited its focus to sexual harassment between members of the same organization such as coworkers, supervisors and subordinates. However, recent research suggests that the historical focus on “intraorganizational harassment” is too limited and has sought to expand the parameters of sexual harassment research to include third parties as potential perpetrators. Researchers have highlighted the frequency of customer sexual harassment (CSH) and have demonstrated its unique effect on adverse consequences (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Morganson & Major, 2008). These findings, in addition to various dynamics which characterize customer/worker interactions, suggest that CSH merits research attention in and of itself. The current study is directed at this literature gap. This study adopts a psychological contract theory framework to explain the nature of the relationship between CSH and important outcomes (as identified in previous research), including affective organizational commitment, mental health, and physical health. Chapter 1 begins with a review of the general sexual harassment and CSH research, followed by a review of psychological contract theory as a theoretical framework and presentation of hypotheses.

This thesis adheres to the format of the *Journal of Applied Psychology*.

Sexual Harassment

Researchers, theorists, and legal experts have characterized sexual harassment as a form of sexual discrimination, which frequently results from men's economic power over women and gender roles that define men as sexual agents and women as objects (e.g., Equal Employment Opportunity Commission [EEOC], 1980; Franke, 1997; Gutek, 1985). Sexual harassment includes *unwanted sexual attention* (unsolicited sexual behavior), *sexual coercion* (attempts to gain sexual favors by threat or bribery), and *gender harassment* (generalized sexist remarks or behaviors and general sexualized hostility; Gelfand, Fitzgerald, & Drasgow, 1995). This definition of the psychological construct of sexual harassment is designed to be a parsimonious empirically-based classification of any sexually harassing behavior. The categorization parallels the legal definition, which includes quid pro quo and hostile environment harassment (Welsh, 1999).

Research has identified numerous adverse job-related and health consequences of sexual harassment. A recent meta-analysis showed that sexual harassment was negatively related to job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and workgroup productivity and positively related to withdrawal behaviors. It was also negatively associated with mental health and physical health of victims through symptoms of anxiety depression and posttraumatic stress disorder (Williness, Steel, & Lee, 2007). Sexual harassment is frequent and ubiquitous. It permeates all socioeconomic groups, levels of education, cultures and countries, age groups and vocations (cf., Williness et al., 2007). A meta-analysis on the incidence rates of work-related sexual harassment in the United States found that 58% of women reported experiencing potentially harassing behaviors and 24%

used the label “sexual harassment” to define their experiences (Iiles, Hauserman, Schwochau, & Stibal, 2003).

Customer sexual harassment. Recent research has found that sexual harassment from customers occurs more frequently than and explains significant incremental validity in outcomes beyond intraorganizational harassment (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Morganson & Major, 2008). For example, 86% of participants reported being sexually harassed by customers compared to 40-68% of workers who reported intraorganizational harassment (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007). In a cross-sectional study of 592 female college students who worked at least 10 hours per week, Morganson and Major (2008) found that sexual harassment from non-organizational members explained significant incremental variance in satisfaction with one’s supervisors and coworkers, mental health, and physical health beyond intraorganizational harassment. Similarly, in a sample of 3,445 women in professional and non-professional occupations, CSH significantly predicted general job satisfaction after controlling for intraorganizational harassment (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007).

Scholars have conceptualized sexual harassment as a function of power and dependence (e.g., Tangri, Burt, & Johnson, 1982; Gettman & Gelfand, 2007). Victims are more likely to be targeted by harassers who are in a position of power and authority (e.g., Bargh, Raymond, Pryor & Strack, 1995; Fitzgerald, Magley, Drasgow, 1999). In support of the power and dependency framework in a customer/client context, Gettman and Gelfand (2007) found that perceived client power significantly predicted CSH. Similarly, Fine, Shepherd, and Josephs (1999) found a significant positive relationship between client coercive and reward power and client sexual harassment of saleswomen. They note

that “The relentless customer orientation of many competitive firms makes it imperative for salespeople to act in any manner which maintains the customer’s relationship with the firm” (p. 21). The notion that “the customer is always right” is frequently a guiding company philosophy communicated to the employee as early as the selection process when customer service orientation is an assessment criterion. It is made apparent through mission statements, performance feedback, and the plethora of experiences that comprise organizational socialization. Indeed, displaying positive emotion with customers is a requirement in some jobs (Diefendorff, Richard & Croyle, 2006); it is enforced through supervisor monitoring and customer evaluations (Fuller & Smith, 1996). Customers may also hold coercive and reward power over workers. Reward power is the ability for the power wielder to give some kind of benefit or confer valued materials (French & Raven, 1959). In the service industry, this includes working for tips or commission. It may also include simple patronage: the employee who most readily brings in and pleases the most customers enjoys the benefits of job and career success. Customers possessing distributive power may feel a sense of entitlement to harass workers. Just as customers have the ability to disperse valued rewards, they have the capacity to withhold them (coercive power). Third parties are often able to punish employees for not enduring the treatment they choose to administer, for example, refusing to tip or making it known within the worker’s organization that they will take their business elsewhere.

Because organizational grievance procedures do not apply to customers, the behaviors of these individuals are likely to go unchecked. There are laws on the books requiring companies to protect workers from sexual harassment from third parties to the organization (e.g., [29 code of federal regulations 1604.11(e)]), and a number of law suits

regarding CSH have been filed over the years (e.g., EEOC v. Sage Realty, 1981; Lockard v. Pizza Hut, 1998); however, state and federal laws do not provide the same sexual harassment protection against third party harassers as they do against intraorganizational harassers (cf., Coyle & Sumida, 2005). Third parties are not subject to organizational inoculation training against sexual harassment and are often immune to whistle blowing.

In addition, certain occupations are associated with culturally-held sexual stereotypes which may contribute to the incidence of customer sexual harassment. Particularly in situations where women are working in care and service occupations, sexual scripts may carry over into the workplace (e.g., nursing and bartending) by eliciting traditional gender role schemata. Some occupations may be sexualized due to their history or some other aspect of the job. For example, Fine, Shepherd, and Josephs (1994) argue that the sales profession has historically been associated with sexual overtones creating an environment which predicts increased sexual harassment of female salespeople.

In sum, power dynamics, current law, customer service orientation, and sexual work context are factors that point to CSH as a unique construct. These considerations are compounded by the fact that the service industry is growing and clients are the focal point of many women's work (cf., U.S. Census Bureau, 1997). Because of the centrality of clients to many women's career success, CSH may be difficult to escape and to report successfully (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007). Given the frequency and severity of CSH as a phenomenon and the factors which distinguish it from previous sexual harassment research, additional theory is needed to guide future research and better understand how CSH operates across work contexts. To this end, the next section turns to psychological

contract theory to provide a theoretical framework toward an understanding this new area of research.

Psychological Contract

Psychological contract refers to the expectations based upon both expressed and implied commitments that employees form regarding what to anticipate from their relationship with their employer. While some expectations concern concrete issues such as salary, fringe benefits, working conditions and job tasks, other expectations are less tangible and may include dignity at work, a sense of being cared for by the organization and other socioemotional benefits (Armeli, Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Lynch, 1998; Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994; Rousseau, 1995; Schalk & Roe, 2007). Rousseau (1990) argued that individuals begin to form their schema of what the contract entails at the outset of the employment relationship and that the contract continues to develop over time. During the course of development, individuals come to perceive contracts as obligations, rather than mere expectations (Rousseau, 1990). Individuals vary in both their schemata and what they deem to be an acceptable range of deviation from the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995; Schalk & Roe, 2007). Thus, psychological contracts are highly subjective and must be understood from the employee's perspective (Rousseau, 1989).

Organizations may intentionally or inadvertently violate the psychological contract by surpassing employee expectations of the agreement (e.g., Robinson, 1996; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). Psychological contract theory argues that individuals may experience a *contract breach* or perception that the contract has been broken in some way (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Robinson & Morrison, 2000; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007).

Research shows that contract breaches occur frequently and have important implications for both individuals and organizations (Robinson, 1996; Robinson & Morrison, 1995; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994). In a sample of 128 managers, Robinson and Rousseau (1994) found that 55% reported that their organization had failed to fulfill a promise within the first two years of the employment relationship. Results also indicate that contract breaches lead to adverse reactions by the injured party. Perceived contract breach is negatively linked to employer trust, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, intention to stay with the organization, and in-role and extra role performance (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Turnley & Feldman, 2000; Robinson, 1996; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Zhao et al., 2007). Individuals reporting high levels of contract violation also report high levels of tardiness, absenteeism and intention to leave the organization (Robinson, 1996; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Zhao et al., 2007). Furthermore, Rousseau (1990) argues that as contracts break down, expressions of emotion, including signs of aggression and depression are likely to occur.

The perception that one's basic values are at risk in a work situation (e.g., when the environment becomes dangerous or threatening) constitutes one kind of breach of contract (Schalk & Roe, 2007). For example, in a qualitative study, participants reported that they would perceive the organization to have committed an intolerable behavior if they were not treated as a person and if they were confronted with sexual harassment (Schalk & Roe, 2007). Notice that the outcomes of contract breach – organizational withdrawal, emotional response, reduced job satisfaction, and performance – correspond with the outcomes of intraorganizational and customer sexual harassment discussed in the previous section. It is asserted that the similarity is not incidental; sexual harassment is

concordant with a psychological contract theory framework. CSH is conceptualized as a form of contract breach, which precedes adverse reactions by the affected party. To the extent that workers hold particular expectations of their employers (e.g., being treated with dignity, a sense of being cared for, etc.), it is expected that CSH will be perceived as a contract breach. Thus, it was proposed that,

Hypothesis 1: Perceived organizational obligations moderate the relationship between customer sexual harassment and contract breach. A greater relationship between CSH and contract breach exists when perceived organizational obligations are greater.

For those who work in environments where CSH is notoriously a job hazard (e.g., cocktail waitress, flight attendant), some expectation of exposure to sexualized treatment may be an implicit part of the psychological contract. Women with a low tolerance for CSH may opt out of certain lines of work altogether. The tendency for women who do not fit in positions with high risk of CSH is explained by the Attraction-Selection-Attrition (ASA) model (Schneider, 1987). The three processes in this model explain how organizations and jobs become homogeneously comprised of employees with similar qualities. Women with high sensitivity to CSH are unlikely to stay in positions where they are subject to CSH; those who stay are likely to experience negative affective responses and withdrawal from the organization. Conversely, the model suggests that women who opt to work in positions where sexualized treatment is an explicitly stated or

implied part of the employment agreement may be better psychologically prepared to deal with CSH.

Psychological contracts vary along a continuum (Lester, Kickul, & Bergmann, 2007; MacNeil, 1985; Rousseau, 1990). On one end, *transactional contracts* typically involve interactions which are monetizable exchanges (i.e., they can be readily compensated by financial or tangible payment). On the other end, *relational contracts* can involve more open-ended agreements including monetizable and non-monetizable exchanges (e.g., exchanges involving meaningfulness of work; Robinson, Kratz, & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1990).

The logic of psychological contract theory suggests that CSH may be more salient and noxious to women who have a relational contract with their employer (e.g., they expect particular treatment in return for the personal investment they have made in their career and job) than for those who have more transactional-type contracts (e.g., they expect only superficial compensation such as money). Women with broader psychological contracts are more likely to perceive CSH as undermining and contrary to their perceived psychological contracts. As Guzzo, Nelson, and Noonan (1992) assert, some individuals' relationships with their employers are considerably more encompassing than others, particularly when organizations are extensively involved in and have a significant influence on employees' lives on and off the job. While these more encompassing psychological contracts are linked to more extensive employee involvement and commitment, the downside is that they bear an increased risk that a contract breach will be perceived (Guzzo et al., 1994). Gettman and Gelfand's (2007) finding – that CSH is reported with greater frequency for women in professional

occupations – may be taken as support of the notion that CSH is associated with more severe consequences for women with broader psychological contracts.

Researchers have used the continuum of contract types (from transactional to relational) descriptively rather than as a basis for research (Lester et al., 2007; MacNeil, 1985; Rousseau, 1990). Instead, psychological contracts are researched by asking participants about elements of contracts; measures frequently include both relational and transactional contracts and the items are combined together (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro, 2002; Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003; Robinson, 1996; Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson & Morrison 1995; Rousseau, 1990). Because CSH is theoretically a breach of expected relational treatment (e.g., being treated with dignity and a sense of being cared for by one's organization) rather than the result of breaches of transactional obligations (e.g., job duties, pay, benefits, etc.) this thesis focuses on the presence and absence of relational elements of the psychological contract. The bipolar continuum is used here only as an illustrative example. The focus of this thesis is upon individuals' particular perceptions and expectations; this focus is comfortably in line with psychological contract theory which asserts that psychological contracts must be understood from the individual's perspective (Rousseau, 1995).

To test psychological contract theory as a framework for understanding CSH, the relationship between CSH, perceived contract breach, and three outcome variables which have been linked to CSH in prior literature were examined. It was expected that psychological contract theory would provide a better explanation of variance than is provided by examining direct relationships between CSH and outcome variables. First, the relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment was considered.

Affective organizational commitment refers to one's emotional attachment to their organization (Meyer & Allen, 1991). Affective organizational commitment is relevant to women's career development because it is negatively associated with turnover, and positively associated with work performance and well-being (Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, & Topolnytsky, 2002). In previous research, Gettman and Gelfand (2007) identified a negative link between CSH and affective organizational commitment. Psychological contract breach has also been negatively linked with affective organizational commitment (Bunderson, 2001; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Zhao et al., 2007). Thus, it was predicted that:

Hypothesis 2: Perceived contract breach moderates the relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment. A greater relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment exists when perceived contract breach is greater.

In prior research, Morganson and Major (2008) found significant negative relationships between CSH and mental and physical health. Similarly, Gettman and Gelfand (2007) found that CSH was positively linked to stress in general and psychological distress and negatively linked to health satisfaction. Following the rationale outlined above, the following was proposed:

Hypothesis 3: Perceived contract breach moderates the relationship between CSH and mental health. A greater relationship between CSH and mental health exists when perceived contract breach is greater.

Hypothesis 4: Perceived contract breach moderates the relationship between CSH and physical health. A greater relationship between CSH and physical health exists when perceived contract breach is greater.

CHAPTER II

METHOD

Procedure

Based on a power analysis, I sought a minimum of 410 participants for this study. The power analysis was performed using the only available effect sizes for the variables and relationships of interest. Average R^2 for customer sexual harassment (across dependent variables: mental health, physical health, affective organizational commitment) was set at .04 (cf., Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Morganson & Major, 2008). An average R^2 value of .27 was used for the relationship between affective organizational commitment and psychological contract breach (cf., Bunderson, 2001; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Zhao et al., 2007). Since no effect sizes for the proposed interactions were available, power analysis was calculated using a standard small effect size ($R^2 = .02$).

A convenience sample of 420 females working in customer service occupations comprised the participant pool. The sample included jobs that are stereotypically associated with a sexualized context or script (e.g., restaurant staff) and as well as those that are typically male dominated (e.g., insurance claims adjusters). Participants were recruited using several methods in order to create an aggregate database with a widely representative cross-section of female customer service workers. First, the survey was posted on listservs and invitations were sent to informal email distribution lists. These included the listserv for the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues (SPSSI), the Psychology of Women Resource List (an affiliate of SPSSI), the Women's Center

mailing list at Old Dominion University, and 7 groups of customer service workers on Facebook (an online networking website). The link was also posted on the University Announcements and sent within the Psychology Department at Old Dominion University. Appendix A contains a sample posting. In total, 105 (25.0%) participants in the aggregate sample were recruited using these mass distribution methods. Second, an email containing specific information and instructions for participation was provided to colleagues of the researcher who have contact with target populations (Appendix B). A snowball technique was used to gather target participants through these contacts. Emails were sent to alumni of the Old Dominion University psychology program. Paper copies of the email invitation were distributed by hand to women working in customer service positions. Appendix C contains the script used in soliciting participants in the field. Additionally, women's interest group websites that listed female workers' names and email addresses were invited to participate. A total of 121 (28.81%) women responded to these individual recruiting methods. Third, 167 (39.8%) students at Old Dominion University were recruited using the psychology department's human subjects pool. Appendix D contains the study advertisement. Students were screened in an initial survey before they were allowed to participate. Only female students who indicated that they worked in addition to their studies had access to participate. The survey was advertised for customer service workers only. Fourth, students in two sections of an Old Dominion University Industrial/Organizational Psychology class were invited to participate directly because SONA credit was not offered in these courses. Forty-seven students participated, but only 27 were females with identifiable customer service positions based on their job descriptions. These 27 participants comprised 6.4% of the final sample.

This study is part of a larger research project funded by the Clara Mayo Grant for pre-dissertation research from the Society for the Psychological Study of Social Issues. All non-students were offered a one-in-ten chance to win a \$50 cash prize in exchange for participation for completing both parts of a longitudinal study with two time points. The current study used cross-sectional data from their time 1 responses. Non-student participants were identifiable by an assigned participant number. This part of the study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Old Dominion University. The informed consent form, which appeared as the first web page of the survey, is included in Appendix E. All student participants were offered a half credit in exchange for participation with no option for monetary compensation due to budget constraints. Their responses were anonymous and cross-sectional only. Student participation was granted exempt status through the University College of Sciences Human Subjects Committee. The letter to student participants, which appeared as the first web page of the student survey is included in Appendix F.

Surveys took approximately 20 minutes to complete and participants were assured of the confidentiality of the data. To minimize response bias, the term "sexual harassment" was not used to advertise the survey. Instead, the contents of the survey were generally described as follows: "The survey asks about a number of work perceptions and experiences that are both positive and negative to explain how they relate to behavior, attitudes, and well-being." It was essential to avoid using the term "sexual harassment" explicitly because evidence suggests priming may occur if the term is used. Numerous studies have documented a difference between experiencing offensive unwelcome, sex-related behaviors and labeling the incidents as sexual harassment (e.g., Cortina, Swan,

Fitzgerald, & Waldo, 1998; Magley, Hulin, Fitzgerald, & DeNardo, 1999). At least two studies have examined sexual harassment longitudinally without explicitly stating that the study was about sexual harassment as was done in the current study (Glomb, Munson, & Hulin, 1999; Munson, Hulin, & Drasgow, 2000). To further avoid response bias, scales of outcomes (contract breach, affective organizational commitment, and mental and physical health) were placed prior to the measures of CSH, and perceived employer obligations.

Participants

Participants were an average of 29.36 years old ($SD = 11.67$) and worked for their company an average of 4.17 years ($SD = 5.77$). They worked an average of 32.66 ($SD = 12.35$) hours per week. Participants also reported working with a client base that is 52.34% female ($SD = 22.50\%$). The percentage of female coworkers averaged 60.24% ($SD = 26.35\%$). Participants reported holding a wide variety of jobs. Examples include legal assistant, sales and service representative, waitress, lawyer, sales consultant, claims representative, consultant, project manager, physicians' assistant, and receptionist. The majority of participants had attended some college (47.9%) or held an associate's (15%) or bachelor's degree (16%). Most reported an individual annual income of \$30,000 or less (61%) and were paid an hourly wage (65.3%). Most were White (73.6%) or Black/African American (21.9%). Participants were mostly single (52.6%) or married (28.6%). Frequencies of participant responses on nominal demographic variables are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency Table of Demographics

Variable	<i>n</i>	%
Educational Background		
Some high school	2	.5
High school diploma	19	4.5
Some college	201	47.9
Associate's degree	63	15.0
Bachelor's degree	67	16.0
Some graduate school	20	4.8
Master's degree	38	9.0
PsyD, PhD or MD	10	2.4
Individual Annual Income		
Less than \$30,000	256	61.0
\$30,000 to \$59,999	118	28.1
\$60,000 to \$89,999	26	6.2
\$90,000 or above	14	3.3
Missing data	6	1.4
Pay Structure		
Salary	144	34.3
Hourly	271	65.3
Missing data	5	1.2
Race ^a		
White	309	73.6
Black or African American	92	21.9
Hispanic	17	4.0
Asian	15	3.6
Other	14	3.3
Relationship status		
Single	221	52.6
Married	120	28.6
Living with Partner	43	10.2
Divorced/Separated	35	8.4
Widowed	1	.2

Note. *N* = 420.

- a. Participants checked all races that applied. Some participants indicated multiple backgrounds.

Measures

Customer Sexual Harassment. Customer sexual harassment was measured using the SEQ-C (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007), a version of the Sexual Experiences Questionnaire (SEQ; Fitzgerald, Gelfand, & Drasgow, 1995) which has been adapted for use in a client context. The items are listed in Appendix G. The SEQ has been in circulation for nearly two decades and is the most widely used measure of sexual harassment (Donovan & Drasgow, 1999). The SEQ is a self-reported experiential behavioral frequency index. Items represent four factors: unwanted sexual attention, sexist hostility, sexual hostility and sexual coercion. Participants respond using a 5-point scale ranging from “never” to “most of the time”.

The instrument derives its content validity from an early systematic qualitative study of experiential data from a national sample of college students (Till, 1980). More recently, Gettman and Gelfand (2007) conducted telephone interviews with professional service women and found that the items and factors are consistent and exhaustive of the behaviors reported by their participants. They adapted the SEQ to refer to clients and customers by changing only the measure’s referent. In place of the stem sentence which originally referred to harassing behaviors from “a male coworker or supervisor,” the SEQ-C refers to “a male customer or client.” Their confirmatory factor analysis yielded a good fit for the 4-factor structure (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007).

Overall, reliability in the current study was very strong ($\alpha = .93$). Alpha reliabilities were also high for facets: sexual hostility ($\alpha = .90$), sexist hostility ($\alpha = .82$), unwanted sexual attention ($\alpha = .81$) and sexual coercion ($\alpha = .91$).

Employer obligations. To capture perceptions of employer obligations in the psychological contract, Rousseau's (1990) measure was adapted to include non-tangible contract expectations. There is no validated measure of employer obligations in published literature. Some researchers have measured employer obligations using Rousseau's (1990) measure, often with substituted items to suit their target population (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro, 2002; Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003; Robinson, 1996; Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Robinson & Morrison 1995; Rousseau, 1990); others have created and utilized unpiloted measures (e.g., Bunderson, 2001; Cavanaugh & Noe, 1999; Deery, Iverson, & Walsh, 2006; Lampert, Edwards, & Cable, 2003); and others have relied on qualitative data (e.g., Herriot, Manning & Kid, 1997; Lester et al., 2007).

The original measure of employer obligations asked participants to indicate the extent to which their employer owed them or was obligated to provide promotion, high pay, pay based on current level of performance, training, long-term job security, career development, and support with personal problems. The items in the current measure reflect literature themes and are intended to represent broad, relational-type contracts (cf., Roehling, Cavanaugh, Moynihan, & Boswell, 2000). The content and theory draws from the perceived organizational support literature (e.g., Eisenberger, Huntingon, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986; Eisenberger, Armeli, Rexwinkel, Lynch & Rhoades, 2001). Like psychological contract theory, the construct of perceived organizational support is grounded in social exchange theory. Perceived organizational support has been previously examined and conceptualized in relation to psychological contract breaches and violations (e.g., Bellou, 2007; Coyle-Shapiro, Morrow, & Kessler, 2006; Guzzo et al., 1994).

The adapted measure was piloted on a sample of 334 working students at Old Dominion University. The coefficient alpha for this measure was .72. Obligation was measured in conjunction with psychological contract breach. The format of the questions is discussed in the next section.

Psychological contract breach. Psychological contract breach was measured with the same set of items used to measure obligations (Appendix H). In addition to rating obligations, participants rated each item on two additional scales. They were asked “How important is receiving this from your employer to you?” and “How much did you receive this from your employer compared to how much you expected it?” Each item was listed above three drop down menus representing (1) employer obligations, (2) importance, and (3) amount received versus expected. Items were presented in this manner to avoid redundancy and to facilitate discrimination between each of the questions. Importance ratings were made on a scale from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*very important*). Participants rated whether or not their expectations were met on a scale from 1 (*received much less than expected*) to 5 (*received much more than expected*). This latter scale was reverse scored so that higher numbers indicate greater contract breach. Researchers have examined obligations, importance and amount of item received versus expected to measure contract breach (e.g., Orvis, Dudley, & Cortina, in press; Turnley & Feldman, 1999; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). Amount of the element received versus expected was multiplied by importance for weighting. The product scores are summed as a measure of contract breach (Orvis et al., in press; Turnley & Feldman, 1999; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). The coefficient alpha for this measure was .77.

Mental and physical health. The Short Form 12 (SF-12; Ware, Kosinski, & Keller, 1996) was used to evaluate physical and mental health outcomes. It includes 12 questions from the SF-36 (SF-36; Hays, Sherbourne & Mazel, 1993) regarding physical functioning, role limitations due to physical health problems, bodily pain, general health, vitality, social functioning, role limitations due to emotional problems, and general mental health (Appendix I). This measure breaks down into two subscales, the Physical Component Summary (PCS) and the Mental Component Summary (MCS). These subscales were treated as separate dependent variables. Validity and reliability data for this shortened measure were evaluated on a large U.S. sample ($N = 2,333$). In previous research, the SF-12 was found to possess strong criterion-related and concurrent validity in research comparing its results to clinical diagnoses. These studies validated the measure cross-sectionally and longitudinally across various severities of physical and emotional conditions. This abbreviated measure of the SF-36 was found to correlate .95 and .97 on the physical and mental dimensions respectively (Ware, et al., 1996). Internal consistency reliability cannot be calculated for this measure because responses are made on multiple different scales; the measure uses a complex coding algorithm that mathematically combines the responses to each item to create a scale score.

Affective organizational commitment. Affective organization commitment was measured using the affective portion of Meyer, Allen, and Smith's (1993) organizational commitment scale (Appendix J). Participants respond to six items on a 7-point scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). In previous research, affective organizational commitment repeatedly emerged as a unique construct, separate from other forms of commitment (e.g., normative and continuance commitment; Meyer &

Allen, 1991; Meyer et al., 1993). In support of the theoretical rationale of the construct, it was positively related to job satisfaction and has predicted turnover intentions, performance and employee citizenship in a longitudinal study (Meyer et al., 1993). Alpha reliabilities for this measure ranged from .85 to .87 (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Meyer et al., 1993). Similarly, the coefficient alpha in this study was .84.

Control variables. Participants were asked their race, marital status, pay structure (hourly or salary), income, educational level, organizational and occupational tenure, and hours worked per week. They were also asked to estimate the percentage of female customers and coworkers that they deal with on a regular basis (i.e., customer and coworker gender context, respectively).

CHAPTER III

RESULTS

Factor Analyses

The items for employer obligations and psychological contract breach were factor analyzed using principle components analysis with varimax rotation. Because the two measures use the same items, when items from both scales are entered in the same analysis they do not cleanly load onto two factors; matching items are cohesive. Thus, the two scales were examined with separate analyses. The results for the factor analyses for employer obligations and psychological contract breach are shown in Tables 2 and 3, respectively. The employer obligations scale yielded two factors. The items that failed to load with the other factors were “How much do you believe your employer is obligated to provide you with (1) support for personal problems and (2) a sense of being cared for.” These items were dropped from both the employer obligations and psychological contract breach measure with the rationale that if the item does not represent an obligation (as the first factor analysis indicated) theoretically it is not representative of employees’ psychological contracts. Each of the final measures had similar content and loaded onto a single factor as shown in Tables 4 and 5.

Table 2

Initial Factor Analysis Results for Perceived Employer Obligations

Item	Factor	
	1	2
A safe working environment	.72	-.00
A sense of being cared for	.05	.83
Respect	.74	.17
Fair treatment	.80	.04
Psychological safety	.57	.39
Protection against aggressive customers	.56	.29
Support for personal problems	.18	.79
	Eigenvalue	2.80
	% Variance explained	40.0
		1.16
		16.5

Note. Bolded items indicate the strongest relationship between the item and the extracted factor.

Table 3

Initial Factor Analysis Results for Psychological Contract Breach

Item	Factor Loading
A safe working environment	.57
A sense of being cared for	.57
Respect	.79
Fair treatment	.79
Psychological safety	.66
Protection against aggressive customers	.62
Support for personal problems	.75

Note. Eigenvalue = 3.26, variance explained = 46.58%.

Table 4

Factor Analysis Results for Perceived Employer Obligations

Item	Factor Loading
A safe working environment	.69
Respect	.76
Fair treatment	.77
Psychological safety	.68
Protection against aggressive customers	.63

Note. Eigenvalue = 2.48, variance explained = 49.62%.

Table 5

Factor Analysis Results for Psychological Contract Breach

Item	Factor Loading
A safe working environment	.65
Respect	.81
Fair treatment	.83
Psychological safety	.64
Protection against aggressive customers	.65

Note. Eigenvalue = 2.59, variance explained = 51.73%.

Data Screening and Descriptive Statistics

The initial sample included 423 participants. However, two were removed due to severe univariate outliers on demographic variables, which raised concerns about the integrity of their data. One participant was removed for extreme scores on the mental and physical health outcomes. Means, standard deviations, alpha reliabilities and bivariate correlations were run for the variables of interest and are presented in Table 6.

Mahalanobis' distance detected multivariate outliers. Multivariate outliers were only removed in the analysis for which the scores were extreme; they were not permanently

deleted from the dataset. There were eight outliers for the regression equation used to test Hypothesis 1, seven for Hypothesis 2, nine for Hypothesis 3, and ten for Hypothesis 4. Participants with missing data for any of the key variables in the study were removed from analysis using listwise deletion (2-3% depending upon the regression equation). Distributions for sexual harassment were non-normal; both skewness (statistic = 1.47, SE = .12) and kurtosis were high (statistic = 2.17, SE = .24). To bring the variables to normal, logarithmic and inverse transformations of sexual harassment variables were attempted but did not impact the results in testing the hypotheses. Because transformations did not improve significance in subsequent analyses to test the hypotheses and for the sake of maintaining easily interpretable results, transformed scores were ultimately not used. Scatterplots of standardized errors and predictors appeared normal supporting heteroscedasticity. Loesse lines were plotted to test for linearity between predictors and outcome variables and linearity was supported. Tolerance levels were all above .1 supporting that multicollinearity was not a problem. Q-Q plots and histograms were examined to test the assumption of normality of residuals; this assumption was supported. There was a sufficient ratio of cases to independent variables to adequately test hypotheses. There were more than 40 cases per IV, which is desirable for stepwise regression (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007).

Table 6

Means, Standard Deviations and Intercorrelations^a of Variables

Variable	M	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Hours/Wk	32.66	13.35	-										
2. Age	29.36	11.67	.47***	-									
3. Tenure	4.17	5.77	.38***	.59***	-								
4. Client Gender Context	52.32	22.50	-.14**	.60***	.02	-							
5. Work Gender Context	60.24	26.35	-.12*	-.13**	.01	.69***	-						
6. Physical Health ^b	53.25	7.09	-.01	-.12*	.00	-.04	-.08	-					
7. Mental Health ^b	43.85	10.38	.09	.19***	.07	.08	.07	-.17***	-				
8. Affective Commitment	4.39	1.42	.20***	.26***	.16**	.05	.04	-.07	-.20***	(.84)			
9. Employer Obligations	4.24	.63	.10*	.06	.06	.01	-.04	-.06	.11*	.15**	(.72)		
10. Contract Breach	65.22	17.71	.06	.06	.06	-.04	-.08	-.05	-.26***	-.36***	.11*	(.77)	
11. CSH	1.58	.60	-.04	-.19***	-.15**	-.08	-.12*	-.07	-.18	-.18***	-.02	.18***	(.93)

Note. * $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

a. Coefficient alphas are reported on the diagonal.

b. Alpha levels could not be calculated because the measure is based on general population scores. In prior literature, this scale has a mean score of 50 and standard deviation of 10 (Ware et al., 1996).

Test of Hypotheses

Following Baron and Kenny's (1986) procedure for assessing moderation using multiple regression, four hierarchical multiple regression equations were used to test hypotheses. For the first equation, perceived employer obligations and CSH were regressed onto contract breach in step 1. The interaction term (perceived obligations x CSH) was entered in step 2. To test hypotheses 2-4, a regression equation was calculated for each dependent variable (affective organizational commitment, mental health, and physical health). Control variables were entered in the first step. CSH and perceived contract breach were entered in the next step. Finally, the interaction term (CSH x perceived breach) was entered last. CSH and psychological contract breach were centered before they were entered into the equation and before the interaction term was created (Aiken & West, 1991). Significant interaction terms were sought as support for each hypothesis. Tables 7, 8, 9 and 10 display the unstandardized coefficients (B), the standardized coefficients (β), semi-partial correlations (sr_i^2), R-squared values and change in R-squared for each step of the regression analysis on the dependent variables. Covariates were selected using a theoretical approach.

CSH as a form of contract breach. Hypothesis 1 predicted that perceived organizational obligations would moderate the relationship between CSH and contract breach such that a greater relationship between CSH and contract breach would exist when perceived organizational obligations were greater. To test this hypothesis CSH and employer obligations were regressed onto psychological contract breach (Table 7). After entering employer obligations and CSH in step 1, the R was significantly different from zero, $F(2,407) = 11.86, p < .001, R^2 = .06$. Employer obligations significantly positively

predicted psychological contract breach ($\beta = .04, p < .05, sr_i^2 = .01$). Customer sexual harassment significantly positively predicted psychological contract breach ($\beta = .21, p < .001, sr_i^2 = .04$). When the interaction term of CSH and employer obligations was added to the equation the change in R was significantly different from zero, $F(3,406) = 8.14, p < .001, R^2 = .00$. However, contrary to Hypothesis 1, the change in R-square was not significant, ($\Delta R^2 = .00, n.s.$). The interaction term (CSH multiplied by employer obligations) did not predict psychological contract breach ($\beta = .04, n.s.$).

Table 7

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Psychological Contract Breach

Variable	B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	sr_i^2
Step 1			.06***		
Employer obligations	3.09	.10*			.01
CSH	6.46	.21***			.04
Step 2			.06***	.00	
Employer obligations X CSH	2.20	.04			.00

Note. * $p < .05$, *** $p < .001$; N = 410

Affective organizational commitment. Hypothesis 2 predicted that perceived contract breach would moderate the relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment; a greater relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment was expected when perceived contract breach was greater.

To test this hypothesis CSH and psychological contract breach were regressed onto affective organizational commitment (Table 8). After entering the control variables in step 1, the R was significantly different from zero, $F(4,400) = 10.63, p < .001, R^2 = .10$. Age was positively related to affective organizational commitment ($\beta = .19, p < .01, sr_i^2 = .02$). Company tenure did not predict affective organizational commitment ($\beta = .06, n.s.$). Hours did not significantly predict affective organizational commitment ($\beta = .08, n.s.$). Sub-sample (student or non-student) did not significantly predict affective organizational commitment ($\beta = .04, n.s.$). The R was significantly different from zero in step 2, $F(6,398) = 23.23, p < .001, R^2 = .26$. The second model, which included CSH and psychological contract breach significantly predicted affective organizational commitment. Psychological contract breach negatively predicted affective organizational commitment ($\beta = -.40, p < .001, sr_i^2 = .16$). CSH did not significantly predict affective organizational commitment ($\beta = -.03, n.s.$). When the interaction term of psychological contract breach and CSH was added to the equation the change in R was significantly different from zero, $F(1,397) = 20.73, p < .001, R^2 = .27$. In support of Hypothesis 2, the change in R-square was significant ($\Delta R^2 = .01, p < .05$); the interaction explained incremental variance beyond psychological contract and CSH. As shown in Figure 1, the interaction of CSH and psychological contract breach significantly predicted affective organizational commitment ($\beta = .10, p < .05, sr_i^2 = .01$). As predicted, the relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment was greater when psychological contract breach was greater.

Table 8
Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Affective Organizational Commitment

Variable	B	β	R ²	ΔR^2	sr _i ²
Step 1			.10***		
Age	.02	.19**			.02
Tenure	.02	.06			.00
Hours	.01	.08			.00
Student/non-student [†]	.11	.04			.00
Step 2			.26***	.16***	
Psychological contract breach	-.03	-.40***			.16
CSH	-.08	-.03			.00
Step 3			.27*	.01*	
Breach X CSH	.01	.10			.00

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$ *** $p < .001$; N = 405.

[†] Sub-sample is orthogonally coded (0 = student sub-sample; 1 = non-student sub-sample).

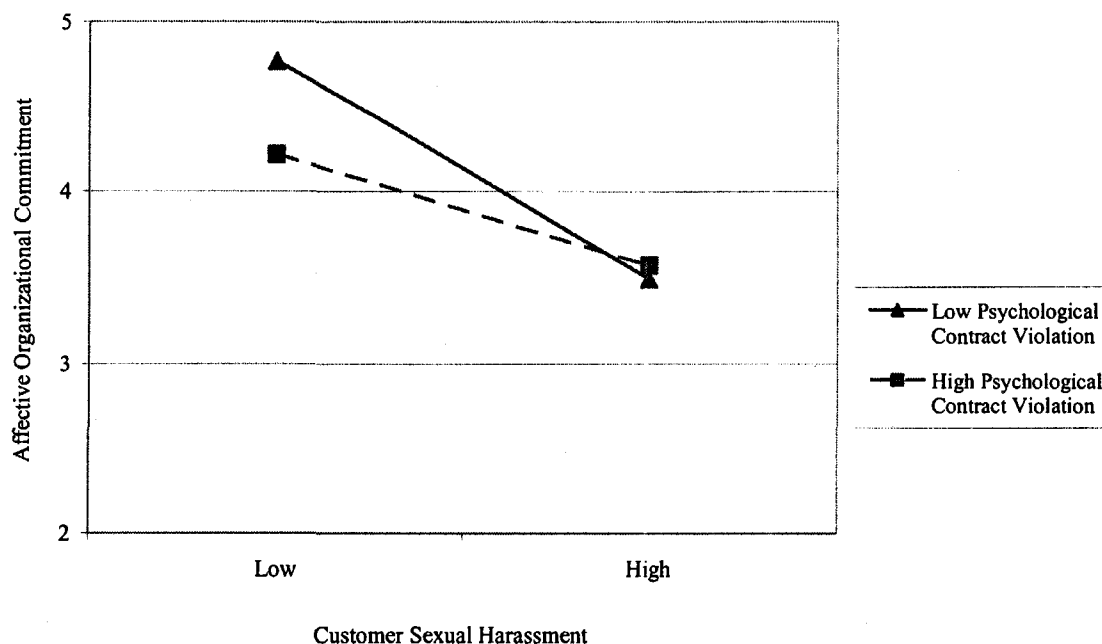


Figure 1. Graphical representation of psychological contract breach as a moderator of the relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment.

Mental health. CSH and psychological contract breach were regressed onto mental health to test Hypothesis 3 (see Table 9). Covariates were entered in step 1 and the R was significantly different from zero, $F(2,405) = 8.74, p < .001, R^2 = .04$. Age significantly positively predicted mental health ($\beta = .21, p < .001, sr_i^2 = .03$). Sub-sample (student or non-student) did not significantly predict mental health ($\beta = -.03, n.s.$). Psychological contract breach and CSH were added in step 2 and the R was significantly different from zero, $F(2,403) = 14.70, p < .001, R^2 = .13$. CSH negatively predicted mental health at a trend level ($\beta = -.09, p < .10, sr_i^2 = .01$). Psychological contract breach significantly negatively predicted mental health ($\beta = -.27, p < .001, sr_i^2 = .07$). When the interaction of CSH and psychological contract breach was added, the R was significantly different from zero, $F(1,402) = 29.39, p < .001, R^2 = .13$. However, contrary to

Hypothesis 3 the change in R-square was non-significant ($\Delta R^2 = .00, n.s.$). The interaction term (CSH multiplied by employer obligations) did not predict mental health ($\beta = .00, n.s.$).

Table 9

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Mental Health

Variable	B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	sr_i^2
Step 1			.04***		
Age	.19	.21***			.03
Student/non-student [†]	.52	.03			.00
Step 2			.13***	.09***	
Psychological contract breach	-.15	-.27***			.07
CSH	-1.50	-.02 ^a			.01
Step 2			.13***	.00	
Breach X CSH	.00	.00			.00

Note. ^a $p < .10$, *** $p < .001$; N = 408.

[†] Sub-sample is orthogonally coded (0 = student sub-sample; 1 = non-student sub-sample).

Physical health. CSH and psychological contract breach were regressed onto physical health to test Hypothesis 4 (see Table 10). Covariates were added in step 1 and the R was different from zero at a trend level, $F(2,398) = 2.86, p < .10, R^2 = .01$. Age significantly negatively predicted physical health ($\beta = -.13, p < .05, sr_i^2 = .01$). Sub-sample (student or non-student) did not significantly predict physical health ($\beta = .28, n.s.$). Psychological contract breach and CSH were added in step 2 and the R was not significantly different from zero, $F(4,396) = 1.74, n.s.$ CSH ($\beta = -.06, n.s.$) and psychological contract breach ($\beta = .00, n.s.$) did not significantly predict physical health. When the interaction of CSH and psychological contract breach was added, the R was not significantly different from zero, $F(5,395) = 1.39, n.s.$ Contrary to Hypothesis 4, the change in R-square was not significant interaction was non-significant ($\Delta R^2 = .00, n.s.$). The interaction term (CSH multiplied by employer obligations) did not significantly predict physical health ($\beta = .01, n.s.$).

Table 10

Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Physical Health

Variable	B	β	R^2	ΔR^2	sr_i^2
Step 1			.01		
Age	-.07	-.13*			.01
Student/non-student [†]	.28	.02			.02
Step 2			.01	.00	
Psychological contract breach	.00	.00			.00
CSH	-.66	-.06			.01
Step 3			.01	.00	
Breach X CSH	.00	.01			.00

Note. N = 401.

[†] Sub-sample is orthogonally coded (0 = student sub-sample; 1 = non-student sub-sample).

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

In this study, 84.8% of participants reported experiencing at least one of the sexually harassing behaviors (e.g., hearing offensive stories or jokes, being treated differently because of one's sex) in the measure "once or twice" or more frequently. Additionally, 23.8% responded "yes" when asked if they had experienced sexual harassment. Customer sexual harassment is a common occurrence which is only recently being explored in research (Getman & Gelfand, 2007; Morganson & Major, 2008). This study applied psychological contract theory as a framework to better understand how CSH affects women across a variety of customer service positions. To this end, moderate support was found for psychological contract theory as a framework.

Psychological Contract Breach

This study was the first to link sexual harassment to psychological contract theory. In the testing of Hypothesis 1, although the predicted interaction term (employer obligations x CSH) was non-significant, CSH significantly predicted psychological contract breach. The effect was larger than that of employer obligations suggesting that customer sexual harassment constitutes a relatively powerful type of psychological contract breach. This is consistent with the statements made in Schalk and Roe's (2007) qualitative results; individuals may perceive the organization to have committed an intolerable behavior if they were confronted with sexual harassment. Surprisingly, organizational obligations and CSH were unrelated, which is likely why the proposed interaction in Hypothesis 1 was non-significant. The finding that CSH and employer

obligations were not related may reflect limitations in the measure of employer obligations, but may also have a meaningful interpretation. It may reflect that CSH is a breach of implicit values that are manifested only when these values are confronted.

Affective Organizational Commitment

In Hypothesis 2, as expected, psychological contract breach moderated the relationship between CSH and affective organizational commitment. The negative relationship between CSH and affective commitment was greater when perceived psychological contract breach was greater. Affective organizational commitment is relevant to women's career development because it links to turnover, work performance and well-being (Meyer et al., 2002). CSH may discourage women from particular jobs, and may lead them to "adapt" to and to endure sexist treatment. This treatment may be an implicit or explicit part of the psychological contract. The findings of the current study suggest that these barriers are not completely overt. The types of jobs that women are selected into and the set of expectations that they form as part of their employment relationship may camouflage the sexist treatment they endure.

The testing of Hypothesis 2 also found that CSH contract breach was negatively related to affective organizational commitment. The negative link between psychological contract breach and affective organizational commitment is also confirms existing research (Bunderson, 2001; Johnson & O'Leary-Kelly, 2003; Zhao et al., 2007). In contrast to previous research (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007) the link between CSH and affective organizational commitment was non-significant. However, CSH was negatively related to affective organizational commitment before age was added as a covariate. This suggests that CSH is largely an effect of age. The types of jobs that younger workers hold

may be associated with a greater risk for sexual harassment. Furthermore, sexual harassment is an outgrowth of power; younger women likely fall target to CSH more often because age is an indicator of power and status.

Health Outcomes

Although this study did not find support for Hypotheses 3 and 4, which predicted that psychological contract breach would moderate the relationship between CSH and health outcomes, CSH and psychological contract breach had negative main effects on mental health. The finding that CSH is negatively related to mental health confirms previous research (Morganson & Major, 2008). Expanding upon the psychological literature, this was the first study to identify mental health as an outcome of psychological contract breach. The results provide support for Rousseau's assertion that as psychological contracts break down signs of aggression and depression occur.

Non-significant findings for Hypotheses 3 and 4, which predicted that CSH and contract breach would interact to predict mental and physical health outcomes may be attributed to several causes. First, the power analysis was based on an average estimated effect size across outcomes. Previous psychological contract research had not examined the effect size of health outcomes. The effect of CSH and health was smaller than the effect of CSH and affective commitment in past research (Morganson & Major, 2008). Thus, it is possible that with more participants Hypotheses 3 and 4 may find support. Indeed, the interaction term in the regression analysis predicting physical health was nearing significance ($p = .16$). Second, although the SF-12 has been validated and is widely used (Ware et al., 1996), it may not be ideal for psychological research. For example, it was surprising that the mental and physical health component summary scales

were negatively correlated. Additionally, more proximal outcomes, such as health satisfaction, psychological distress, and stress in general may yield a greater effect than mental and physical health themselves; these outcomes have been linked with CSH in past research (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007).

Effect sizes

Although effect sizes in this study were small, numerous researchers have asserted that small effect sizes have empirical value (e.g., Abelson, 1985). CSH research also has high practical value despite its small effects. As the “tournament model” asserts, barriers to women’s career development occur as small disadvantages which accumulate over time and eventually have an incremental result (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Ragins & Sundstrom, 1989). The skewed and kurtotic nature of customer sexual harassment may have attenuated the observed effect sizes. Customer sexual harassment has a low base rate. The majority of participants in this study indicated that they have not been sexually harassed ($M = 1.58$, $SD = .60$, scale range: 0 to 5). Because multiple regression works best with normally distributed variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007), the non-normal nature of the data may have obscured results. Transformations did not remedy the normality problem. Perhaps the small effect size sought in this study would have been detectable if participants reported greater variability in their experiences of customer sexual harassment.

Limitations

As discussed in the method section, psychological contract has been inconsistently measured in the literature. Although the measure of employer obligations used in the current study was piloted on a large sample, 5 of the original 12 items were

weak and had to be dropped from analysis. Two more were dropped from the current study to obtain a single factor; this left only a five item measure for employer obligations and psychological contract breach. The resulting measure may not have been broad enough to capture some of the small effects sought in this study. In particular, the measure of employer obligations was problematic as shown by the alpha reliability (.72) and initial factor analysis. Some psychological contract research has also failed to find that employer obligations load on a single factor (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro & Conway, 2005). However, most researchers have not evaluated the factor structure of the measure they created and employed (e.g., Robinson, 1996; Turnley & Feldman, 1999; Turnley & Feldman, 2000).

Future Directions

Creating the psychological contract measure required combining subscales (i.e., importance and of element received vs. expected). However, other researchers have examined psychological contract by analyzing the discrepancy between perceived obligations and the amount of item received (e.g., Robinson, 1996). Difference scores suffer from several methodological problems. Instead, polynomial regression offers a more reliable and complex alternative analysis of the data (Edwards, 2001; Edwards & Parry, 1993; Lambert, Edwards, & Cable, 2003). A polynomial framework permits a more complex analysis. In one study, polynomial regression provided a better explanation of the data than the traditional model by examining whether breach was a deficiency or surplus of inducements (Lambert et al., 2003). The current study was part of a larger longitudinal study. Examining psychological contract breach over time using polynomial regression may yield the expected results, especially since the relationship

between breach and violation is theorized to occur longitudinally (Robinson & Morrison, 2000).

Research should continue to explore customer sexual harassment. As other researchers have argued, CSH may need to be “problemetized” in the academic research in order for women to gain a means of defending themselves in the workplace, as was the case for intraorganizational sexual harassment in the 1980’s (Gettman & Gelfand, 2007; Hughes & Tadic, 1998). In addition to the outcomes examined in the current study, it would be interesting to look at other outcomes which have been associated with workplace aggression such as discretionary performance, job satisfaction, withdrawal and emotional burnout. Building upon the current study, future research should examine the role of labeling CSH incidents (i.e., using the term “sexual harassment” to describe offensive, unwelcome, sex-related behaviors) in relation to psychological contract breach. Research has identified a discrepancy between experiencing these behaviors and applying the label “sexual harassment” in interorganizational sexual harassment research (e.g., Cortina et al., 1998; Magley et al., 1999). However, labeling has not been examined in CSH research. Labeling theoretically parallels the current research; individuals who hold jobs where enduring sexualized treatment is an implicit part of the psychological contract may be less likely to label their experience as sexual harassment. Additionally, psychological contract theory suggests that the relationship between perceived contract breach and violation is moderated by an interpretation process. In empirical research, the relationship between perceived contract breach and violation was stronger when the employee perceived low interactional fairness (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). Future research should examine labeling as a moderator between perceived contract breach and

CSH. It is also possible that the CSH to outcome (e.g., health, affective commitment) relationship is moderated by both labeling and psychological contract breach in a three-way interaction.

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APPENDIX A**SAMPLE LISTSERV POSTING**

Fellow SPSSI Members,

As part of my master's thesis I am seeking females who work in customer service positions for an online questionnaire. The survey asks about a number of work perceptions and experiences that are both positive and negative to explain how they relate to behavior, attitudes, and well-being.

This study is funded by the SPSSI Clara Mayo grant for master's and pre-dissertation research and is approved by the Old Dominion University IRB. In exchange for participation, it offers a 1 in 10 chance at winning a \$50 cash prize. If you are a female who interfaces with customers, please consider participating by clicking below.

<https://periwinkle.ts.odu.edu/surveys/AGMW4H>

I also ask that you forward this opportunity to other women who work in jobs where contact with customers is required. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me (vmorgans@odu.edu) or my research advisor, Dr. Debra Major (dmajor@odu.edu). Thank you in advance for your time and consideration!!!

Kindest regards,

Valerie Morganson
Industrial and Organizational Psychology
250 Mills Godwin Building
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Old Dominion University
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(757) 683-3725 phone
VMorgans@odu.edu

APPENDIX B**SNOWBALL EMAIL TO COLLEAGUES**

Dear Colleague:

I am a graduate student in the Industrial and Organizational Psychology doctoral program. As part of my master's thesis I am seeking females who work in customer service positions for an online questionnaire. The survey asks about a number of work perceptions and experiences that are both positive and negative to explain how they relate to behavior, attitudes, and well-being.

You may click on the link (<https://periwinkle.ts.odu.edu/surveys/A8GXGY>) to access the survey. As you will see, the first page provides more information about the survey. If you prefer to preview the survey before you decide whether or not to participate, please feel free to navigate through without responding.

This is a two-part study. It consists of 2 surveys that take approximately 20 minutes each to complete. The second survey will be administered 4-5 weeks after this one is complete. As described in further detail on the linked page, the surveys are confidential and participation is voluntary. In exchange for completing both surveys participants will be given a 1 in 10 chance to win a \$50 cash prize.

You have the right not to participate in this study. I do hope that you will choose to participate because the success of the study depends on our getting the best cross-section of employees that we possibly can. You also have the right not to respond to any specific questions that you may wish to skip within the questionnaire itself, although it is best if you respond to as many questions as possible. This study has been approved by the Institutional Research Board of the University, ensuring that our procedures are considered appropriate for human research participants.

I also ask that you forward this email to other **women** who work in jobs where *contact with customers* is required. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me (vmorgans@odu.edu) or my research advisor, Dr. Debra Major (dmajor@odu.edu). Thank you in advance for your time and consideration!!!

Best regards,

Valerie Morganson
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APPENDIX C

SCRIPT FOR RECRUITING FIELD PARTICIPANTS

Introduction:

“Hello, my name is Valerie Morganson, I am a graduate student from Old Dominion University. As part of my master’s thesis research, I’m asking women who work in customer service positions to complete a two-part survey. In exchange for completing both parts of the survey you will be given a 1 in 10 chance to win \$50 cash. Does this sound like something that you would consider?”

Frequently Asked Question:

Question: “What is the survey about?”

Researcher’s answer: “To give you the gist of it, the survey is about both positive and negative experiences that you have had at work, work attitudes, and well being. You are welcome to take a look through the survey before you decide whether or not to participate.”

APPENDIX D

ADVERTISEMENT ON SONA FOR STUDENT RECRUITMENT

OFF – Work Perceptions

Abstract This anonymous online questionnaire asks your feelings about your job, what particular experiences you have had while working, and how you feel about various work-related and health topics.

Description This survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete. All of your responses will be confidential and stored in a secure database. Your individual responses will not be revealed. Once you have finished your survey you will be linked to a separate website, where you may enter your information to attain credit for participation. You may withdraw from the study at any time and participation is entirely voluntary. Please answer questions as honestly and accurately as possible.

Web Study This is an online study. To participate, sign up, then go to the website listed below to participate.

Website You may not view the website until you sign up for this study.

Eligibility Requirements All participants must be 18 years of age or older and must be employed.

Duration 20 minutes

Credits ½ Credits

APPENDIX E**INFORMED CONSENT FORM****Project Work Perceptions
OLD DOMINION UNIVERSITY**

PROJECT TITLE: Project Work Perceptions

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this form is to give you information that may affect your decision whether to say YES or NO to participation in this research, and to record the consent of those who say YES to participating in Project Work Perceptions.

RESEARCHERS

Responsible Project Investigator:

Debra Major, Ph.D.
Department of Psychology
Old Dominion University
250 Mills Godwin Building
Department of Psychology
Old Dominion University
Norfolk, VA 23529

Investigator:

Valerie J. Morganson
Department of Psychology
Old Dominion University
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Department of Psychology
Old Dominion University
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DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH STUDY

Several studies have been conducted looking into how individuals' work perceptions, experiences and expectations relate to their work behavior, attitudes, and well-being. This study looks at several work perceptions and experiences that are both positive and negative to explain how they relate to behavior, attitudes, and well-being. The study looks at how these things are related to one another and how the relationships change over time, which has not been done in past research.

This study involves filling out two questionnaires. Each questionnaire will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. At the end of the first survey you will be asked to enter your email address. You must provide your email in order for us to contact you to take the second survey and be eligible for the prize money. When you complete the first survey the researcher will assign you a random participant number to protect your identity. Four to five weeks after you complete the first survey you will receive an email to participate in the second survey. You will enter your participant number (provided in the email). Please complete the second survey within 2 weeks of receiving it.

You will receive reminders to complete it. Once you have completed both surveys, you will be given a one in ten chance to win a \$50 cash prize. If you win one of the prizes the researcher will email you to ask your name and address so that a check may be mailed to you. Four-hundred ten people are expected to participate in this study.

Some of the questions in the survey are personal in nature; sometimes, people are hesitant about answering them. Please know that your answers are completely confidential. Researchers are interested in examining responses to the questionnaire in group form only. Your privacy will be protected.

As a research participant, you have certain rights:

1. You have the right not to participate in this study.
2. You have the right to stop answering questions at any time.
3. You have the right to skip any questions that you do not want to answer.

EXCLUSIONARY CRITERIA

To participate in this study you should be female and work at least 20 hours per week in a job that requires you to assist customers. You must be 18 years or older to participate in this study.

RISKS AND BENEFITS

RISKS: As with any questionnaire where identifying information is gathered, there is a risk of release of personal information. The researchers have tried to minimize this risk by (1) only asking your email addresses in the survey (which is required to contact you to participate in the second study and prize money), (2) assigning you with a random identification number rather than using names or employer information, and (3) storing your email addresses separately from your responses once data has been gathered (databases will be kept in separate electronic storage facilities). If you are a prize winner, we will email you for your name and address to send the check; your personal information will be stored in a password protected file separate from your survey responses.

BENEFITS: The main benefit to you for participating in this study is that you will be granted an opportunity to win \$50 cash. Your participation will help advance science and will enable student research and learning.

COSTS AND PAYMENTS

The researchers want your decision about participating in this study to be absolutely voluntary. Yet they recognize that your participation requires an investment of your time and energy. In order to compensate your participation, you will be entered into a lottery in which you will have a one in ten chance at winning a \$50 cash prize.

NEW INFORMATION

If the researchers find new information during this study that would reasonably change your decision about participating, then they will give it to you.

CONFIDENTIALITY

All information obtained about you in this study is strictly confidential unless disclosure is required by law. The results of this study may be used in reports, presentations and publications, but the researcher will not identify you.

WITHDRAWAL PRIVILEGE

It is OK for you to say NO. Even if you say YES now, you are free to say NO later, and walk away or withdraw from the study -- at any time.

COMPENSATION FOR ILLNESS AND INJURY

If you say YES, then your consent in this document does not waive any of your legal rights. However, in the event of distress arising from this study, neither Old Dominion University nor the researchers are able to give you any money, insurance coverage, free medical care, or any other compensation for such injury. In the event that you suffer injury as a result of participation in this research project, you may contact Valerie Morganson (vmorgans@odu.edu) at 757-683-3725 or Debra Major (Dmajor@odu.edu) at 757-683-3725 or Dr. George Maihafer the current IRB chair at 757-683-4520 at Old Dominion University, who will be glad to review the matter with you.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT

By clicking below, you are saying several things. You are saying that you have read this form or have had it read to you, that you are satisfied that you understand this form, the research study, and its risks and benefits. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the researchers at any time during the course of this study:

Valerie Morganson
Vmorgans@odu.edu
757-683-3725

Debra Major
Dmajor@odu.edu
757-683-3725

If at any time you feel pressured to participate, or if you have any questions about your rights or this form, then you should call Dr. George Maihafer, the current IRB chair, at 757-683-4520, or the Old Dominion University Office of Research, at 757-683-3460.

And importantly, by clicking below, you are telling the researcher YES, that you agree to participate in this study. Please feel free to print a copy of this page for your records.

APPENDIX F

LETTER TO STUDENT PARTICIPANTS

Dear Participant:

Thank you for participating in this study. You will need about 20 minutes to complete it.

This study asks about several of your perceptions and experiences (both positive and negative) regarding your work. All of your responses will be completely confidential and the identity of your organization will remain anonymous. You may skip any item that you find objectionable or which makes you feel uncomfortable.

When the survey is completed, you will be taken to another webpage where you will fill in your name and other information to obtain your half credit for participating. This website is kept separately to protect your anonymity; we are unable to associate your identification information with your survey response.

Once your survey is complete, the researcher will award you credit for participation within 2 weeks. Please email Valerie (see below) if you do not receive credit after two weeks. Please, under no circumstance should you retake the survey. Doing so will not help you get credit.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact the experimenters below.

Thank you for your time!

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APPENDIX G

CUSTOMER SEXUAL HARASSMENT ITEMS

Construct	Instructions and Items
Customer Sexual Harassment	<p data-bbox="607 569 1394 638">In the last 2 years, how often have you been in a situation where a male customer or client...</p> <ol data-bbox="607 674 1458 1547" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Told offensive sexual stories or jokes? 2. Made unwelcome attempts to draw you into discussion of sexual matters? 3. Treated you differently because of your sex? 4. Made offensive remarks about appearance, body or sexual activities? 5. Made gestures or used body language of a sexual nature that offended you? 6. Displayed, used, or distributed sexist or suggestive materials? 7. Made offensive sexist remarks? 8. Made unwanted attempts to establish a romantic relationship with you despite your efforts to discourage him? 9. Continued to ask you for dates, drinks, dinner, etc., even though you said "No"? 10. Made you feel like you were being bribed with a reward to engage in sexual behavior? 11. Made you feel threatened with some sort of retaliation for not being sexually cooperative? 12. Touched you in a way that made you feel uncomfortable? 13. Made unwanted attempts to stroke, fondle, or kiss you? 14. Treated badly for refusing to have sex? 15. Implied better treatment if you were sexually cooperative? 16. Put you down or was condescending to you because of your sex?

Note. Responses ranged from 1 (*never*) to 5 (*most of the time*).

APPENDIX H

EMPLOYER OBLIGATION AND

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH ITEMS

Construct	Instructions and Items
Contract Breach Psychological & Obligations	<p>Employers make promises to give employees certain things in exchange for their contributions to the organization. The following 7 items ask about your WORK EXPECTATIONS based on implied or explicit promise or understanding. A list of items is provided. For each item please answer the following questions:</p> <p>(1) How much do you believe your employer is <u>obligated to provide</u> you this?</p> <p>(2) How <u>important</u> is receiving this from your employer to you?</p> <p>(3) How much <u>did you receive</u> this from your employer compared to how much you expected it?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A safe working environment 2. Support for personal problems* 3. Respect 4. Fair treatment 5. Psychological safety 6. Protection against aggressive customers 7. A sense of being cared for*

Note. Responses ranged from 1 (*not at all obligated*) to 5 (*very obligated*) for employer obligations. Responses for psychological contract breach ranged from 1 (*not at all important*) to 5 (*very important*) and from 1 (*received much less than expected*) to 5 (*received much more than expected*) for the importance and amount received components of the breach measure.

* Item was dropped after factor analysis.

APPENDIX I

MENTAL AND PHYSICAL HEALTH ITEMS

Construct	Instructions and Items
Mental and Physical Health	<p data-bbox="602 520 1476 632">The following questions ask about your health and daily activities. If you are unsure about an answer, give the best answer you can.</p> <ol data-bbox="602 667 1476 1724" style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In general, would you say your health is...^a 2. Does your health limit you in moderate activities you might do during a typical day such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, bowling, or working in the garden or yard?^b 3. Does your health limit your ability to climb several flights of stairs?^b 4. During the past four weeks, did you ever accomplish less than you would have liked with your work or other regular activities as a result of your physical health?^c 5. During the past four weeks, were you ever limited in the kind of work or other activities you could perform as a result of your physical health?^c 6. During the past four weeks, did you ever accomplish less than you would have liked with your work or other regular activities as a result of any emotional problems (such as feeling depressed or anxious)?^c 7. During the past four weeks, did you ever not perform work or other activities as carefully as usual as a result of any emotional problems (such as feeling depressed or anxious)?^c 8. During the past 4 weeks, how much did pain interfere with your normal work (including both work outside the home and housework)?^d 9. Have you felt calm and peaceful?^e 10. Did you have a lot of energy?^e 11. Have you felt downhearted and blue?^e 12. During the past 4 weeks, how much of the time has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your normal social activities with family, friends, neighborhoods, or groups?^f

Note. Responses ranged from ^a 1 (*excellent*) to 5 (*poor*), ^b 1 (*yes, limited a lot*) to 3 (*no, not limited at all*), ^c 1 (*yes*) and 2 (*no*), ^d 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*extremely*), ^e 1 (*all of the time*) to 6 (*none of the time*), ^f 1 (*all of the time*) to 6 (*none of the time*).

APPENDIX J

AFFECTIVE ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT ITEMS

Construct	Instructions and Items
Affective Organizational Commitment	<p data-bbox="604 534 1455 566">Rate your agreement/disagreement with the following items:</p> <ol data-bbox="604 608 1455 898" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="604 608 1455 672">1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization. <li data-bbox="604 678 1455 710">2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own. <li data-bbox="604 717 1455 780">3. I do not feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization (R). <li data-bbox="604 787 1455 819">4. I do not feel "emotionally attached" to this organization (R). <li data-bbox="604 825 1455 857">5. I do not feel like "part of the family" at my organization (R). <li data-bbox="604 863 1455 898">6. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning to me.

Note. Responses ranged from 1 (*very strongly disagree*) to 7 (*very strongly agree*).

VITA

Valerie Jean Morganson graduated Summa Cum Laude from the University of Connecticut in December of 2004 with a Bachelor of Arts degree. She completed a dual major in Psychology and French in three and a half years. Subsequently, she worked as an auto insurance adjuster and appraiser for a year and a half before returning to graduate school at Old Dominion University for her Ph.D. in Industrial/Organizational Psychology.

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