

2022

A Psychological Contract Perspective of Attitudinal Outcomes from United States Mergers and Acquisitions

kathrine e. martin
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Management and Human Potential

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Kathrine Martin

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee

Dr. Michael Neubert, Committee Chairperson, Management Faculty
Dr. Thomas Butkiewicz, Committee Member, Management Faculty
Dr. Mohammad Sharifzadeh, University Reviewer, Management Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost
Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University
2022

Abstract

A Psychological Contract Perspective of Attitudinal Outcomes from United States

Mergers and Acquisitions

by

Kathrine Martin

MBA, University of Texas at Arlington 2006

Master of Urban Design, University of Colorado, Denver 2002

M-Arch, University of Colorado, Denver 2001

BS, University of Nevada, Las Vegas 1994

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

August 2022

Abstract

Mergers and acquisitions are a popular corporate method for expanding market presence, growing resource capabilities, and increasing stockholder value. Merger and acquisition activity can be perceived by employees as a psychological contract violation (PCV) and can cause negative changes in employee attitudes. Using correlation and regression analysis, 174 survey responses were analyzed to examine the relationship between a PCV and employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention caused by mergers and acquisition activity for knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States. The second part of this study introduced a credible explanation to explore changes in the relationship between the perception of a PCV and the attitudinal outcomes. Psychological contract theory and the supporting theories of expectancy, cognitive dissonance, sense-making, and equity were applied to analyze the attitudinal outcomes. The results indicated that for every unit increase in a perceived PCV, there was a corresponding decrease of 1.945 units for job satisfaction, a decrease of .574 units of organizational commitment, and an increase of 1.411 units of turnover intention. The effects of a credible explanation as a moderator were significant for decreasing the effects of the relationship between a perceived PCV and organizational commitment ($B=-.0301$) and for increasing the effects of the relationship between a perceived PCV and turnover intention ($B=.0129$). The findings of this study may contribute to positive social change by understanding how merger and acquisition activity can affect employee attitudes and creating an awareness of how communicating a credible explanation may benefit both the employee and the organization.

A Psychological Contract Perspective of Attitudinal Outcomes from United States

Mergers and Acquisitions

by

Kathrine Martin

MBA, University of Texas at Arlington 2006

Master of Urban Design, University of Colorado, Denver 2002

M-Arch, University of Colorado, Denver 2001

BS, University of Nevada, Las Vegas 1994

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Management

Walden University

August 2022

Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my beloved Grandmother, Evelyn, for her insistence on education, and her forward thinking to build a better future for the next generation. From the stories of her childhood during the Great Depression to her help with every injured stray dog I brought home – she taught me that the human condition applies to all of us. It is not a place to grow *to*, it is a place to grow *from*. She never let a visit go by without making me answer to what I wanted to be when I grew up, and then forced me to have the awkward-8-year-old interviews with every professional we came in contact with. It was debilitatingly embarrassing as a child, but it provided me the opportunity to talk to veterinarians, architects, politicians, artists, plumbers, teachers, and small business owners – all to demonstrate that they were all just ordinary people like me who worked hard and chased their dreams. To the woman who refused to accept low expectations, this dissertation is dedicated to you.

Acknowledgments

Completing this study has been a learning adventure that would not have been possible without the amazing support and encouragement from several individuals. I would like to acknowledge the Village that cleared the path for me:

My husband, Bob – for his unwavering support throughout my entire educational journey, including the nights spent sleeping on the floor waiting for me to finish my assignments. I promise I am done now.....wink, wink.

My Dad, Jim – for his continuous moral support, supply of snacks, and the use of his office to harbor quiet refuge to focus on this dissertation

Dr. Neubert – for being an incredible advisor with invaluable insight and advice, and knowing just how much to nudge.

Dr. Butkiewicz – for jumping in with both feet and providing clear direction to the light at the end of the tunnel.

Eric Dillinger – for his infectious passion for learning and teaching. Always making me feel like this was a worthy endeavor.

Roxanne Doyle – for her shoulder to lean on and those dang pep talks that made me realize I had come to far to quit.

Grandmaster Radicioni – who transformed a reticent, self-doubting child into a confident young woman ready to take on the world and challenge the status quo.

And thank you to all of my other friends and family that understood my absence from all the memory-making events while I worked on completing this research study.

Table of Contents

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study.....	1
Background.....	2
Problem Statement.....	5
Purpose of the Study.....	6
Research Questions and Hypotheses	6
Theoretical Framework.....	9
Nature of the Study.....	10
Definitions.....	14
Assumptions.....	15
Scope and Delimitations	16
Limitations	17
Significance of the Study	19
Significance to Theory.....	19
Significance to Practice.....	20
Significance to Social Change	21
Summary and Transition.....	22
Chapter 2: Literature Review	23
Literature Search Strategy.....	25
Theoretical Foundation	26

Literature Review.....	30
Psychological Contract Theory.....	31
Psychological Contract Violation (PCV) Theory	32
Supporting Theoretical Perspectives.....	33
Organizational Change Through Mergers and Acquisitions	41
Credible Explanation (CE).....	43
Job Satisfaction (JS).....	44
Organizational Commitment (OC)	45
Turnover Intention (TI).....	47
Gap in the Literature	49
Summary and Conclusions	50
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	52
Research Design and Rationale	52
Methodology	54
Population	55
Sampling and Sampling Procedures	56
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data).....	57
Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs	58
Data Analysis Plan.....	64
Threats to Validity	69
External Validity.....	69

Internal Validity	70
Construct Validity.....	71
Ethical Procedures	72
Summary.....	73
Chapter 4: Results.....	74
Data Collection	75
Descriptive and Demographic Characteristics.....	76
General Demographics.....	77
Employment Characteristics	79
Study Results	83
Descriptive Statistics.....	84
Statistical Analysis of the Hypotheses.....	91
Summary.....	110
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	113
Interpretation of Findings	114
Limitations of the Study.....	118
Recommendations.....	119
Implications.....	122
Conclusions.....	124
References.....	126
Appendix A: Permissions for Instrument Use	140
Appendix B: Survey.....	144

Appendix C: Demographics Survey Tool.....	146
Appendix D: Research Survey Tool	147

List of Tables

Table 1	Statistical Operations	68
Table 2	General Demographics	78
Table 3	Employment Characteristics	79
Table 4	Descriptive Statistic	81
Table 5	Aggregate Means of Variables Under Study	85
Table 6	Descriptive Statistics – Psychological Contract Violation	86
Table 7	Descriptive Statistics – Job Satisfaction	87
Table 8	Descriptive Statistics – Organizational Commitment.....	88
Table 9	Descriptive Statistics – Turnover Intention	90
Table 10	Descriptive Statistics – Credible Explanation	91
Table 11	Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normal Distribution.....	92
Table 12	Spearman Correlation Coefficients.....	93
Table 13	Regression Analysis Model Summaries	94
Table 14	Regression Analyses Coefficient Summaries	95
Table 15	Summary Table of RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3 Significance and Coefficients.....	100
Table 16	Summary Table of RQ4 Significance and Coefficients.....	110

List of Figures

Figure 1 Proposed Research Model	54
Figure 2 Response Count Timeline.....	75
Figure 3 Firm Size Before and After the Merger or Acquisition.....	83
Figure 4 Simple Slopes for the Relationship Between Psychological Contract Violation and Organizational Commitment with a Credible Explanation as a Moderator.....	103
Figure 5 Simple Slopes for the Relationship Between Psychological Contract Violation and Normative Commitment with a Credible Explanation as a Moderator.....	107
Figure 6 Simple Slopes for the Relationship Between Psychological Contract Violation and Turnover Intention with a Credible Explanation as a Moderator	109

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

A large number of mergers and acquisitions fail to achieve the intended economic value that underpinned the initial goal for the acquisition. Cultural integration has been cited as a primary challenge in failed merger and acquisition activities (Gill, 2012; Smith, 2016), particularly when employees feel the merger and acquisition activity has violated the psychological contract between employees and the organization. In this study, I sought to understand the correlation between a perceived psychological contract violation from merger and acquisition activities on three specific attitude attributes of surviving employees: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. By understanding how negative experiences during merger and acquisition activity contribute to the perception of a psychological contract violation, executive managers and senior leaders may be able to proactively manage merger and acquisition activity to reduce these perceptions. I assumed that reduced perceptions of psychological contract violation led to a better work environment and contributed to a better social community outside of the workplace.

This chapter includes the background of merger and acquisition activity effects on employee attitudes, the problem statement for this study, and the research questions and hypotheses. In this study, I focused on three attitudinal outcomes resulting from a perceived psychological contract violation induced by merger and acquisition activities. I introduced an additional moderating variable to analyze the effects of a credible explanation. The results are not generalizable beyond the study group, as noted in the scope and delimitations section of this chapter.

Background

There are several research initiatives contributing to the background literature for this study. I used Rousseau's (1989, 1995, 1996, 2001) work as the foundational theory for this study. Rousseau (1989, 1995, 1996, 2001) developed the psychological contract and explored how mergers and acquisitions affect the underlying relationship between employees and the organization. Locke (1969) developed a definition for job satisfaction that has held for over 50 years. Robinson and Rousseau (1994), Lawler (1973), and Locke (1969) provided foundational findings for the link between a perceived psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, trust, and intention to stay. Devonish (2018) clarified the role of job satisfaction in employee responses to an effort-reward imbalance such as those incurred through merger and acquisition activities. Mowday et al. (1979) correlated the inverse relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention. Memon et al. (2018) related merger and acquisition activity directly to work engagement and turnover intention. Vough and Caza (2017) and González (2016) correlated a credible explanation to sense-making and the perception of a psychological contract violation caused by merger and acquisition activity. I used this body of knowledge as the basis for my expanded research.

Social contracts are constructed by individuals based on their social environment and the structure of how people interact with one another. Reciprocity is a universal norm that is used to define the behavioral expectations for the dyadic relationship between individuals and broader society. Helping those who have helped us is a typical example of an expected reciprocal behavioral contract in social contracts (Rousseau, 1995). These

same principles for reciprocal voluntary exchanges extend into the work environment through employee-constructed psychological contracts (Rousseau, 1995). Merger and acquisition activities cause organizational change, and people are naturally resistant to change. Although the psychological contract is constantly evolving as the employee and employer relationship evolves, merger and acquisition activities can bring about abrupt change (Rousseau, 1995, 1996).

Merger and acquisition-induced changes can affect how individuals perceive the newly formed model as aligning with the psychological contract that has been constructed by each employee with their organization. Rousseau (1989, 1995, 1996, 2001) established the foundational theory of the psychological contract and how mergers and acquisitions affect the underlying relationship. When organizational changes occur, the dyadic model that has served as the structure for the existing relationship between the employee and employer can be perceived to be violated by the ensuing organizational changes caused by the merger and acquisition activities. A perceived psychological contract violation has been linked to changes in attitudinal outcomes of employees, specifically job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention (Lawler, 1973; Locke, 1969; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994).

Job satisfaction is affected by the effort-reward balance as subjectively constructed by the employee. Merger and acquisition activity that causes an imbalance to the effort-reward model anticipated by employees based on the existing model can have consequential effects on job satisfaction (Devonish, 2018). Memon et al. (2018) related merger and acquisition activity directly to work engagement and turnover intention.

Mowday et al. (1979) demonstrated the foundational inverse relationship between organizational commitment and turnover intention. These relationships all demonstrate the effects on attitudinal outcomes that merger and acquisition activity can cause.

Rousseau (1995) posited that the context of the psychological contract violation could affect the degree of the perceived violation and, in some cases, can negate the violation perception when the offending party is perceived not to have been able to control the circumstances. When the cause of the psychological contract violation is interpreted to be the result of an external factor, the effects of a perceived violation can be reduced. Vough and Caza (2017) and González (2016) related a credible explanation to sense-making and the perception of a psychological contract violation caused by merger and acquisition activity. By applying intentional messaging through communication, the effects on attitudinal outcomes can be partially mitigated.

González (2016) provided research demonstrating a correlation between the perception of a psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention on survivors in the pharmaceutical industry, specifically in Puerto Rico, noting that additional research avenues include expanding similar studies to other industries and other regions. In my literature review, I found a gap in understanding the relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation from merger and acquisition activity and attitudinal outcomes on knowledge-based roles in the United States. My goal for this study was to provide information to fill the identified gap in the literature for an industry that,

according to FMI Capital Advisors, Inc. (2019), has experienced record numbers of merger and acquisition activity in 2018 and anticipates continued trends.

Problem Statement

Forty-six percent of all mergers and acquisitions failed to achieve the return on investment that drove the initial integration, citing ineffective integration as one of the leading causes (Deloitte, 2020). The damaging effect of a perceived psychological contract violation during and after merger and acquisition activity was recognized by Magano and Thomas's (2017) research study as a factor that needs to be addressed. When cultural and behavioral aspects of an organization are disrupted, the resulting integration will not produce the intended results (Rebner & Yeganeh, 2019). This concept serves as my general management problem. Merger and acquisition activities can be perceived by survivors as a psychological contract violation, which causes attitudes, that then cause associated behaviors (Li & Chen, 2018). These associated behaviors are the specific management problem for this study.

The current body of research does not include information about the effects of merger and acquisition activity on attitudinal outcomes of knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States and the relationship between a credible explanation of the perception of a psychological contract violation and the resulting attitudinal outcomes to assist executive managers in supporting positive attitudinal effects of merger and acquisition activity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the attitudinal outcomes of employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. I used a credible explanation as the moderating variable to analyze the relationship of a credible motive for the merger and acquisition activity and changes in the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Psychological contract violation was the predictor variable. The dependent variables that I used in the analysis for this study were job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The moderating variable was a credible explanation to explain the need for executive management to pursue the merger and acquisition activity.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental, Spearman correlation and regression analysis study was to examine the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the relationship between the attitudinal outcomes of employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Variables were measured using the 7-point Likert scale with psychological contract violation as the predictor variable, and job satisfaction,

organizational commitment, and turnover intention as the dependent variables. Research Question 4 adds a credible explanation as the moderating variable. I used the following questions to prompt the relationship determinations of this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_01): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a1}): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_02): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a2}): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors

of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_03): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a3): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 4 (RQ4): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_04): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation

for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Alternative Hypothesis (H_{a4}): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Theoretical Framework

Foundational psychological contract theory has been well established by Rousseau (1989, 1995, 1996, 2001). The psychological contract theory is underpinned by several theoretical propositions that define how a psychological contract is constructed and valued. Expectancy theory is used to describe the expectation of reciprocity between effort and reward (Vroom, 1964). Cognitive dissonance theory is used to explain why employees feel uncomfortable when a new behavioral model is presented in the workplace that may not be fully aligned with an individual's values and beliefs (Festinger, 1957). Sense-making theory is an elaboration on the subjective nature of how employees examine changed environments and construct new social identities from their subjective understanding (Louis, 1980). Equity theory is used to examine how employees evaluate their transactional employment exchanges in alignment with their own perceptions of self-worth and evaluate the fairness of the exchange (Adams, 1965). Social exchange theory further shows that interpersonal exchanges have obligatory reciprocal

exchange expectations (Blau, 1964). I detail these foundational theories supporting the formation of the psychological contract in Chapter 2.

The psychological contract theory can be used to understand employee reactions to organizational change incurred from merger and acquisition activities. Employee perceptions of merger and acquisition activities can be affected by employee trust of management, which affects employee resistance to change and consequently, the success of the merger and acquisition (Appelbaum et al., 2017). Adams' (1965) foundational equity theory established the erosion of trust that can happen when relationship-based exchanges are not perceived as fair, which can occur through merger and acquisition activities where employees have little control over organizational change induced by merger and acquisition activity. In this study, I focused on understanding the relationship of a perceived psychological contract violation on employee attitudinal outcomes as a result of merger and acquisition activities, and the additional relationship of a credible explanation on the perceived psychological contract violation and attitudinal outcomes. All of these noted foundational theories support understanding the subjective construction of a psychological contract and the underlying causes for the formation of a perceived psychological contract violation incurred by merger and acquisition activities.

Nature of the Study

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental, Spearman correlation and regression analysis study was to examine the relationship between the perception of psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the

relationship for attitudinal outcomes of employee job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and turnover intention. I used a credible explanation as the moderating variable to analyze the relationship of a credible motive for the merger and acquisition activity and changes in the perception of a psychological contract violation, and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and turnover intention. Psychological contract violation was the predictor variable. The dependent variables that I used were job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The moderating variable was a credible explanation to explain the need for executive management to pursue the merger and acquisition activity. I used the following preestablished survey tools to collect data. I used a combined single survey with questions I selected from established survey tools for each variable:

1. I measured psychological contract violation with questions from the scale developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). Permission received from Dr. Sandra Robinson on January 2, 2019.
2. I measured job satisfaction with questions from the survey developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980). Permission received from Dr. Greg Oldham on December 30, 2018.
3. I measured organizational commitment with questions from the survey developed by Allen and Meyer (1990). Permission received by Dr. Natalie Allen on March 15, 2019.

4. I measured turnover intention with questions from the survey developed by Wayne et al. (1997). Permission received by Dr. Sandy J. Wayne on December 29, 2018.
5. I measured credible explanation with questions from an adapted version survey originally developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000).
Permission received from Dr. Sandra Robinson on January 2, 2019.

I used a nonexperimental, Spearman correlation and linear and multiple regression design this study to explore relationships between multiple variables. Abutabenjeh and Jaradat (2018) noted that correlation studies are used for inquiries and well suited for describing the relationship between variables. Bivariate correlational designs are predictive designs that can be used in determining connections among variables (Schirmer et al., 2016). These early exploratory designs are used to develop understandings about the relationships between pairs of variables that can be explored further (Schirmer et al., 2016). A researcher using a correlational study does not identify the cause and effect of the relationship, but rather explores relationships by observing and identifying linear relationships between variables (Center for Quality, 2015). Under a correlation study, variables are not controlled, and control groups are not used to compare findings. The purpose of a correlation study is to statistically test for relational patterns, which is appropriate to explore the relationships proposed in this study (González, 2016). In the second part of the study, I used multiple regression to explore the relationship of the moderating variable to the attitudinal outcomes. Multiple regression tests for

relationships among multiple variables, including the influence of a moderating variable (Harkiolakis, 2020).

Target participants were surviving employees of merger and acquisition activity in knowledge-based roles in consulting firms in the United States, on either the acquiring or acquired firm side. I used snowball sampling to identify merger and acquisition survivors in knowledge-based roles of nation-wide consulting firms. Participants were surveyed by use of electronically administered surveys through QuestionPro, an internet-based tool. The survey included 40 questions combining portions of five predetermined and established measurement tools to collect data measuring job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, psychological contract violation, and the effect of a credible explanation, as shown in Appendix D. The survey also included 16 demographic questions to better understand the group of participants, as shown in Appendix C.

I used the sample technique of snowballing reach more participants within known nation-wide consulting firms in the United States that have survived merger and acquisition activity. Initial participant seeking was conducted through social media including LinkedIn and Facebook. I provided an internet survey as a link in the social media posts to allow participants to complete the survey remotely at their convenience. I targeted initial participants where direct contacts were currently employed to request survey support and initiate the snowball sampling method at mid to large size serial acquisition consulting firms in the United States.

Using Qualtrics (2019) sample size calculator for a population size of 10,000 United States consulting employees and a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, a sample size of 384 participants was ideal. The G*Power calculations to predict sample size at an effect size (f^2) of 0.15, error probability of 0.05, and a power of 80% calculated a sample size of 55 participants needed for linear regression with one predictor variable, and 68 participants needed for multiple regression with two predictor variables. I used Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to analyze the data collected from the surveys through a correlational analysis for the initial relationships of a perceived psychological contract violation to the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. I used multiple regression analysis in SPSS PROCESS to explore the effects of the moderating variable for a credible explanation on the attitudinal outcomes. In the PROCESS macro, confidence intervals assess the effects of the moderator at three levels (one standard deviation below the mean, at the mean, and one standard deviation above the mean).

Definitions

In this study, I explored foundational concepts of psychological contracts and attitudinal outcomes. The terms used for the independent, dependent and moderating variables in this study are defined for clarity in application toward the effects from merger and acquisition activities.

Credible explanation: A justification for an action that occurs before, after or during the occurrence and seeks to explain the cause and responsibility for the action. A credible explanation can shape the understanding of employee reactions to merger and

acquisition activities and the provide information for the sense-making process (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994).

Job satisfaction: A subjective assessment compiled by an individual that evaluates job fulfillment against personal needs including emotional components (Locke, 1969).

Organizational commitment: An emotional attachment to an organization that incorporates an individual's identification and involvement with the organization through a personal desire to remain a member (Porter et al., 1974).

Psychological contract: A subjective model developed by an individual that frames the relationship and anticipatory exchanges between the employee and the organization (Rousseau, 1995).

Psychological contract violation: A subjective evaluation of compliance with the psychological contract from the individual experience perspective (Rousseau, 1995).

Turnover intention: The intentional willingness to leave a current organization including thoughts or actions to search for new employment or alternatives to remaining with the current employer (Hom et al., 2017).

Assumptions

In this study, I analyzed the effect of merger and acquisition activity on the existing psychological contract already established between an employee and the organization. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, I assumed that individuals had pre-established psychological contracts with their employers and were aligned with those contracts prior to the merger and acquisition activity that is being studied. I assumed this to be the baseline for measuring changes to attitudinal outcomes. While a psychological

contract violation is a more severe and more difficult to rectify than a psychological contract breach, I assumed for the purpose of this study that a typical employee is not fully aware of the unwritten and subjective construct of a psychological contract, and therefore not capable of distinguishing between a perceived contract breach and a contract violation.

The selected target population for this study were knowledge-based professionals in the consulting industry that I assumed to be at a mature state in their careers and capable of selecting new work opportunities and directing their own careers. Because I designed the survey to maintain anonymity of the participants, I only used questions pertaining to levels of education and years of experience. Therefore, I held the assumption that with the use of the snowball method for sampling, that similar target populations also included mature career professionals with the ability to act on turnover intention. For this study, I assumed that the participants were able to differentiate between organizational change induced by merger and acquisition activity, and those changes induced by standard organizational operations and change initiatives. This was an important differentiation to assure the effects are the result of merger and acquisition activity.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study addressed the potentially damaging effects of merger and acquisition activities on the established psychological contract, and the correlation to a perceived violation of that psychological contract to surviving employee attitudes. This study limited the attitudinal outcomes to three well defined variables with pre-established

measurement instruments for job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. I only considered organizational change initiated from merger and acquisition activities. The limitations and exclusion of other organizational change initiatives allowed the research to focus solely on the effects of merger and acquisition activities on employee attitudes.

When generalizing the findings, observe caution. I limited the population of this study to knowledge-based roles in a specific industry. Because of the skillset and experience level required to hold a knowledge-based role, the findings may not be generalizable to all employment levels. I conducted this research study for a target population employed in the United States, which is an economically advanced nation, so applicability to emerging nations may have different results. Additionally, the snowball sampling method that I used may limit the ability to generalize the findings because snowball sampling is non-random, and builds on specific individuals' networks (Moss et al., n.d.).

Limitations

There are several limitations to this study. First, I conducted this study in the United States, which is an economically advanced country. Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2017) noted that developing economies may have opposite reactions to merger and acquisition activities and perceive organizational changes as positive motivators for career opportunities and growth.

Second, the selected industry in the consulting sector was limited to knowledge-based roles. This implies that the individuals contributing to the study were

independently knowledgeable with a competitive advantage in the work force. I did not restrict the target population to the place of employment where the merger and acquisition activity occurred and had the capability and transferrable skillset to change organizations if they so wished. Future research may include additional market sectors, additional employee levels to include nonknowledge-based roles, or expand to include additional countries.

Third, individuals subjectively construct and evaluate psychological contracts. The employer may not even be aware of the terms of the psychological contract held by the individual. The perception of a psychological contract violation is discretionary and varies for each individual.

Fourth, I studied only the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. I did not consider additional attitudinal outcomes under the scope of this research study. Future research may include additional attitudinal outcomes.

Fifth, I evaluated organizational change derived directly from merger and acquisition activities. I excluded additional organizational changes from this research study. It may have been difficult for the target population to discern which activities were directly related to mergers and acquisitions and which activities were the result of broader organizational change initiative.

Sixth, the surveys were self-reported measurement tools. The responses may have included central tendency errors or suffered biases caused by impression management, particularly for employees seeking to impress their supervisors or colleagues.

Seventh, the results relied on employee memory of a past merger and acquisition activity. The results may have been different if I took a survey both before and after the activity.

Significance of the Study

Significance to Theory

Relationships are the cornerstone of cultures and society. Damaged employee-employer relationships affect the personal and professional lives of individuals. A perceived psychological contract violation can alter the foundational relationship that exists between employees and their organization (Rousseau, 1995). Understanding this relationship can provide management options for maintaining or improving the relationship between employees and employers throughout merger and acquisition activities, and possibly improving the attitudinal reactions that result from the induced organizational changes.

Organizational success depends on the voluntary cooperation of employees (Rousseau, 2011). Some level of dysfunctional exchange between employers and employees will always occur through a psychological contract because the contract is not formally constructed nor interpreted mutually by both parties. However, individuals act on them as though they were (Rousseau, 1995). Development of a psychological contract does not occur at the onset of employment, but rather is dependent on multiple exchanges and evaluations over a period of time (Rousseau, 2011). When a violation is perceived with an associated loss in reciprocal exchange, a withdrawal for support of the relationship ensues. Transforming the psychological contract in advance of this perceived

violation should be a focus that accompanies merger and acquisition activities so survivors can restore consistency and predictability in exchanges with their new transformed organization.

Significance to Practice

Deloitte (2020) predicted that mergers and acquisitions will continue well into the next decade. Unfortunately, there is a high rate of merger and acquisition failures resulting from cultural collisions and unmanaged change resulting from the activities associated with the merger or acquisition (Deloitte, 2020). Much of the focus of merger and acquisition activity is around the economic benefits and changes that the merger and acquisition will bring, with minimal consideration of the impacts to the workforce, specifically the survivors. This study may have relevant practice implications by providing a deeper understanding of how individuals react to merger and acquisition change, specifically the perception of a psychological contract violation, and the resulting attitude changes. Negative attitudinal changes may result in diminished performance and organizational citizenship (Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 2011). By understanding how employees are processing and interpreting the organizational changes, companies can better manage reactions to merger and acquisition activities and the potential for success of the merger. A credible explanation may alter the perception of a psychological contract violation and help to resolve the underlying cause of damaged employee-employer relationships during merger and acquisition activities. Depending on the outcome for the acceptance of the credible explanation, organizational agents could benefit from understanding how a justification for the merger and acquisition activity

could reframe how employees perceive and interpret the changes and resulting attitudinal adjustments.

Significance to Social Change

The development and evaluation of psychological contracts initiates in social contracts. Social contracts include reciprocal obligations of fair trade expected in broader societal context and serve as the foundation for interpreting psychological contracts in the work environment (Rousseau, 2011). The expectations derived from social contracts and societal culture can outweigh legal requirements, as exemplified by Rousseau (2011) noting the American employment laws surrounding at-will employment by organizations. Even though the law supports firing employees with no cause under the at-will employment laws, the American cultural social contract expects a reason for termination and trusts that employers will not randomly fire employees but would instead have a justified reason for doing so, even though a reason is not a legal requirement.

Work lives permeate into personal lives and affect relationships beyond the workplace (Boswell et al., 2014). It would follow then, that violations in the psychological contracts that create mistrust and feelings of inequity would flow into the social realm of individuals following negative experiences in the workplace. Understanding communication strategies and how to minimize the perception of a psychological contract violation during and after merger and acquisition activity can benefit employees and organizations (Rousseau, 1995), and can assist in maintaining productive and positive working relationships that will emotionally and economically transfer into families and communities.

Summary and Transition

Merger and acquisition activities are common occurrences with high rates of failure. The perception by individuals on organizational changes induced by mergers and acquisitions can translate to a violation of the employee-employer psychological contract. This employee-constructed contract governs the expected voluntary reciprocity an employee feels obligated to repay an organization in exchange for the perceived or real benefits offered by the organization.

This study examined the relationship between a perceived violation of the psychological contract and the effects on the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and turnover intention for knowledge-based employee roles in nation-wide consulting firms in the United States. The moderating variable of a credible explanation contributed to the research by analyzing the effect of communicating a compelling context for the merger and acquisition activity that caused the change and subsequent perception of a psychological contract violation. Chapter 2 provides additional context on the psychological contract and other theories supporting the variables for attitudinal outcomes used in this study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

A high number of mergers and acquisitions fail to achieve the intended benefits anticipated from the investment and cite integration during post-merger activities as a major contributing factor (Deloitte, 2020). The perception of a violation to the existing construct of an individual's psychological contract through the merger and acquisition phases is a problem that needs addressing (Magano & Thomas, 2017) or the resulting integration will fall short of the intended outcomes (Rebner & Yeganeh, 2019). When cultural and behavioral aspects of an organization become disrupted, the resulting integration will not produce the intended results (Rebner & Yeganeh, 2019). This concept serves as my general management problem. Merger and acquisition activities can be perceived by survivors as a psychological contract violation, which cause attitudes, that then cause associated behaviors (Li & Chen, 2018). These associated behaviors are the specific management problem for this study. Previous researchers have not addressed the effects of merger and acquisition activity on attitudinal outcomes of knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the relationship of a credible explanation to the perception of a psychological contract violation and the resulting attitudinal outcomes to assist executive managers in supporting positive attitudinal effects of merger and acquisition activity.

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental, Spearman correlation and regression analysis study was to examine the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the

relationship between the attitudinal outcomes of employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. I used a credible explanation as the moderating variable to analyze the relationship of a credible motive for the merger and acquisition activity and changes in the relationship between perception of a psychological contract violation, and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

Foundational theories that contribute to understanding of how a psychological contract is subjectively constructed are expanded in this chapter. I review the underlying theories of expectancy, cognitive dissonance, sense-making, equity, and social exchange to understand the derivation of a perceived psychological contract violation induced by organizational change through merger and acquisition activity. I also discuss in this chapter the variables of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention used to measure attitudinal outcomes. I discuss the moderating variable of credible explanation to understand how a justifiable reason may influence the perception of psychological contract violation and the resulting attitudinal outcomes.

Mergers and acquisitions are financially driven decisions that do not always fully consider the emotional and psychological effects on the people side of the deal. Up to 46% of merger and acquisitions fail to achieve the expected value that drove the merger and acquisition activity, with effective integration noted as the leading factor in achieving a successful merger and acquisition outcome (Deloitte, 2020). Merger and acquisition activity can include changes to management, the organizational structure, peer groups, employee benefits, culture, workplace social norms, pay incentives, physical work

environment, employee autonomy, and several other factors contributing to the employee constructed psychological contract. Merger and acquisition activity that alters the fundamental trust between employees and their organization can be perceived as a violation of the psychological contract that served as the foundation for the dyadic relationship driving high attitudinal outcomes (Magano & Thomas, 2017). It was postulated that a perceived violation of this contract through merger and acquisition activity can diminish attitudinal outcomes.

Literature Search Strategy

In this study, I focused the literature review on three major domains to understand the full dynamic relationships of the psychological contract and mergers and acquisitions. The three domains that best categorized the relationships included: psychological contracts and the perceived violations through merger and acquisition activity; attitudinal effects in the workplace summarized by job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention; and survivor reactions to merger and acquisition activity.

Databases searched for existing literature included Google Scholar and the Walden library portal to access business and management articles, journals, and books. Databases accessed through Walden included ABI/INFORM, Business Source Complete, EBSCO eBooks, Emerald Insight, SAGE journals, and ScienceDirect. Key search terms used were primarily focused on merger and acquisition terminology; the foundational theories of psychological contracts and violation perceptions; and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Key

search terms also included the supporting theories of expectancy, cognitive dissonance, sense-making, equity, and social exchange.

The scope of the literature review included: current reviews of mergers and acquisition trends and changes to the workplace; seminal works relating to psychological contract theory and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention; and supporting theories of expectancy, cognitive dissonance, sense-making, equity, and social exchange. I used seminal works to provide the foundational understanding of how merger and acquisition-induced change affects employees. I reviewed additional merger and acquisition peer-reviewed literature for current trends and new information surfacing within the last 5 years.

Theoretical Foundation

The concepts derived under the psychological contract theory and the psychological contract violation theory contribute to understanding how individuals process and react to organizational change derived from merger and acquisition activity. I used these foundational theories to support the current research and provide a framework for understanding emotional and attitudinal outcomes of unfulfilled contract perceptions resulting from merger and acquisition activities. I used the supporting theories of expectancy, cognitive dissonance, sense-making, equity, and social exchange to provide a deeper understanding of the effects of change induced by merger and acquisition activity and how those changes are interpreted and rationalized by individuals.

The origins of the foundational and supporting theories are attributed to seminal works produced by the following authors:

- Psychological contract theory: Rousseau (1989, 1995, 1996, 2001)
- Psychological contract violation theory: Rousseau (1996, 2001)
- Expectancy theory: Vroom (1964)
- Cognitive dissonance theory: Festinger (1957)
- Sense-making theory: Louis (1980)
- Equity theory: Adams (1965)
- Social exchange theory: Blau (1964)

I selected these theories because they all contribute to the development of the subjective contracts formed between an employee and the associated organization. The relational bond that supports employee retention and positive attitudinal outcomes is developed or deteriorated through each of these theoretical concepts. The combined construct and interpretation of the organizational environment to each individual is what contributes to the subjective formation of the psychological contract, which is the basis for this study. To understand the development of the psychological contract and the interpretation of a perceived violation to that contract, these supporting foundational theories must also be understood.

Psychological contract theory is the foundation for interpreting the unwritten agreement an employee perceives to be in place with an organization and understanding how externally induced change from merger and acquisition activity can be interpreted against this subjective contract (Rousseau, 1989, 1995, 1996, 2001). The psychological contract theory is supported by multiple theories that can be used to assist in

understanding how unanticipated change can affect the relationship of employees and their organization.

I selected this theory for the basis of this study because it frames the relationship and expectations developed by an employee with respect to reciprocity of investment and reward (Rousseau, 1989, 1995, 1996, 2001). Merger and acquisition activity can disrupt this framework in unanticipated ways, leading to a need to reevaluate and possibly reconstruct the psychological contract (González, 2016). This disruption induces change that may or may not be perceived as a psychological contract violation, and may have resulting effects on attitudinal outcomes, which I use this study to quantitatively determine.

I use expectancy theory to outline how employees anticipate the effort and reward exchange to occur during the employment duration (Vroom, 1964). Through prior research that applied the expectancy theory it is understood how motivation is derived or diminished by the interpretation of the effort and reward expectations that are subjectively developed by employees (Vroom, 1964). This theory is applicable to this study because it underpins the effort and reward reciprocity expected under the psychological contract.

Festinger (1957) developed a supporting theory of cognitive dissonance to explain why the introduction of new employee behavioral models, such as those incurred from mergers and acquisitions, may no longer align with an individual's values and beliefs. When this occurs, employees can experience discomfort until the change can be rationalized to align with their existing values and beliefs. Cognitive dissonance is

relative to this study to provide an understanding of how employees rationalize change and react to realign their behavioral model. These reactions may or may not result in changes to attitudinal outcomes, which is a focus of this study.

Sense-making theory is used to provide a framework to understand how employees reconstruct their social identities from changes to their environment (Louis, 1980). Mergers and acquisitions can alter the work environment and force employees to subjectively self-reexamine their new social identity within the changed environment. Reconstructing social identities may or may not result in changes to attitudinal outcomes within the changed work environment. This theory is applied to support the understanding of how the reconstruction of an employee's social identity can be altered and changed following merger and acquisition activity and is therefore also applied to support the intention of this study to understand the relationship between merger and acquisition activity and the effects to attitudinal outcomes.

Equity theory supports the interpretation of the perceived fairness of transactional exchanges in the work environment and how they contribute to an individual's evaluation of self-worth (Adams, 1965). These transactional exchanges, such as the perception of pay or utilization fairness are self-evaluated and support the perceptions that lead to psychological contract violation perceptions, which is also self-evaluated and subjective.

Social exchange theory structures the obligatory expectations of interpersonal exchanges through perceived personal relationships in the work environment (Blau, 1964). It would follow that interruptions to these workplace relationships that affect the interpersonal exchanges, such as those brought about by merger and acquisition-imposed

changes, would disrupt the social exchange. Social exchange theory supports reciprocity between employers and employees, and therefore supports how the perception of a psychological contract violation is evaluated.

I use all of these foundational and supporting theories to frame the development of subjective individual contracts and perceived expectations that can be altered in unanticipated ways through merger and acquisition activities. In this study I apply these theories to understand the construct of the employee-employer relationship and will be the basis for evaluating the effects on attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention from merger and acquisition activity in relation to a perceived psychological contract violation.

Literature Review

Merger and acquisition activity that has continued to gain momentum for the preceding 7 years is expected to continue at an increased rate into the new decade (Deloitte, 2020). The most predominant driver for mergers or acquisitions is value creation. The Deloitte (2020) survey of over 1,000 executives reported revenue and growth as the two prevalent value drivers when considering a merger or acquisition. The organizational changes required to merge two companies can cause perceptions of violations to employee psychological contracts (Magano & Thomas, 2017). These perceived violations may erode organizational value by altering employee attitudes, potentially resulting in changes to organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intention.

It has been well established that turnover rates increase during merger and acquisition activities among employees and executives in the acquired firm (Cannella & Hambrick, 1993; Krishnan et al., 1997; Krug & Hegarty, 2001; Lubatkin et al., 1999; Walsh, 1989; Walsh & Ellwood, 1991). With employees being a significant source of value for organizations, understanding the precedents and relationships affecting the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention is necessary to manage merger and acquisition activity.

In this section I expand on the definition of a psychological contract and the theory applicable to understanding how merger and acquisition activity affect the psychological contract and the perception that it has been violated. I describe further supporting theories in context of the study including expectancy theory, cognitive dissonance theory, sense-making theory, equity theory, and social exchange theory.

Psychological Contract Theory

Rousseau (1989) established the foundational theory for the current subjective construct of the psychological contract between an individual and an employer. The employee-employer psychological contract is the belief held by an individual that reciprocity through exchange mechanisms in the workplace have been agreed to and will be maintained (Rousseau, 1989). This perception is held by the individual and is not a formal contract or even necessarily understood or recognized by the employer. Mutual agreement is not required for the formation of a psychological contract by an individual. The components for the formation of a psychological contract include: the employee belief that a promise has been made, some form of anticipatory committed effort made by

the employee, and an expectation of a future obligatory reciprocity by the employer (Rousseau, 1989). A fundamental aspect of the contract theory is the underlying expectation that an individual is entitled to something in exchange for something that has been given up, which the individual considers to be of value (Rousseau, 2016).

Martin (1995) believed the psychological contract theory proposed by Rousseau in 1989 was specific to the long-held belief that if employees work hard for an organization, they would be rewarded with career-long employment and a retirement package in exchange for career-long commitment and corporate dedication. Martin argued that the psychological contract theory is outdated and no longer relevant. He suggests a current application can be applied to the employer obligation to provide job skills to employees as the obligatory reciprocity resulting in the benefit of increased employability in the industry, but no promise of career-long employability at the same organization. I selected this variable as the foundational framework for this study because it provides a structure to understand the existing employee-employer relationship prior to change incurred by merger and acquisition activities.

Psychological Contract Violation (PCV) Theory

When reciprocity is not maintained as proportionally anticipated under an individual's psychological contract, a perceived violation can occur. This perceived violation is entirely subjective and can be transactional or relationship based. If a promotion or salary increase was expected, but not promised, then the perception is considered a transactional violation. If a promotion or salary increase was promised and not fulfilled, then an additional layer of a perceived relationship violation can occur

(Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1989). A perceived lack of obligatory fulfillment of the psychological contract can lead to a perception of injustice and resulting changes in attitudes and behaviors (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1989). This perception of a violation and the resulting change in attitudes was the focus of this study in relation to merger and acquisition activity.

Morrison and Robinson (1997) distinguished between a psychological contract violation and a psychological contract breach, with a violation being the more severe of the two. There is not a defining line or distinguishable sequence between a breach and a violation (Morrison & Robinson, 1997) as neither cedes nor follows the other. For the purpose of this study, I assumed that a typical employee is not fully aware of the unwritten and subjective construct of a psychological contract, and therefore not capable of distinguishing between a perceived contract breach and a contract violation. The focus of this study was on the perception of a psychological contract violation, which is described as a broken promise against the subjective psychological contract (Rousseau, 1989).

Supporting Theoretical Perspectives

Several supporting theories contribute to an expanded understanding of the psychological contract and subsequent psychological contract violation in relation to attitudinal outcomes from merger and acquisition activity. The supporting concepts of expectancy theory, cognitive dissonance theory, sense-making theory, equity theory, and social exchange theory provide deeper connections to the relationship between merger

and acquisition activity and employee attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

Expectancy Theory

Expectancy theory frames the relationship between the effort and results employees attain compared to the reciprocal benefits expected to receive for those efforts and corresponding results (Vroom, 1964). Employees invest effort with the deliberate intention of attaining personal rewards from an organization such as salary increases, job security, promotions, and new opportunities. Employee evaluations of probability for desired rewards are continuously assessed by each individual and determine conduct (Vroom, 1964). Popescu-Ljungholm (2015) further expanded expectancy theory to include employee expectation that performance will drive a specific outcome as a motivator for workplace conduct. The conduct that employees undertake is a personal decision based on results that are considered important to the individual (Vroom, 1964).

Expectancy theory as a motivator can induce high performance behaviors when employees perceive a high probability of the expected rewards driving the behavior (Popescu-Ljungholm, 2015). In the case of unfulfilled expectations, it follows that the probability assessment made by an individual after an unfulfilled exchange would be lower and consequently result in lower motivation levels. Merger and acquisition activity that is perceived as causing unfulfilled expectations from invested effort of employees could therefore affect employee motivation in terms of organizational commitment and job satisfaction. This supporting theory is applicable to this study to understand how an

individual constructs anticipated rewards that may or may not be affected by organizational changes brought about by merger and acquisition activities.

Cognitive Dissonance Theory

Cognitive dissonance theory posits that when employees hold multiple cognitions, or perceptions based on fragments of knowledge that are not aligned they will feel dissonance, or psychological discomfort, until they are able to resolve the discrepancy (Festinger, 1957). Because dissonance is a negative effect, employees will feel uncomfortable when expected to behave in a manner that is not consistent with their values or beliefs. The misalignment causes discomfort until the discrepancy is resolved, or the individual remains in a negative state, which serves as a motivator to resolve the dissonance (Festinger, 1957). Cognitive discrepancies are caused by multiple triggers: *Counter attitudinal behaviors* where employees are acting in a manner contradictory to their personal attitude or beliefs; *Free choice* where employees must make a decision from imperfect alternatives; *Effort-behavioral commitment* where employees seek additional resources to support an escalated commitment level (Hinojosa et al., 2017). Discrepancy reduction for the misalignment of behavior and attitude can be resolved by changing attitude to align with behavior, changing behavior to align with attitude, or by trivializing the behavior that was not consistent with the attitude (Festinger, 1957). It is more likely that individuals will adjust attitude to align with past behaviors, since attitudes are more adaptive than past behaviors (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959).

By nature, merger and acquisition activities typically require a committed action. Cognitive dissonance is felt more strongly when associated with decisions that require a

commitment to action, since action cannot occur until the dissonance is resolved (Harmon-Jones et al., 2015). Once the dissonance is resolved, action can occur and commitment to the decision can follow (Harmon-Jones et al., 2015). It would flow from the action-based model presented by Harmon-Jones et al. (2015) that when merger and acquisition activity causes uncertainties and organizational change, a commitment to the organization would be difficult until the dissonance is resolved, and employees can commit and act on their new attitudinal and behavioral decisions. Changing either attitudes or behaviors to resolve dissonance can be either beneficial or detrimental to the success of merger and acquisition activity, provoking a need for managers to be aware and actively manage employee dissonance before, during, and after merger and acquisition activities.

Cognitive dissonance can be avoided preemptively by changing attitudes, behaviors, or other cognitions to avoid the negative effect of dissonance and dissonance reduction (Le Mens et al., 2015). Employees can resist organizational change in an attempt to avoid dissonance created by new organizational structures (Le Mens et al., 2015). It flows from this concept that employees may resist other organizational changes resulting from merger and acquisition activity to avoid dissonance. Therefore, cognitive dissonance can have a ripple effect beyond the initial merger and acquisition activity causing a broader negative effect on employee resistance to change. Cognitive dissonance theory is relevant to this study as it frames the potential resistance to change that could relate to attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, turnover intention and organizational commitment.

Sense-Making Theory

Organizational change can be created through merger and acquisition activity. Amid the ambiguity and uncertainty associated with that change, employees naturally attempt to make sense of the activities and changes surrounding them. Sense-making theory explains how individuals process unknowns by constructing their own understanding of a new environment or a changed one (Spillane & Anderson, 2014). In the context of organizational change, employees undergo the sense-making process at an individual level, but within the professional setting of the broader organization, taking into account their workplace social construct and the organizational policies, norms and culture (Spillane & Anderson, 2014). When the normal and expected outcomes of individual experiences and anticipated processes is interrupted by surprise or unexpected nonconformities, individuals examine their environment to decipher clues and subjectively rebuild their understanding of their new environment (Louis, 1980). The application of sense-making theory does not imply accuracy, but rather fulfills a need to interpret change at a level that makes sense to the individual. The interpretation of environmental clues is unique to each individual while also influenced by the organizational environment and social construct of each employee. Employees do not reconstruct their social identity in isolation, but rather by absorbing contextual inputs from their surroundings and other employees in the form of information exchange, storytelling, and shared experiences and interpretations (Vough & Caza, 2017).

The development of social relationships in the workplace contribute to an individual's social identity and sense of fairness within the organizational context

(Lamertz, 2002). A framework forms from these social relationships for comparison among other employees and contribute to the perceptions of fairness and organizational justice (Lamertz, 2002). These interpersonal relationships with peers and managers represent an individual's membership in the organization (Lamertz, 2002). Employees examine their relationship with the organization and also impose a broader judgement of how the organization relates to employees in general. Merger and acquisition activities are heavily subject to perceptions of fairness and organizational justice as decisions about employee roles and the elimination of redundancies are translated into organizational restructuring activities. This supporting theory directly relates to this study by providing a framework for interpreting fairness among other employees as a result of merger and acquisition activities.

Equity Theory

Adams (1965) established the model for Equity Theory, which is based on general expectations that vary from one individual to the next. The personal expectations of level of salary or level of job responsibility to commensurate with the internal self-belief system drives the perceptions of equity fairness (Adams, 1965). When employees feel underpaid or underutilized, the perceived inequity can lead to dissatisfaction, but not necessarily distrust. The difference between a perceived disproportionate exchange in equity versus the psychological contract, for transactional incongruence, is that equity can be restored through remedial actions, while a perceived psychological contract violation erodes trust and cannot easily be restored (Rousseau, 1989). However, both perceived inequity and perceived psychological contract violations from a relationship

are more deeply rooted and personal, requiring emotional corrective actions as well as transactional corrective actions.

Akiate (2018) demonstrated that employee trust towards management following bank merger and acquisition activity affected organizational commitment by focusing specifically on the perception of procedural justice, a dimension of organizational justice. Organizational trust is based on feelings, whereas organizational commitment is based on behaviors (Akiate, 2018). It would then follow that higher levels of trust in management would create higher levels of organizational commitment, where behaviors follow from feelings. Akiate's study found that procedural justice was highly associated to organizational commitment and adversely associated to turnover intention. The study applied equity theory to explore a relationship to the attitudinal outcomes of organizational commitment and turnover intention, similar to the intention of this study. The equity theory is based on the perception of fairness, not a violation of a contract (Rousseau, 1989). And because merger and acquisition activities create change and uncertainty, employees perform self-evaluations of fairness. Equity theory supports this study and underscores the perception of fairness during merger and acquisition activity.

Social Exchange Theory

The perception of fairness during merger and acquisition activities is a subjective evaluation made by each employee. The expectation of obligatory reciprocal exchange is the basis of social exchange theory, created by a series of interactions at an interpersonal level (Blau, 1964). Continual successful exchanges lead to the formation of a personal relationship where the exchanges become personal obligations (Cropanzano et al., 2017).

The interactions include extrinsic rewards such as pay increases and promotions, as well as intrinsic rewards such as networking opportunities and reputation building (Wang & Hou, 2015). Wang and Hou (2015) found that these controlled motivations had a greater influence in organizations that value personal contributions over group contributions.

Leader-member exchange (LMX) theory is an extension of social exchange theory that applies the obligatory social exchange expectation to the leader-member relationship in the organizational context between supervisors and subordinates. High-quality LMX relationships include frequent dyadic interaction and reciprocated exchanges that promote positive work attitudes (Han et al., 2018). Constructing a high-quality LMX requires the development of trust between both parties to enable the leader to engage in the risk-taking activities of delegation and autonomy of subordinates, and the subordinates trust that the leader is acting in their best interests (Scandura & Pellegrini, 2008). Employees engaged in high LMX relationships with their supervisors can perceive this relationship to be favorable positioning amongst peers when they meet their leader's expectations and receive favorable opportunities. In a high quality dyadic LMX model, supervisors invest in building a relationship with subordinates through coaching, mentoring and development support, and in return receive a reciprocal benefit of increased employee performance, work-related effort, and organizational commitment (Han et al., 2018). A high LMX model can also create cognitive dissonance when high-quality LMX relationships are subjected to expectations that do not align attitude with behaviors, such as those associated with organizational change (Bernerth et al., 2016).

Social exchange theory can also be considered an extension of equity theory where the expectation of reciprocal exchange is subject to the employee's perception of what amounts to an equitable social exchange based on a position of either benevolence or entitlement (Han et al., 2018). Han et al. (2018) demonstrated a positive correlation between benevolent employees engaged in a high LMX relationship and change-oriented organizational citizenship behaviors, and a negative correlation between entitled employees engaged in a high LMX relationship and change-oriented organizational citizenship. Han et al. theorized that entitled employees may be more prone to promote their own self-interests over that of the organization and therefore felt less obligation to reciprocate during periods of change. Harden et al. (2018) posited that the social exchange theory supports that a high LMX with perceived fairness of rewards creates a stronger sense of reciprocal obligation in the form of organizational commitment which leads to a lower turnover intention. LMX is directly related to work attitudes, and was therefore pertinent to this study to understand how merger and acquisition activity can affect the social exchange expectations and possibly result in changes to attitudinal outcomes.

Organizational Change Through Mergers and Acquisitions

Rapid business growth and market extension can be achieved through merger and acquisition activity, making it a viable solution for strategic business growth. Most organizations enter into merger and acquisition activity with the ultimate goal of increasing financial performance, and lessor focus on the human capital and intellect that is required to realize that goal. Gallup (2017) noted that less than one third of employees

worldwide are involved, enthusiastic and committed to their workplace. With human capital as the underpinning for financial performance, organizations cannot afford a decrease in employee attitudinal outcomes as a result of merger and acquisition activity.

Merger and acquisitions cause organizational change. Organizational reactions to external factors can cause a perception of a violation to the psychological contract, particularly related to merger and acquisition activities (González, 2016). Organizational performance is improved through the elimination of duplicate roles, consolidation of activities, and other efficiency measures aimed at reducing redundancies. This improved efficiency is typically accomplished through reorganization and restructuring of the combined organization (Rozen-Bakher, 2018). These activities inherently cause organizational change that employees may or may not perceive as a violation to the psychological contract previously constructed with their organization.

Employee perception and participation during merger and acquisition-induced organizational change has a direct correlation to employee resistance to change (Appelbaum et al., 2017). Two factors contributing to employee perception and participation during and after the merger and acquisition activity include: 1) trust of management, and 2) perception of fairness and justice (Appelbaum et al., 2017). Resistance to change is a common reason for merger and acquisition activity to fail. A reduced likelihood of resistance to change has been linked to a high leader-member exchange (Georgalis et al., 2015) which is a supporting theory of the psychological contract. Therefore, a high LMX can reduce resistance to change and increase the likelihood of successful merger and acquisition activities.

Credible Explanation (CE)

As change occurs through merger and acquisition activity and disrupts the perception of the organization's fulfillment of the psychological contract, employees working through the sense-making process seek to understand how events developed (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). As uncertainty increases about the fulfillment of the psychological contract, employee monitoring of the psychological contract increases (Rousseau, 1995). Several researchers have posited that the use of a credible explanation may mitigate the perception of a psychological contract violation (González, 2016; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1995). Morrison and Robinson (1997) even postulated that an employee may agree with the organization's decision to engage in the activity that caused the unfulfillment of the employment agreement after evaluating the causes leading to the event. A credible explanation (CE), defined as a means for reducing the perception of a psychological contract violation, can offer a justification for the merger and acquisition activity performed by the organization that has caused the *actual* unfulfillment or the *perceived* unfulfillment of the psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995). A credible explanation can also be used as a strategy to reduce or mitigate the perception of a psychological contract violation to the affected employees (Rousseau, 1995). Rousseau (1995) explained the concept of renegeing based on an organization's recognition of an obligation, and either the *inability* to fulfill the employment agreement, or the *unwillingness* to fulfill the employment agreement. In the case of an inability to fulfill the employment promise, a credible explanation that conveys the change in circumstances may reduce the perception that the employment agreement was not

willingly unmet and reduce blame towards the organization (Rousseau, 1995). Because this factor can alter the perception of a violation of the psychological contract, I selected a credible explanation as the moderating variable.

It is even possible for employees affected by merger and acquisition activity to perceive the organization as a victim and relinquish the organization from accountability for the psychological contract violation (Fincham & Bradbury, 1992; Kidd & Utne, 1978). Fincham and Bradbury (1992) differentiated the attribution of blame and responsibility, where blame is associated to the cause of the event, and responsibility is associated to the moral accountability of the situation. Shaver (2012) clarified that it possible to hold an individual or organization responsible but release them from blame when an adequate justification is offered. Kidd and Utne (1978) proposed that inequities derived from external causes renders the responsible party less responsible than those derived internally from an individual or organization.

Job Satisfaction (JS)

Job satisfaction refers to an individual's subjective evaluation of the fulfillment of their job in relation to their needs (Locke, 1969). Job satisfaction includes a reactive emotional component for positive or negative feelings about the work environment (Locke, 1969). From this foundational model, it follows that job satisfaction is related to the psychological contract theory of reciprocal exchange in the workplace where an employee fulfills the needs of the organization and has an unwritten expectation that the organization will fulfill the informal and personal needs of the employee. Employee effort rewards should be fair and appropriate to balance the effort-reward relationship

between an employee and the organization (Devonish, 2018), sometimes represented by the employee's relationship with their immediate supervisor. A recent study performed by Devonish (2018) found that job satisfaction plays a mediating role between effort-reward imbalance and the individual outcomes of burnout, turnover intentions, and mental health. From these findings it was inferred that merger and acquisition activity perceived to create an effort-reward imbalance can affect job satisfaction and mediate turnover intention. Additionally, Malik and Kanwal (2018) found a positive significant relationship between knowledge sharing practices and job satisfaction. From this, it can be expected that knowledge sharing practices enhanced during merger and acquisition activities could benefit the attitudinal outcome of job satisfaction.

Organizational Commitment (OC)

Porter et al. (1974) defined organizational commitment as an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization. Organizational commitment is the emotional attachment of an employee to an organization. Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) delineated this emotional attachment into three categories: shared values, personal engagement, and identity-relevance. Porter et al. posited that three main components had to be met for organizational commitment to occur: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and interests; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization. Both perspectives of the characteristics of organizational commitment include wanting to engage on behalf of the organization, and a personal feeling of membership in an organization that aligns with personal values.

Allen and Meyer (1990) developed a three-component model for framing organizational commitment: affective attachment to the organization (affective commitment); awareness of costs related to leaving the organization and evaluated available alternatives and transferability of skills (continuance commitment); and feeling obligated to remain from social norms for reciprocity of benefits or opportunities previously extended from the organization (normative commitment). Perceived psychological contract violations can affect all three components of the Meyer and Allen model for commitment (Meyer et al., 1998). Akiate (2018) used a three-part survey to assess all three levels of organizational commitment to explore a relationship with trust towards management following bank merger activity. The study found that the higher the level of trust by employees towards management, the higher the organizational commitment. Additionally, Febriani and Yancey (2019) applied the original Meyer and Allen (1991) affective commitment survey to determine the relationship between the effectiveness of human resources during merger and acquisition activity and organizational commitment. The study found no significant relationship between organizational change caused by merger and acquisition activity and organizational commitment when human resource initiatives were effective (Febriani & Yancey, 2019).

Through merger and acquisition activity, the employee relationship with the organization may be perceived differently. Employees may experience uncertainty and forecast a poor outcome that initiates a withdrawal from productive work practices or a departure from the organization if the preference is to remain productive (Bebenroth, & Thiele, 2017). This forecast of a poor outcome can also be interpreted as the perception

of a psychological contract violation when the employee experiences uncertainty and resolves through sense-making that the organization is no longer fulfilling the employment agreement. When the three conditions of organizational commitment are no longer satisfied, employee willingness to act on behalf of the organization and the desire to remain a member can be affected. Factors affecting organizational commitment include the perceived structure, process and climate of the organization (Ahuja et al., 2018), which can be induced by merger and acquisition activity.

Turnover Intention (TI)

Turnover intention has been a well-studied topic for over 100 years (Hom et al., 2017). The definition of turnover intention has been described by multiple researchers to include the conscious, voluntary, and deliberate willingness and awareness of thoughts to leave a current employer (Çelik, & Çıra, 2013; Hom et al., 2017; Tett & Meyer, 1993). Turnover intention does not require action but can include formal or informal searching for new employment opportunities (Hom et al., 2017). Mobley's 1977 model for predictors of turnover included job dissatisfaction and an evaluation of alternatives. He further demonstrated that intentions to quit have been correlated as predictors to quitting (Mobley, 1977).

Turnover can have negative financial effects on organizations through hiring and training costs and knowledge resource gaps. Devonish (2018) correlated a link between effort-reward imbalance and job satisfaction, and also found that effort-reward imbalance has a direct effect on turnover intention. Social structures and competitive advantage in organizations can also be negatively affected by turnover with a disruption of

communication networks and peer presence, depending on who stays, who goes, and where they go (Hom et al., 2017). It is assumed that the erosion of social structures and competitive advantage have inherent financial impacts in direct opposition to the financial drivers that initiated the merger and acquisition activities.

Perceived injustice in the workplace can lead to work-related depression and irritation, which was shown by Radebe and Dhurup (2018) to lead to an increase in turnover intention. Memon et al. (2018) demonstrated that person-organization fit had a direct correlation on turnover intention, mediated by work engagement. Employees that perceived their organization to be more compatible with their individual values and needs were found to be more engaged and reported lower turnover intention (Memon et al., 2018). From this correlation it can be deduced that employee engagement during merger and acquisition activity would reduce turnover intention.

Survivor's reactions to mergers and acquisitions can generate emotionally charged activities resulting from organizational change that cause feelings of betrayal and uncertainty. Gunkel et al. (2015) provided evidence that managerial influence can help mitigate the emotions evoked by uncertainties and insecurities of employees during merger and acquisition activity. Managerial communications during merger and acquisition activities directly affected *passive* resistance behaviors, while managerial support directly affected *active* resistance behaviors (Gunkel et al., 2015). The feelings of insecurity and dissatisfaction were directly correlated to uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation. This presupposes that the uncertainty felt during merger and acquisition activity, if not mitigated through managerial communication and support, can progress to

insecurities and dissatisfaction which can then progress to turnover intention (Gunkel et al., 2015; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). The perception of a psychological contract violation was found to be inversely related to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and directly related to turnover intention in the Puerto Rican pharmaceutical industry (González, 2016). These findings support the relationship-based violation of the psychological contract from the perception of injustice associated with merger and acquisition activity.

A conflicting study by Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2017) demonstrated that mergers and acquisitions in less advanced economies are associated with an increased perception of growth opportunities which creates positive attitudinal outcomes for job satisfaction and reduced turnover intention. These results are predicated on the assumption that organizations in developing economies are strife with “market inefficiencies and institutional weaknesses” (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2017, p. 165). Employees are therefore more prone to view merger and acquisition activity as a means for career and network development in developing economies.

Gap in the Literature

The literature demonstrates that merger and acquisition activity can degrade the trust in relationships between employees and their organizations, as well as create a perception of a psychological contract violation from merger and acquisition-induced organizational and workplace change. The direct correlation of a perceived psychological contract violation as a response to merger and acquisition activity, in relation to attitudinal outcomes for United States employees in knowledge-based consulting roles for

consulting firms had not been explored. This industry is reliant on human capital to be successful and remain competitive.

Summary and Conclusions

The construct for the psychological contract has been supported through multiple social and relationship-based theories that demonstrate how the workplace is perceived and interpreted by individuals. The literature review has demonstrated strong links between organizational change induced by merger and acquisition activities and the effects of a perceived psychological contract violation from the resulting organizational changes. Perceived psychological contract violations have been related to employee attitudinal outcomes (Gunkel et al., 2015; Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1989). This research specifically indicated the relationship of a perceived psychological contract violation to the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activities in knowledge-based roles within large nation-wide consulting firms. Additionally, I explored the mitigating effect of a credible explanation to determine the effect on the perception of a psychological contract violation and the subsequent effects on attitudinal outcomes.

For this study, I used psychological contract violation for the predictor variable. To better understand how a perceived psychological contract violation translates to attitudinal changes, I used three attitudinal dependent variables: job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Because the perception of a psychological contract violation is subjective, I used the moderating variable of credible explanation to determine how a credible explanation affects the three attitudinal

outcomes. I provided a description of the research model and methodology in Chapter 3 to statistically analyze the relationships between the predictor variable and criterion variables, as well as the relationship of the moderating variable to the criterion variables. Understanding the relationships between a perceived psychological contract violation and attitudinal outcomes following merger and acquisition activities is the focus of this study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this quantitative nonexperimental, Spearman correlation and regression, analysis study was to examine the relationship between the perception of psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the relationship for attitudinal outcomes of employee job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and turnover intention. I used a credible explanation as the moderating variable to analyze the relationship of a credible motive for the merger and acquisition activity and changes in the perception of a psychological contract violation, and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and turnover intention.

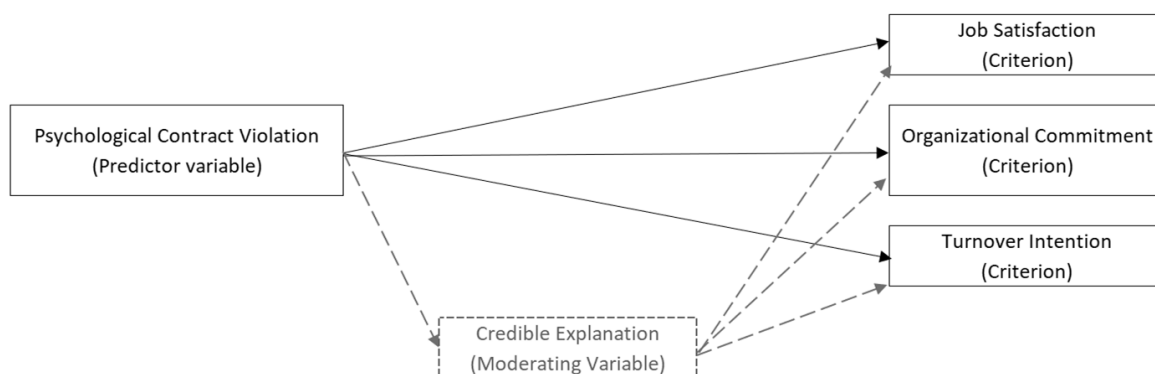
In this chapter, I review the research design and methodology proposed to study the relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation caused by merger and acquisition activity in relation to three attitudinal outcomes, as well as the moderating effect of a credible explanation. I first present the research design, rationale, and proposed research model, followed by the methodology and data analysis plan. The chapter will conclude with an identification of threats to validity and a closing summary.

Research Design and Rationale

I used a nonexperimental correlational design was used in this study to explore relationships between a perceived psychological contract violation and attitudinal outcomes. The application of correlation studies is a proficient method for identifying relationships between variables through inquiries (Abutabenjeh & Jaradat, 2018).

Predictive relationships among variables can be understood through the use of bivariate correlations which support exploratory research designs (Schirmer et al., 2016). A correlational study is not used to identify the cause and effect of the relationship, but rather to explore relationships by observing and identifying linear relationships between variables (Center for Quality, 2015). Under a correlation study, variables are not controlled, and control groups are not used to compare findings. The purpose of a cross-sectional correlation study is to statistically test for relational patterns, which was appropriate to explore the relationships proposed in this study (González, 2016). I then applied a linear regression analysis to each criterion variable that had a significant relationship with the predictor variable through the correlation analysis results.

Psychological contract violation was the predictor variable. The dependent variables were job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention to measure attitudinal outcomes. The moderating variable was a credible explanation to explain the need for executive management to pursue the merger and acquisition activity. This moderating variable determined if providing a credible explanation for the justification of the merger and acquisition activity can influence the relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes. The research model is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1*Research Model*

The research model is partially consistent with prior research conducted on perceived psychological contract violation and attitudinal outcomes (González, 2016), but does not differentiate between a psychological contract violation and a psychological contract breach. This study expands on previous research conducted by applying a similar model to a new industry and country. I applied a similar and aligned research design to advance knowledge on the attitudinal effects of a perceived psychological contract violation caused by merger and acquisition activities.

Methodology

I focused the methodology for this study on providing statistical data to establish patterns between two variables based on an individual's recollection of the experience of prior activities. Because the merger and acquisition activity has already occurred and creates an uncontrolled research environment, the applied methodology was correlational

and nonexperimental (Harkiolakis, 2020). Cross-sectional designs measure change by individual experience and generate a static model that represents the recollection and interpretation of the experience at a set moment in time (Harkiolakis, 2020). Schwab (2013) noted that a nonexperimental, cross-sectional correlation study can be used to provide insight into the relationships, if any, between two variables. I analyzed perceived psychological contract violation and the dependent variables of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention with this methodology and additionally analyzed with a linear regression analysis. I conducted a multiple regression analysis to determine the relationship between the same dependent variable and dependent variables with the inclusion of a moderating variable for a credible explanation. I then evaluated the results of both analyses to understand the effects to attitudinal outcomes that the moderating variable contributes.

Population

The target population included surviving employees of merger and acquisition activity in knowledge-based roles in consulting firms in the United States, on either the acquiring or acquired firm side. Using the Qualtrics (2019) sample size calculator for a population size of approximately 10,000 United States consulting employees with a 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error, the ideal sample size was 384 participants. I received and analyzed 174 surveys for this study, therefore a full confidence level may not have been achieved. The G*Power calculations to predict sample size at an effect size (f^2) of 0.15, error probability of 0.05, and a power of 80% calculated a sample size of 55

for linear regression with one predictor variable, and 68 for multiple regression with two predictor variables.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

I surveyed participants by use of electronically administered self-surveys through the internet-based tool QuestionPro. The survey, as shown in Appendix C, included 16 demographic questions and 40 questions combining portions of five predetermined and established measurement tools to collect data measuring job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, psychological contract violation, and the effect of a credible explanation.

The sample technique was snowballing to reach more participants within known nation-wide consulting firms in the United States that have survived merger and acquisition activity. Snowballing is a purposive sampling method that can be used to target a specific demographic characteristic and assumes their network includes similarly experienced individuals that also meets the characteristics sought after for the quantitative sampling base (Harkiolakis, 2020). I conducted initial participant-seeking through social media including LinkedIn and Facebook. I provided an internet survey link within social media posts to allow participants to complete the survey remotely at their convenience. Initial target participants existed where direct contacts were known to fit the target population parameters to request survey support and propagate the snowball sampling method at serial acquisition consulting firms in the United States.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection (Primary Data)

I initiated recruiting with known direct industry contacts and connections through LinkedIn and Facebook that met the parameters for the target population of merger and acquisition survivors at large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States. I requested those individuals to complete the survey and forward to any additional direct contacts that also meet the parameters of the target population.

I asked participants to self-identify demographic information that included:

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Marriage status
4. Level of education
5. Country of origin
6. Salary range
7. Part-time or full-time employee
8. Supervision of other employees
9. Management or non-management position
10. Year of merger or acquisition
11. Years with firm prior to merger/acquisition
12. Years after firm following the merger/acquisition
13. Still employed at the merged/acquired/acquiring firm?
14. Name of employer at time of Role in the merger or acquisition
15. Size of firm prior to the merger or acquisition?

16. Size of combined firm after the merger or acquisition?

I developed an initial invitation to participate with information regarding the purpose and use of the data being requested. The online survey tool required a consent to be checked prior to continuing to the survey. At the end of the survey, but before receiving “survey complete” notification, the survey thanked the participant and briefly describe the next steps of the process and noted the use of the collected data. I did not collect names and contact information so participants could be more open to responding without fear of recourse. There were no follow-up requirements with the participants.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

I used pre-established survey tools to collect data for this study, as shown in Appendix D. The use of structured instruments provides a standardized procedure to support replicability and credibility of the research (Harkiolakis, 2020). I selected the survey tools because of their consistent use in research for human behaviors and workplace psychology. I used a combined single survey with questions selected from established survey tools for each variable. Permission grant emails for use of these survey tools are included in Appendix A. The entire 7-point Likert scale was applied to all of the survey tools where the following points correspond to the level of agreement with each question:

1. *Strongly disagree*
2. *Moderately disagree*
3. *Somewhat disagree*
4. *Neutral*

5. *Somewhat agree*
6. *Moderately agree*
7. *Strongly agree*

Cronbach's Alpha is a test used to determine the internal consistency and reliability of scale-based survey tools (Taber, 2018). Because the instruments that were used for measuring participant responses for the predictor variable, dependent variable and moderating variables of this study were based on the Likert scale, I used Cronbach's Alpha to provide statistical evidence of instrument quality.

Validity informs the degree to which the survey instrument achieves the desired measurements (Isaac & Michael, 1995). Content validity is demonstrated by the frequent and consistent use of the selected survey tools for more than 20 years. Dependent variable-related validity was demonstrated by use of the selected dependent variables measured by the selected instruments with consistent and comparative results among multiple external studies. Construct validity determines the amount to which the instrument actually measures the variable it was intended to measure. I used Cronbach's Alpha to analyze the construct validity of the measurement instruments applied in this study.

Psychological contract violation was measured by select questions from the survey and entire 7-point Likert scale developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). For the purpose of establishing a feeling of betrayal caused by the merger or acquisition activities, I sampled questions from both the Psychological Contract Breach perception, as well as the psychological contract violation perception questions. Robinson and

Morrison obtained a coefficient alpha of .78 for their instrument. I received permission from Dr. Sandra Robinson on January 2, 2019, and included a copy in Appendix A.

Specific questions that I selected to measure the perception of a psychological contract violation included:

1. I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions.
2. So far, my employer has not done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me.
3. Almost all the promise made by my employer during recruitment have not been kept thus far.
4. I feel that my employer has not come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired.
5. My employer has broken many of its promises to me even though I have upheld my side of the deal.
6. I feel betrayed by my organization.
7. I feel a great deal of anger toward my organization.
8. I feel that my organization has violated the contract between us.
9. I feel extremely frustrated by how I have been treated by my organization.

I measured job satisfaction by select questions from the Job Diagnostic Survey developed by Hackman and Oldham (1980) using the entire 7-point Likert scale.

Hackman and Oldham obtained internal reliability consistencies ranging between .88 and .56 for their instrument, which is generally considered reliable (Hackman & Oldham,

1975). I received permission from Dr. Greg Oldham on December 30, 2018, and included a copy in Appendix A. Questions I extracted from the Job Diagnostic Survey were:

1. Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job.
2. I frequently think of quitting this job.
3. I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.
4. Most people on this job are very satisfied with the job.
5. People on this job often think of quitting.

I measured organizational commitment by select questions from the survey developed by Allen and Meyer (1990) to measure affective (desire-based), continuing (cost-based), and normative (obligation-based) aspects of organizational commitment using the entire 7-point Likert scale. The reliability of the Allen and Meyer instrument is .86. I received permission from by Dr. Natalie Allen on March 15, 2019, and included a copy in Appendix A. I used the three-component model employee commitment surveys in their entirety. I reversed questions posed in the negative so the same Likert scale could be applied to the entire survey.

Affective Commitment

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
3. I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.
4. I feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.
5. I feel like "part of the family" at my organization.

6. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

Continuance Commitment

7. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
8. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
9. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.
10. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.
11. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.
12. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

Normative Commitment

13. I feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.
14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.
15. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.
16. This organization deserves my loyalty.
17. I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.
18. I owe a great deal to my organization.

I measured turnover intention by select questions from the survey developed by Wayne et al. (1997). I received permission from Dr. Sandy J. Wayne on December 29, 2018, and included a copy in Appendix A. I used questions from the survey category of Intentions to Quit to measure turnover intention for the purpose of this study. Those questions included:

1. As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave the organization.
2. I am actively looking for a job outside of the organization.
3. I am seriously thinking of quitting my job at this organization.
4. I often think of quitting my job at this organization.
5. I think I will still be working at this organization five years from now.

I measured credible explanation by select questions from an adapted version of the psychological contract violation survey originally developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000) using the entire 7-point Likert scale to measure causal attribution. I received permission from Dr. Sandra Robinson on January 2, 2019, and included a copy in Appendix A. Questions from this survey tool included:

1. When a promise was not fulfilled, it was usually due to changing circumstances that were beyond my employer's control.
2. In most cases when my organization failed to fulfill a promise it was due to factors that could not have been foreseen.
3. The credible explanation provided by my organization for the merger or acquisition prevented them from fulfilling their promises.

Data Analysis Plan

I used SPSS version 21 to analyze the data collected from the surveys through a correlational analysis and a multiple regression analysis including the effects of the moderating variable for a credible explanation. I reviewed data for completeness of survey question responses and quality checked to ensure data entry into the SPSS database was accurate. I verified any outliers in the data reporting with the actual survey data collected.

I used the following questions to prompt the relationship determinations of this study:

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_0): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_02): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a2): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 3 (RQ3): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?

Null Hypothesis (H_03): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a3): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 4 (RQ4): What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation

for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Null Hypothesis (H_04): There is no relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_a4): There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

I presented a demographic analysis to describe the survey respondents and their associated social-demographic data. This included gender, age, marital status, level of education, birth country, salary range, full or part-time employment status, management or nonmanagement position within the company, and employment duration before and after the merger or acquisition. These descriptive statistics include the frequencies of each demographic characteristic among the respondents. To account for the internal validity threat of maturation, I limited data sets to individuals that experienced merger and acquisition activity within the last 5 years.

The statistical methods that I used to analyze the relationship between variables were nonexperimental, Spearman correlation and regression analysis to establish patterns between variables. I performed the correlation analysis between the predictor variable and each dependent variable independently. I then performed a linear regression analysis for each pair of variables identified in the Spearman correlation analysis to have a significant relationship. I then analyzed the relationship between the moderating variable and the predictor variable with a multiple regression model to explore the effect of a credible explanation on the perception of a psychological contract violation and subsequent analyses of the resulting attitudinal effects on the dependent variables using a multiple regression model.

Table 1*Statistical Operations*

Hypothesis	Variables	Analysis
<i>H_{a1}</i> : There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.	PCV1 to PCV9 JS1 to JS5	Descriptive statistics, Non-parametric correlation (Spearman Correlation), Linear regression analysis
<i>H_{a2}</i> : There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.	PCV1 to PCV9 OC1 to OC18	Descriptive statistics, Non-parametric correlation (Spearman Correlation), Linear regression analysis
<i>H_{a3}</i> : There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.	PCV1 to PCV9 TI1 to TI5	Descriptive statistics, Non-parametric correlation (Spearman Correlation), Linear regression analysis
<i>H_{a4}</i> : There is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.	PCV1 to PCV9 CE1 to CE5	Descriptive statistics, Multiple regression analysis using PROCESS macro

I used a confidence interval of 95% with a significance level of .05 in this study. I used *t* tests to model significant differences in demographic representations. I proposed

Bonferroni's correction for the non-parametric correlation analysis to reduce the possibility of Type I error (Harkiolakis, 2020) using the .05 alpha value, but I used a regression analysis instead for a more effective examination to account formally for the possibility that the sampling distributions may be asymmetric.

Threats to Validity

External Validity

The results of this study will not be generalizable to external markets and broader groups of employees affected by merger and acquisition activities. Corporate cultures, national cultures, and employee expectations can vary between industries, locations and settings. I conducted this study in the United States with a perspective representing an economically advanced nation. People in developing economic countries may have opposite reactions to merger and acquisition activities (Paustian-Underdahl et al., 2017).

My selected target population for this study were knowledge-based professionals in the consulting industry that were assumed to be at a mature state in their careers and capable of selecting new work opportunities and directing their own careers. Other levels of professionals and non-professionals may not have access or ability to drive their own career choices to the same degree as the participants in this study.

I assumed for this study that the participants were able to differentiate between organizational change induced by merger and acquisition activity, and those changes induced by standard organizational operations and change initiatives. For this study, I did not compare employee attitudes prior to the merger and acquisition activity to verify the changes in attitudinal outcomes. Instead, I relied on individual recollection and

comparisons to the changes initiated through merger and acquisition activities. I selected participants through snowballing method, so there was a possibility of having several like-minded participants respond to the survey that share common insights and perceptions.

Because the surveys were self-administered, the response environment could not be controlled, nor could the emotional state of each respondent be observed. There was potential for participants to be in an unusually good or bad mood at the time of survey completion which would subjectively skew the results. The responses may have included central tendency errors or suffer biases caused by their current situation. The large number of participants surveyed in this study provided an opportunity to capture both good and bad mood anomalies for a balanced final result.

Internal Validity

Selection bias could have resulted from the snowball sampling method that I used. Because this was a self-selection survey, larger numbers of individuals that have shared the same experience or represent the same demographics could affect the results. To address this threat, I initially sent surveys to members from as many different organizations as possible to attempt to cast a wide net into multiple demographic representations. However, because I used the snowball method, the participant sampling was not controlled and will still include some individuals that have shared similar experiences.

Because this study was not set within a specific timeframe, maturation could cause an internal validity threat. As professionals mature in their careers, their

perspectives of change induced by merger and acquisition activity could be perceived differently in later years. To address this threat, the target population was professionals that have experienced merger and acquisition activity within the last 5 years. A more recent perspective was relevant for evaluating an individual's actual perception of a contract violation. Because the perception of a contract violation occurring in the past was subjective in nature, it was not possible to entirely mitigate this internal validity threat.

Confounding variables might have been another threat to internal validity. The root cause of attitudinal outcomes may be from a multitude of variables, only one of which is the merger and acquisition activity. In this study, I did not explore additional variables leading to a perceived psychological contract violation. I used questions in the survey specific to merger and acquisition activity to address this threat.

Construct Validity

Construct validity is an analysis used to confirm that the measurement instrument applied was fit for purpose and measures the variable it was intended to measure. Threats to construct validity occur when participants do not clearly understand what survey questions are asking. Because the survey for this study used established survey tools, construct validity was met. Hypothesis guessing can be a threat when participants attempt to guess the desired end result and bias responses to meet that goal. Cronbach's Alpha was used to analyze the construct validity. Cronbach's alpha considers all variables in the study model regardless of order (Harkiolakis, 2020).

Ethical Procedures

I completed the Research Ethics training course required by Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB). I submitted the proposal to the IRB for review of compliance with all required procedures. The IRB approval number was 02-15-21-0648033 and expired February 14, 2022.

I collected data anonymously and included only the demographic information collected to categorize the data. I did not collect participant names, organizations, or identifying information for this study. In the introduction of the survey, I included a participant acknowledgement for the aggregate use of the data in this study prior to participating in the survey. Participants were not able to initiate the survey until the acknowledgement was accepted.

Because I used the snowball method for collecting data for this study, supervisors may have forwarded the request to subordinates creating a sense of obligation to complete the survey. Because the survey was anonymous, there was no record of whether the employee completed the survey, so no recourse could occur if the employee chose not to participate.

I did not collect confidential data. I limited survey responses to prescribed menu selections for demographic information, and the selection of Likert scale responses for the measurement tools. There were no open-ended response options. I did not disseminate the raw data. I may release and circulate the analyzed results of the study as part of the study results and final dissertation.

Summary

For this research study, I used a quantitative nonexperimental, Spearman correlation, and regression analysis to support the relationship analysis between multiple variables and correlation causality of the predictor variable of perceived psychological contract violation. I used multiple regression to analyze the effect of the moderating variable for a credible explanation on the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. For the data collection effort, I used established instruments for the collection of information using the Likert scale. I administered the survey virtually on an internet-based platform and used the snowballing technique to reach the target population representing knowledge-based professionals in United States consulting firms that have survived merger and acquisition activity. I calculated the ideal sample size as 384 survey responses using Qualtrics (2019), and 68 survey responses using G*Power calculations. I conducted the analysis for this study using 174 collected surveys.

I used SPSS version 21 statistical software and the PROCESS macro to perform the data analysis. The results are presented in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4: Results

I designed this study to examine the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles for consulting firms in the United States, and the relationship between attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, commitment to the organization, and turnover intention. The second part of the study included an investigation a potential moderating variable for a credible explanation to analyze the effect on the perception of a perceived psychological contract violation and attitudinal outcomes.

I proposed in this study that following merger and acquisition activity, there is a relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Furthermore, I proposed that a credible explanation has a relationship with the perception of a psychological contract violation and consequently, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

I presented the results of the statistical analysis from the collected survey responses for this study within this chapter, beginning with a demographic analysis of survey participants divided into general demographic characteristics and employment characteristics. I provided additional demographics specific to the merger and acquisition activity are in the data analysis section. Following the demographics analysis, I analyzed the hypotheses using SPSS version 21. I used a regression analysis to determine the relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and the three attitudinal outcomes. I performed a multiple regression analysis to analyze the results of a

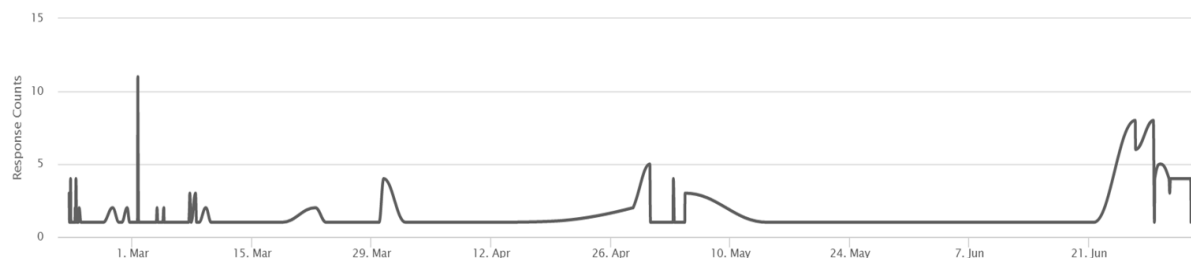
moderating credible explanation and the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation and the same attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

Data Collection

I made the survey available to participants on February 21, 2021 and closed the survey on July 2, 2021. I used social media posts to initiate the snowballing effect, with periodic reminders to complete the survey, and additional posts to new groups. Response counts are depicted on the response count timeline in Figure 2. Surges correspond to additional social media postings to stimulate activity.

Figure 2

Response Count Timeline



The ideal calculated sample size noted in Chapter 3 was 384 responses. At close of the survey, I received 174 survey responses for use in this study. There were 196 participants accepted the survey consent form and proceeded to the question section. Nineteen of those participants did not answer a single question and were therefore removed from the data set, leaving 174 complete or partial survey responses for use in the

data analysis. Of those 174 responses, 149 participants completed all questions, and 25 completed some questions but had one or more missing responses.

The G*Power calculations to predict sample size at an effect size (f^2) of 0.15, error probability of 0.05, and a power of 80%, calculated a sample size of 55 for linear regression with one predictor variable, and 68 for multiple regression with two predictor variables. This study exceeds the predicted sample size required to achieve an effect size smaller than 0.15.

Sample participants may not be representative of the larger population of merger and acquisition survivors in knowledge-based roles within the consulting industry in the United States. I selected participants through snowballing method, so there was a possibility of having several like-minded participants respond to the survey that share common insights and perceptions that may not be generalizable to the broader population.

Descriptive and Demographic Characteristics

I used descriptive and frequency analysis to demonstrate the characteristics of the participants included in this study. I collected data using an online survey tool, QuestionPro, and employed social media requests to solicit participants meeting the requirements for the study. I provided a link to the survey in the social media post. The sample size was 174 knowledge-based role participants that had survived a merger or acquisition in the prior 6 years within the consulting industry in the United States.

General Demographics

The aggregate responses show that the majority (55.7%) of respondents were male, and the highest frequency age bracket was 45 to 54 years old at the time of the merger or acquisition. The majority of participants are married (75.3%), and 93.7% have attained bachelor's or graduate degrees. Participants who originated in the United States represents 87.4% of those surveyed.

Table 2*General Demographics*

Demographic	Percent	Frequency
Gender		
Male	55.7%	97
Female	43.7%	76
Other	0.6%	1
Total	100.0%	174
Age		
Under 18	0.0%	0
18-24	2.9%	5
25-34	12.1%	21
35-44	17.8%	31
45-54	35.1%	61
55-64	19.0%	33
Above 64	13.2%	23
Total	100.0%	174
Marriage Status		
Married	75.3%	131
Not Married	24.7%	43
Total	100.0%	174
Level of Education		
High School	1.1%	2
Trade/Technical	0.6%	1
Associate Degree	4.6%	8
Bachelor's Degree	44.3%	77
Graduate Degree	49.4%	86
Total	100.0%	174
Country of Origin		
USA	87.4%	152
US Territory	1.7%	3
Mexico	0.6%	1
Canada	4.6%	8
Other	5.7%	10
Total	100.0%	174

Employment Characteristics

Employment characteristics are displayed in Table 3 and demonstrate the participant salary ranges, employment status, supervisory roles, and management roles. The majority of participants (92%) are full time employees, 63.2% responded that they have supervisory responsibility over other employees, and 60.9% are in management roles. There is missing data for two of the salary range responses for employment characteristics.

Table 3

Employment Characteristics

Employment Characteristic	Percent	Frequency
Salary Range		
Less than \$50,000	4.1%	7
\$50,000 - \$100,000	20.9%	36
\$100,000-150,000	24.4%	42
\$150,000 - 200,000	25.0%	43
\$200,000-250,000	14.5%	25
More than \$250,000	11.0%	19
Total	100.0%	172
Employment Status		
Part Time	3.4%	6
Full Time	92.0%	160
Contract	4.6%	8
Total	100.0%	174
Supervision of Other Employees		
Yes	63.2%	110
No	36.8%	64
Total	100.0%	174
Management or Non-Management Position		
Management	60.9%	106
Non-Management	39.1%	68
Total	100.0%	174

Merger and Acquisition Demographics

The demographics displayed in Table 4 denote the frequencies for characteristics of the participants in relation to their merger or acquisition activity for a better understanding of their employment duration before and after the merger or acquisition, and the size of their organization before and after the merger or acquisition. The survey criteria limited participant experiences to 5 years but allowed for mergers or acquisitions that happened a few years prior because resulting integration activity stemming from those mergers or acquisitions may take a few years to complete, allowing participant experience to remain within the required 5-year timeframe to mitigate the internal validity threat of maturation.

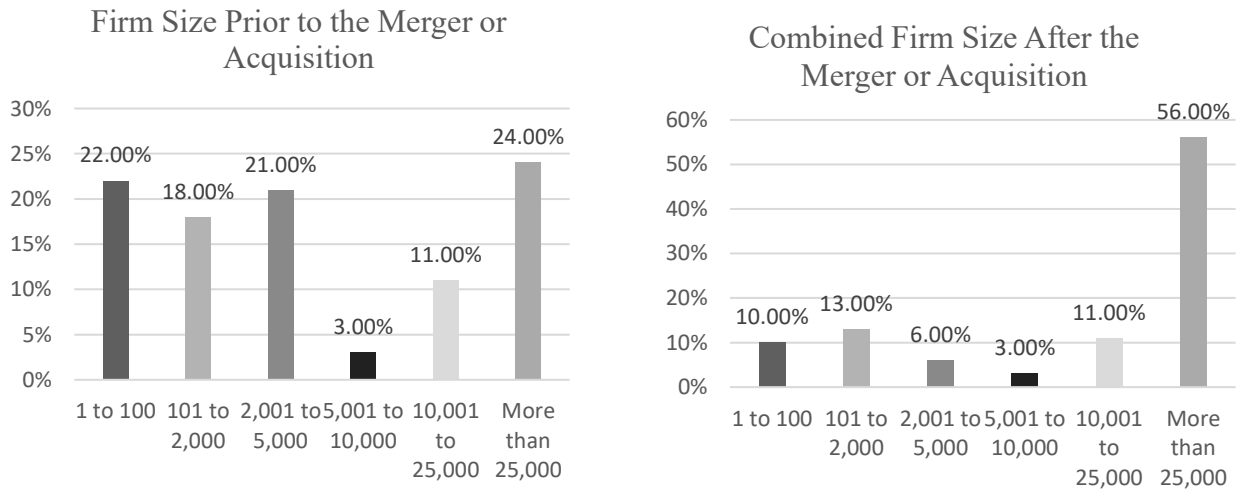
The majority of participants (73.5%) were with their organization for 10 years or less prior to the merger or acquisition, and 57.5% remained employed with their organization at the time of the survey response. The majority of participants (55.2% were on the acquired side of the transition. Descriptive statistics are included in Table 4. There is missing data for two of the Year of Merger or Acquisition responses, and one of the Size of Firm Prior to the Merger/Acquisition.

Table 4*Descriptive Statistic*

Descriptive Statistic	Percent	Frequency
Year of Merger or Acquisition		
2021	2.9%	5
2020	7.0%	12
2019	16.9%	29
2018	11.0%	19
2017	19.8%	34
2016	9.9%	17
2015 or prior	32.6%	56
Total	100.0%	172
Years with Firm Prior to Merger or Acquisition		
Less than 5 years	37.9%	66
5 to 10 years	35.6%	62
10 to 15 years	12.1%	21
15 to 20 years	7.5%	13
More than 20 years	6.9%	12
Total	100.0%	174
Years with Firm Following the Merger or Acquisition		
0 to 1 year	16.7%	29
1 to 2 years	18.4%	32
2 to 3 years	20.1%	35
3 to 5 years	20.1%	35
More than 5 years	24.7%	43
Total	100.0%	174
Still Employed at the Merged/Acquiring Firm		
Yes	57.5%	100
No	42.5%	74
Total	100.0%	174
Role in the Merger or Acquisition		
Acquired Firm	55.2%	96
Acquiring Firm	30.5%	53
Merger	14.4%	25
Total	100.0%	174

Size of the Firm Prior to the Merger/Acquisition		
1 to 100	22.0%	38
101 to 2,000	18.5%	32
2,001 to 5,000	21.4%	37
5,001 to 10,000	2.9%	5
10,001 to 25,000	11.0%	19
More than 25,000	24.3%	42
Total	100.0%	173
Size of Combined Firm After the Merger/Acquisition		
1 to 100	10.3%	18
101 to 2,000	12.6%	22
2,001 to 5,000	5.7%	10
5,001 to 10,000	3.4%	6
10,001 to 25,000	11.5%	20
More than 25,000	56.3%	98
Total	100.0%	174

As one might expect from organizations joining through merger and acquisition activity, there is shift in firm size following the merger or acquisition activity as compared to the size of the firms prior to the mergers or acquisitions. The majority of participant sized firms that were larger than 25,000 employees following the merger or acquisition activity rose from 24% to 56%. As shown in Figure 3, there is a significant shift from total small firms with 1 to 5,000 employees to total large firms with over 25,000 employees. There is no change for total firms with 5,001 to 25,000. As would be expected with mergers and acquisitions, firm size increases when additional employees are merged or acquired while small firms become absorbed into larger firms.

Figure 3*Firm Size Before and After the Merger or Acquisition***Study Results**

In this section are the statistical results of the Spearman correlation and regression analyses I used to answer the four research questions posed for this study. I provide the number of participant responses for each survey question, as well as the mean score for each, so any specific question outliers can be observed and taken into consideration. I then addressed each research question through an analysis of the statistical results. Because organizational commitment is comprised of three subcategories, I analyzed this variable at the combined level, and at the subcategory level for a better understanding of the results.

Descriptive Statistics

I displayed the descriptive statistics in this section that summarizes the frequency, mean and standard deviation for each of the variables. The scales used for the descriptive statistics are the Likert scale values, ranging from one to seven, where values approaching one equate to *strongly disagree*, four is the midpoint, and values approaching seven equate to *strongly agree*. In the following tables I present the mean and standard deviation for each variable used in this study. The mean values of the individual variables are not conclusive and do not determine study results. I conducted further analysis to determine relationships and statistical significance.

The aggregate means for each of the study variables are depicted in Table 5. I recoded questions for JS-2, JS-5 and TI-5 to align all responses for each variable and account for questions phrased in the opposite context as the rest in each category. The frequencies of responses are displayed in Tables 6 through 11. Because only 149 of the total 174 respondents completed all questions and 25 respondents had one or more missing responses, the frequencies shown in Tables 5 through 11 vary between 150 and 160 total responses for individual questions. I performed the analysis using all participant responses, including those that responded to some but not all survey questions.

Table 5*Aggregate Means of Variables Under Study*

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Psychological contract violation	160	3.55	1.94
Organizational commitment - Affective commitment	154	4.16	1.86
Organizational commitment - Continuance commitment	154	3.41	1.38
Organizational commitment - Normative commitment	154	3.79	1.84
Job satisfaction	158	4.64	1.30
Turnover intention	150	3.90	1.93
Credible explanation	157	4.09	1.84

The aggregate means of the participant responses for each of the questions within each variable question set used in this study are depicted in Tables 6 through 10. Where frequencies are less than 174, missing data from partial survey responses accounts for the variance.

Table 6*Descriptive Statistics - Psychological Contract Violation*

Question	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
PCV-1: I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions.	160	3.81	2.06
PCV-2: So far, my employer has not done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me.	160	3.76	2.11
PCV-3: Almost all the promises made by my employer during recruitment have not been kept thus far.	159	3.69	2.06
PCV-4: I feel that my employer has not come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired.	159	3.56	2.03
PCV-5: My employer has broken many of its promises to me even though I have upheld my side of the deal.	159	3.67	2.13
PCV-6: I feel betrayed by my organization.	159	3.43	2.14
PCV-7: I feel a great deal of anger toward my organization.	159	3.12	2.03
PCV-8: I feel that my organization has violated the contract between us.	159	3.46	2.24
PCV-9: I feel extremely frustrated by how I have been treated by my organization.	159	3.56	2.23

The mean for the psychological contract violation scores falls below the midpoint of four for all nine questions. The aggregate mean for the psychological contract violation variable is 3.56.

Table 7*Descriptive Statistics – Job Satisfaction*

Question	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
JS-1: Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job.	158	4.66	1.96
JS-2: I do not frequently think of quitting this job.	158	4.15	1.98
JS-3: I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.	158	5.52	1.42
JS-4: Most people on this job are very satisfied with the job.	158	4.64	1.57
JS-5: People on this job do not often think of quitting.	158	4.25	1.67

The aggregate mean for the job satisfaction variable is 4.64 indicating positive job satisfaction. I recoded questions JS-2 and JS-5 and rephrased them to align with the positive context of the question set. There are 16 missing survey responses for this question set.

Table 8*Descriptive Statistics – Organizational Commitment*

Question	N	Mean	Std. Dev
<i>Affective Component of Organizational Commitment</i>			
OC-1: I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.	154	4.25	2.09
OC-2: I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.	154	3.94	1.94
OC-3: I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.	154	4.30	2.05
OC-4: I feel emotionally attached to this organization.	154	4.08	1.99
OC-5: I feel like part of the family at my organization.	154	4.19	2.02
OC-6: This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.	154	4.22	2.06
<i>Continuance Component of Organizational Commitment</i>			
OC-7: Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.	154	3.96	1.79
OC-8: It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.	154	3.38	1.67
OC-9: Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.	154	3.56	1.72
OC-10: I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.	154	3.18	1.68
OC-11: If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.	154	3.23	1.66
OC-12: One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.	154	3.16	1.76
<i>Normative Component of Organizational Commitment</i>			
OC-13: I feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.	154	3.75	1.93
OC-14: Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.	154	3.58	2.03
OC-15: I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.	154	3.52	2.08
OC-16: This organization deserves my loyalty.	154	3.70	2.11
OC-17: I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.	154	4.29	2.01
OC-18: I owe a great deal to my organization.	154	3.93	2.04

The affective component of organizational commitment reflects the emotional attachment that an employee feels towards their organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The participant results have mean values about the midpoint of four for five out of the six questions. The aggregate mean for this affective organizational commitment is 4.16.

The continuance component of organizational commitment references the personal awareness of costs associated with leaving an organization and the perception of available alternatives and skill transference that would be required for an employee to leave the organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). The participant mean scores are below the midpoint of four in all six questions. The aggregate mean for this affective organizational commitment is 3.41.

The normative component of organizational commitment indicates the feelings of obligation to remain with an organization (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Five of the six normative questions had mean values below the midpoint of four. The aggregate mean for this affective organizational commitment is 3.80.

The combined aggregate mean for all three organizational commitment categories is 3.79. There are 20 missing survey responses for this question set.

Table 9*Descriptive Statistics – Turnover Intention*

Question	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
TI-1: As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave the organization.	150	3.95	2.13
TI-2: I am actively looking for a job outside of the organization.	150	3.69	2.19
TI-3: I am seriously thinking of quitting my job at this organization.	150	3.64	2.18
TI-4: I often think of quitting my job at this organization.	150	3.90	2.14
TI-5: I do not think I will still be working at this organization five years from now.	150	4.33	2.09

The mean values for turnover intention fall below the midpoint for four of the five questions, indicating a lack of intention to leave. However, the mean value for question TI-5, which I recoded to align all responses for each variable and account for questions initially phrased in the opposite context as the rest in each category, indicates participants do not think they will be working at the same organization 5 years from now with a mean value above four. The aggregate mean for this variable is 3.90. There are 24 missing survey responses for this question set.

Table 10*Descriptive Statistics – Credible Explanation*

Question	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
CE-1: When a promise was not fulfilled, it was usually due to changing circumstances that were beyond my employer's control.	157	4.17	2.00
CE-2: In most cases when my organization failed to fulfill a promise it was due to factors that could not have been avoided.	157	4.11	2.10
CE-3: The credible explanation provided by my organization for the merger or acquisition prevented them from fulfilling their promises.	157	3.98	2.04

The mean values for accepting a credible explanation fall above and below the midpoint of four. The aggregate mean for this variable is 4.09. There are 17 missing survey responses for this question set.

Statistical Analysis of the Hypotheses

I evaluated variables for normal distribution using the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality as shown in Table 11. Because the significance level for all tested variables was less than 0.05, these variables are not normally distributed, which means with 95% confidence that the data does not fit the normal distribution. Therefore, I applied a Spearman correlation.

Table 111*Shapiro-Wilk Test for Normal Distribution*

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Psychological contract violation	0.912	150	0.000
Job satisfaction	0.972	150	0.004
Organizational commitment - Affective commitment	0.941	150	0.000
Organizational commitment - Continuance commitment	0.975	150	0.007
Organizational commitment - Normative commitment	0.928	150	0.000
Turnover intention	0.928	150	0.000
Credible explanation	0.945	150	0.000

Because assumptions of normal distribution were not met, as demonstrated in Table 12 where none of the variables achieved a significance higher than .05, I conducted a Spearman Correlation to evaluate each of the nonparametric cross-sectional relationships between a perceived psychological contract violation, credible explanation, and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The Spearman correlation is the non-parametric equivalent of the Pearson correlation and appropriate to use for variables that are not normally distributed. The results of the Spearman Correlation coefficients are displayed in Table 12. The results of the Spearman correlation displayed in Table 12 indicate statistical significance at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) for all variables with the exception of the organizational commitment sub-category of continuance commitment.

Table 122*Spearman Correlation Coefficients*

	Psychological contract violation	Turnover intention	Job satisfaction	Organizational commitment	Affective commitment	Continuance commitment	Normative commitment	Credible explanation
Psychological contract violation		.769**	-.753**	-.701**	-.719**	0.052	-.664**	-.668**
Turnover intention	.769**		-.773**	-.754**	-.809**	.173*	-.791**	-.692**
Job satisfaction	-.753**	-.773**		.733**	.772**	-0.084	.697**	.656**
Organizational commitment	-.701**	-.754**	.733**		.907**	0.136	.881**	.619**
Affective commitment	-.719**	-.809**	.772**	.907**		-.181*	.857**	.684**
Continuance commitment	0.052	.173*	-0.084	0.136	-.181*		-.243**	-.278**
Normative commitment	-.664**	-.791**	.697**	.881**	.857**	-.243**		.709**
Credible explanation	-.668**	-.692**	.656**	.619**	.684**	-.278**	.709**	

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

I then conducted linear regression analyses to evaluate hypotheses 1, 2 and 3 to determine the relationships between a perceived psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover

intention. I grouped individual questions by associated survey tool variables and transformed them into a single scale variable for the regression analyses. The results of the regression analyses are displayed in Tables 13 and 14. Because the organizational commitment sub-category of continuance commitment was not statistically significant under the Spearman correlation results, I did not perform a linear regression analysis for this variable.

Table 133

Regression Analysis Model Summaries

Model Summaries Independent Variable: <i>psychological contract violation</i>	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	
					R Square Change	F Change
Job satisfaction	.725	0.525	0.522	12.017	0.525	172.65
Turnover intention	.786	0.618	0.615	10.755	0.618	238.98
Organizational commitment	.699	0.489	0.485	12.396	0.489	145.34
Affective commitment	.722	0.521	0.518	12.001	0.521	165.2
Normative commitment	.676	0.457	0.453	12.781	0.457	127.69

Table 144*Regression Analyses Coefficient Summaries*

Coefficient Summaries Independent Variable: Psychological contract violation	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
Job satisfaction	-1.945	0.148	-0.725	0.000	-2.238	-1.653
Turnover intention	1.411	0.091	0.786	0.000	1.231	1.592
Organizational commitment	-0.574	0.048	-0.699	0.000	-0.668	-0.48
Affective commitment	-1.114	0.087	-0.722	0.000	-1.286	-0.943
Normative commitment	-1.059	0.094	-0.676	0.000	-1.244	-0.874

Research Question 1

To investigate Research Question 1: *What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?*, I conducted a simple linear regression. The predictor variable was psychological contract violation, and the dependent variable was job satisfaction. The Spearman Correlation between psychological contract violation and job satisfaction was [Spearman Correlation = -0.753 , $p = .000$], which is statistically significant. The predictor variable, psychological contract violation, was found to be statistically significant [$B = -1.945$, 95% C.I. $(-2.238, -1.653)$, $p = .000$], indicating that for every one unit increase in the psychological contract violation numerical score, the job satisfaction numerical score decreased by approximately 1.945 units. The calculated R square equaled [$R^2 = .525$]

indicating the model explained approximately 52.5% of the variability and that approximately 47.5% of the variability is the result of factors not included in the model. The G*Power post hoc calculation was 99.8% achieved power, and the sensitivity analysis calculated an effect size of 0.05. Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis, and retained the alternative hypothesis, there is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

Research Question 2

To investigate Research Question 2: *What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?*, I conducted a simple linear regression. The predictor variable was psychological contract violation, and the dependent variable was organizational commitment. The Spearman Correlation between perceived psychological contract violation and organizational commitment is [Spearman Correlation = $-.701$, $p = .000$], which is statistically significant. The predictor variable, psychological contract violation, was found to be statistically significant [$B = -.574$, 95% C.I. ($-.668$, $-.480$), $p = .000$], indicating that for every one unit increase in psychological contract violation numerical score, organizational commitment numerical score decreased by approximately .574 units. The calculated R square equaled [$R^2 = .489$] indicating the model explained approximately 48.9% of the variability and that approximately 51.1% of the variability is the result of factors not included in the model. The G*Power post hoc calculation was

99.8% achieved power, and the sensitivity analysis calculated an effect size of 0.052.

Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis, and retained the alternative hypothesis, there is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States.

To understand the differences between the subcategories of organizational commitment, I conducted a simple linear regression analysis using psychological contract violation as the predictor variable. The dependent variable was the organizational commitment subcategory, affective commitment, which is an employee's emotional attachment to the organization. The Spearman Correlation between perceived psychological contract violation and affective commitment is [Spearman Correlation = -.719, $p = .000$], which is statistically significant. The predictor variable, psychological contract violation, was found to be statistically significant [$B = -1.114$, 95% C.I. (-1.286, -.943), $p = .000$], indicating that for every one unit increase in psychological contract violation numerical score, affective commitment numerical score decreased by approximately 1.114 units. The calculated R square equaled [$R^2 = .521$] indicating the model explained approximately 52.1% of the variability and that approximately 47.9% of the variability is the result of factors not included in the model.

To further understand the differences between the subcategories of organizational commitment, I conducted a simple linear regression analysis using psychological contract violation as the predictor variable. The dependent variable was the organizational commitment subcategory, continuance commitment, which is an employee's perceived

cost to leave an organization. The Spearman Correlation between perceived psychological contract violation and continuance commitment is [Spearman Correlation = $-.052$, $p = .518$], which is not statistically significant. The predictor variable, psychological contract violation, was not found to be statistically significant [$B = .202$, 95% C.I. ($-.130$, $-.534$), $p = .231$].

To further understand the differences between the subcategories of organizational commitment, I conducted a simple linear regression analysis using psychological contract violation as the predictor variable. The dependent variable was the organizational commitment subcategory, normative commitment, which is an employee's feelings of obligation to the organization. The Spearman Correlation between perceived psychological contract violation and normative commitment is [Spearman Correlation = $-.664$, $p = .000$], which is statistically significant. I found the predictor variable, psychological contract violation, to be statistically significant [$B = -1.059$, 95%, C.I. ($-.1244$, $-.874$), $p = .000$], indicating that for every one unit increase in psychological contract violation numerical score, normative commitment numerical score decreased by approximately 1.059 units. The calculated R square equaled [$R^2 = .457$] indicating the model explained approximately 45.7% of the variability and that approximately 54.3% of the variability is the result of factors not included in the model.

Research Question 3

To investigate RQ3: *What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?*, a

simple linear regression was conducted. The predictor variable was psychological contract violation, and the dependent variable was turnover intention. The Spearman Correlation between psychological contract violation and turnover intention is [Spearman Correlation = .769, $p = .000$], which is statistically significant. The predictor variable, psychological contract violation, was found to be statistically significant [$B = 1.411$, 95% C.I. (1.231, 1.592), $p = .000$], indicating that for every one unit increase in psychological contract violation numerical score, turnover intention numerical score increased by approximately 1.411 units. The calculated R square equaled [$R^2 = .618$] indicating the model explained approximately 61.8% of the variability and that approximately 38.2% of the variability is the result of factors not included in the model. The G*Power post hoc calculation was 99.7% achieved power, and the sensitivity analysis calculated an effect size of 0.053. Therefore, I rejected the null hypothesis, and retained the alternative hypothesis, there is a relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States

I displayed the significance and relationships for research questions 1, 2 and 3 in Table 15, summarizing the relationship between the predictor variable, psychological contract violation and the dependent variables job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The results indicated that for every unit increase in a perceived PCV, there was a corresponding decrease of 1.945 units for job satisfaction, a decrease of .574 units of organizational commitment, and an increase of 1.411 units of turnover intention.

Table 155

Summary Table of RQ1, RQ2, and RQ3 Significance and Coefficients

Research Question	Interaction between a perceived psychological contract violation and the outcome variables:	p<.05	<i>B</i> coefficient <i>t</i>	Relationship
RQ1	Job satisfaction	0.000	-1.945	Inverse relationship
RQ2	Organizational commitment	0.000	-0.574	Inverse relationship
	Affective commitment	0.000	-1.114	Inverse relationship
	Continuance commitment	0.231	-0.202	No relationship
	Normative commitment	0.000	-1.059	Inverse relationship
RQ3	Turnover intention	0.000	1.411	Direct relationship

Research Question 4

Job Satisfaction. To investigate RQ4: *What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?* I conducted a moderator analysis. I used credible explanation as the moderator between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee job satisfaction, and used PROCESS to perform the simple moderator analysis. The outcome variable for analysis was job satisfaction. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I did not find the interaction between psychological contract

violation and credible explanation to be statistically significant [coefficient = $-.0048$, standard error = $.0038$, 95% C.I. ($-.0124$, $.0027$), $p = .2075$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a non-moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and job satisfaction.

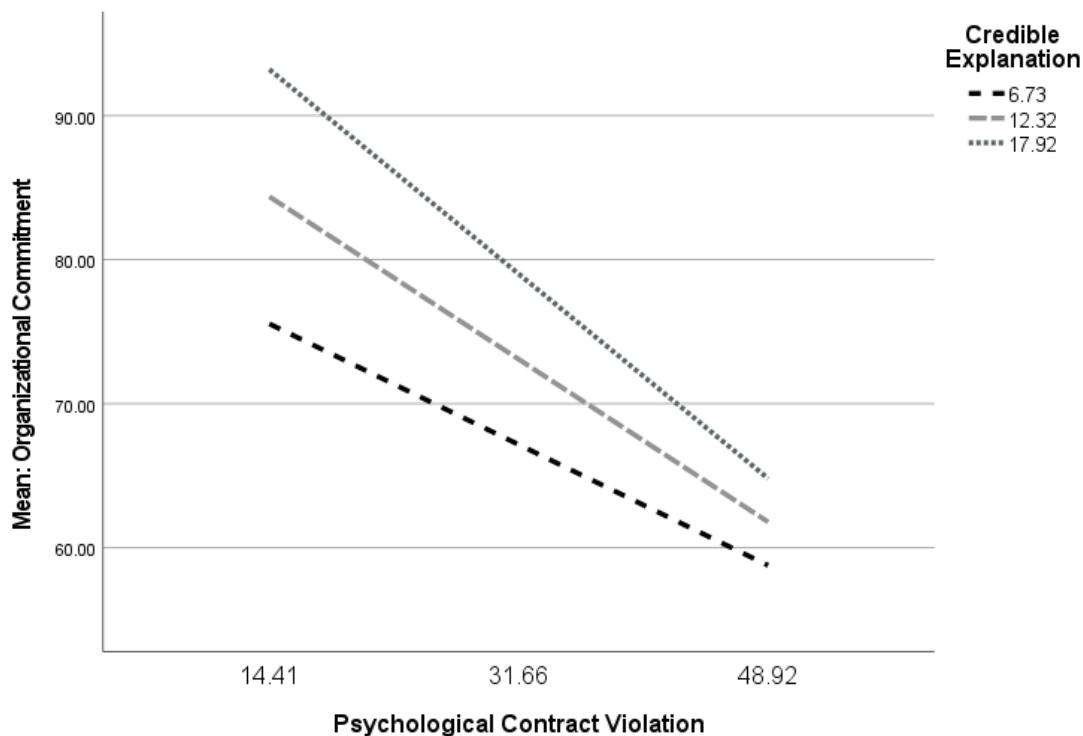
Organizational Commitment. To investigate RQ4: *What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?* I conducted a moderator analysis. I used credible explanation as the moderator between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee organizational commitment and used PROCESS to perform the simple moderator analysis. The G*Power post hoc calculation was 99.2% achieved power, indicating a significant result; and the sensitivity analysis calculated an effect size of 0.066, indicating this study is very robust. The outcome variable for analysis was organizational commitment. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I found the interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation to be statistically significant [coefficient = $-.0301$, 95% C.I. ($-.0552$, $-.0051$), $p = .0188$, standard error = $.0127$]. The conditional effect of psychological contract violation on organizational commitment showed corresponding results. At low moderation (1 standard deviation below the mean) psychological contract violation was

statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.4641$, 95% C.I. ($-.6938$, $-.2344$), $p = .0001$]. At middle moderation (mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.6448$, 95% C.I. ($-.8280$, $-.4616$), $p = .0000$]. At high moderation (1 standard deviation above mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.8556$, 95% C.I. (-1.1170 , $-.5943$), $p = .0000$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a negative moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and organizational commitment, with increasing effects sizes at higher levels of the moderator.

The simple slopes for the relationship between a negative psychological contract violation and organizational commitment at different levels of the moderator (credible explanation) is shown in Figure 4. The more positive the credible explanation, the more negative the effect of a psychological contract violation on organizational commitment. This means that the more accepted the credible explanation is, the lessor the effect a perceived psychological contract violation has on organizational commitment.

Figure 4

Simple Slopes for the Relationship Between Psychological Contract Violation and Organizational Commitment with a Credible Explanation as a Moderator



Organizational Commitment – Subcategories. To investigate the relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation on the subcategories of organizational commitment, affected by a credible explanation, I performed a simple moderator analysis using PROCESS to evaluate affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment.

Affective Commitment. The outcome variable for analysis was affective commitment. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I did not find the interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation to be

statistically significant [coefficient = $-.0115$, standard error = $.0063$, 95% C.I. ($-.0240$, $.0009$), $p = .0694$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a non-moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and affective commitment.

Continuance Commitment. The outcome variable for analysis was continuance commitment. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. The interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation was not found to be statistically significant [coefficient = $.0013$, standard error = $-.0070$, 95% C.I. ($-.0126$, $.0152$), $p = .8540$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a non-moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and continuance commitment.

The outcome variable for analysis was continuance commitment. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I did not find the interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation to be statistically significant [coefficient = $.0013$, standard error = $-.0070$, 95% C.I. ($-.0126$, $.0152$), $p = .8540$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a non-moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and continuance commitment.

Normative Commitment. The outcome variable for analysis was normative commitment. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I found the

interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation to be statistically significant [coefficient = $-.0199$, standard error = $.0061$, 95% C.I. ($-.0319$, $-.0078$), $p = .0014$]. The conditional effect of a psychological contract violation on affective commitment showed corresponding results. At low moderation (1 standard deviation below the mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.1174$, 95% C.I. ($-.2278$, $-.0071$), $p = .0372$]. At middle moderation (mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.2368$, 95% C.I. ($-.3248$, $-.1487$), $p = .0000$]. At high (1 standard deviation above mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.3760$, 95% C.I. ($-.5015$, $-.2504$), $p = .0000$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a negative moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and normative commitment, with increasing effects sizes at higher levels of the moderator.

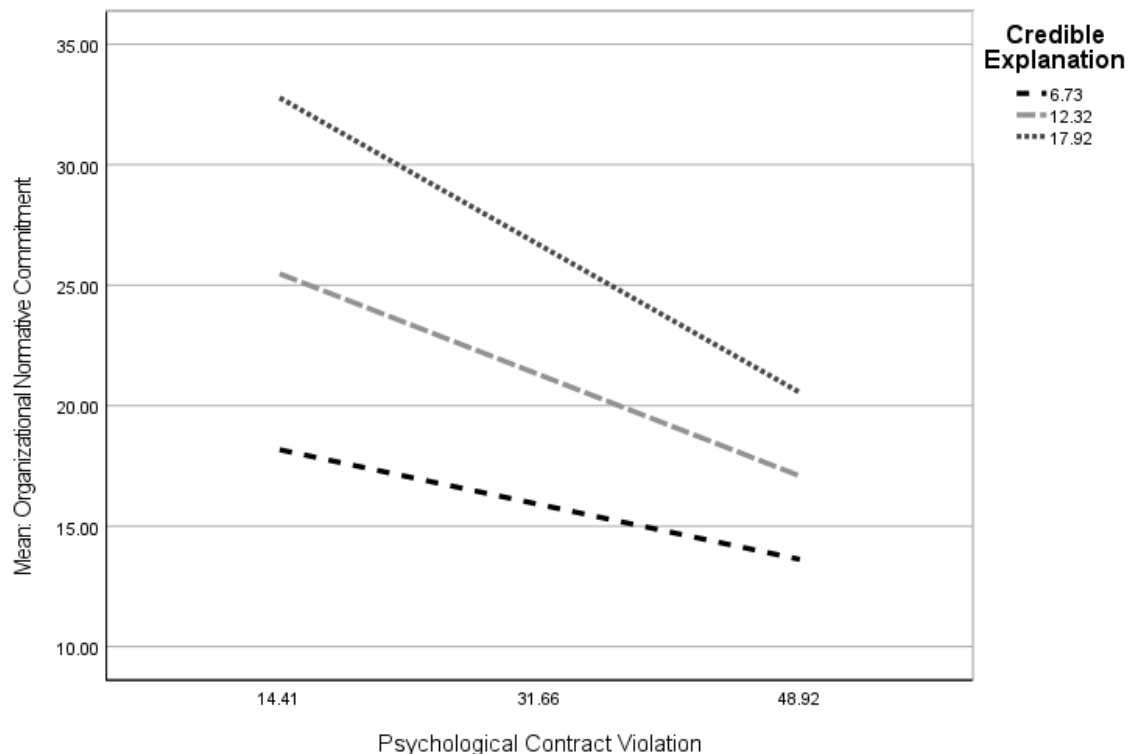
The outcome variable for analysis was normative commitment. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I found the interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation to be statistically significant [coefficient = $-.0199$, standard error = $.0061$, 95% C.I. ($-.0319$, $-.0078$), $p = .0014$]. The conditional effect of a psychological contract violation on affective commitment showed corresponding results. At low moderation (1 standard deviation below the mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.1174$, 95% C.I. ($-.2278$, $-.0071$), $p = .0372$]. At middle moderation (mean) psychological

contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.2368$, 95% C.I. ($-.3248$, $-.1487$), $p = .0000$]. At high (1 standard deviation above mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = $-.3760$, 95% C.I. ($-.5015$, $-.2504$), $p = .0000$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a negative moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and normative commitment, with increasing effects sizes at higher levels of the moderator.

The simple slopes for the relationship between a negative psychological contract violation and normative commitment at different levels of the moderator (credible explanation) is shown in Figure 5. The more positive the credible explanation, the more negative the effect of a psychological contract violation on normative commitment. This means that the more accepted the credible explanation is, the lessor the effect a perceived psychological contract violation has on normative commitment.

Figure 5

Simple Slopes for the Relationship Between Psychological Contract Violation and Normative Commitment with a Credible Explanation as a Moderator



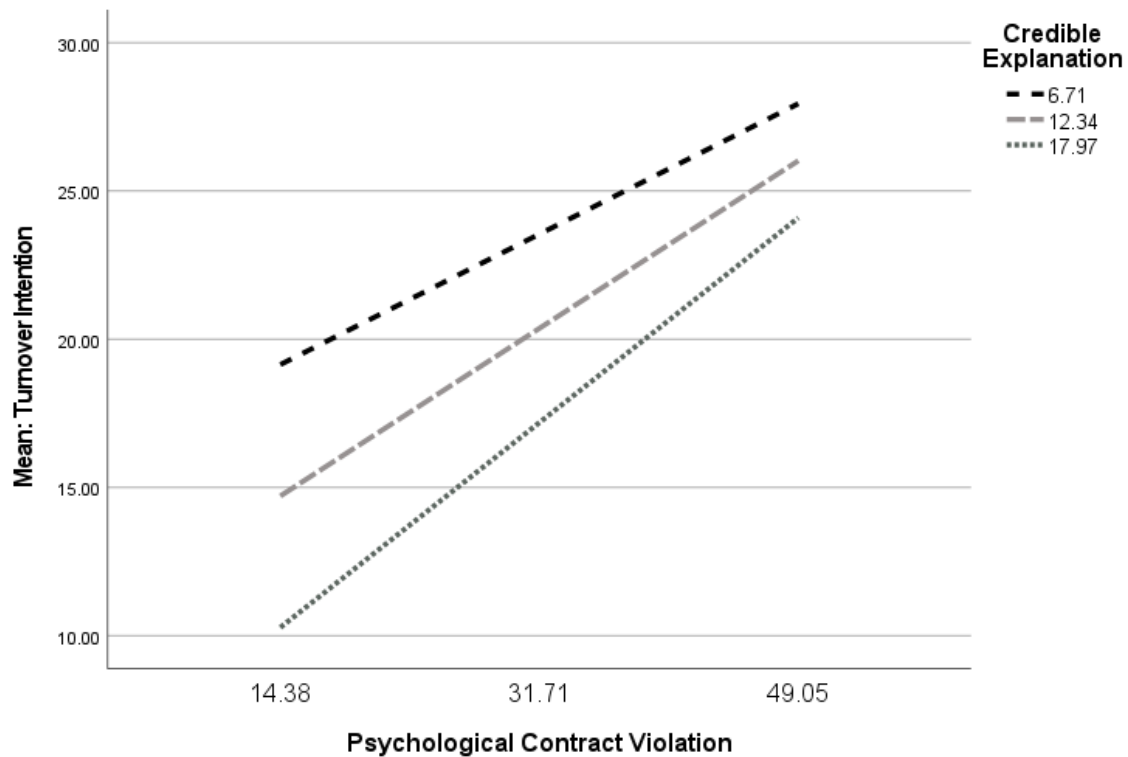
Turnover Intention. To investigate RQ4: *What is the relationship, if any, between a perceived psychological contract violation on employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention and a credible explanation for the necessity of the merger and acquisition activity that drove the perceived psychological contract violation for survivors of merger and acquisition activity in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States?* I conducted a moderator analysis. I used credible explanation as the moderator between a perceived psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention, and used PROCESS to perform the simple moderator

analysis. The outcome variable for analysis was turnover intention. The predictor variable for the analysis was psychological contract violation. The moderator variable evaluated for the analysis was credible explanation. I found the interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation to be statistically significant [coefficient = .0129, standard error = .0049, 95% C.I. (.0033, .0225), $p = .0090$]. The conditional effect of psychological contract violation on turnover intention showed corresponding results. At low moderation (1 standard deviation below the mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = .2447, 95% C.I. (.1565, .3329), $p = .0000$]. At middle moderation (mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = .3218, 95% C.I. (.2517, .3920), $p = .0000$]. At high moderation (1 standard deviation above mean) psychological contract violation was statistically significant [conditional effect = .4119, 95% C.I. (.3120, .5117), $p = .0000$]. These results identify psychological contract violation as a positive moderator of the relationship between psychological contract violation and turnover intention, with increasing effects sizes at higher levels of the moderator.

The simple slopes for the relationship between a positive psychological contract violation and turnover intention at different levels of the moderator (credible explanation) is shown in Figure 6. The more positive the credible explanation, the more positive the effect of a psychological contract violation on turnover intention. This means that the more accepted the credible explanation is, the greater the effect a perceived psychological contract violation has on turnover intention.

Figure 6

Simple Slopes for the Relationship Between Psychological Contract Violation and Turnover Intention with a Credible Explanation as a Moderator



I summarized the significance and relationships for RQ4 in Table 16 for the relationship of the moderating variable, credible explanation, to the dependent variables job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention.

Table 166*Summary Table of RQ4 Significance and Coefficients*

Research Question	Interaction between psychological contract violation and credible explanation for the outcome variables:	p<.05	<i>B</i> coefficient	credible explanation as a moderator
RQ4	Job satisfaction	0.208	-0.0048	Not significant
	Organizational commitment	0.019	-0.0301	Negative moderator
	Affective commitment	0.069	-0.0115	Not significant
	Continuance commitment	0.854	0.0013	Not significant
	Normative commitment	0.001	-0.0199	Negative moderator
	Turnover intention	0.009	0.0129	Positive moderator

Summary

I proposed in this study that following merger and acquisition activity, there is a relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Furthermore, I proposed that a credible explanation has a relationship with the perception of a psychological contract violation and consequently, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. These relationships are important for employers and executive managers seeking to minimize any negative attitudinal outcomes from perceived psychological contract violations arising from the merger or acquisition activities.

The results of this study compiled from 174 survey responses, can be used to empirically quantify answers to each of the research questions: (RQ1) there is an inverse relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and job satisfaction; (RQ2) there is an inverse relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and organizational commitment; and (RQ3) there is a direct relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and the attitudinal outcome of turnover intention. Further analysis of the three subcategories of organizational commitment suggest that a perceived psychological contract violation does not have a relationship with continuance commitment but does have an inverse relationship with both affective commitment and normative commitment, referring to employees' emotional attachment to the organization and their feelings of obligation to the organization, respectively.

I observed in this study that a credible explanation for the merger or acquisition activity is a negative moderator for organizational commitment, and a positive moderator for turnover intention. This means that a credible explanation for the merger or acquisition activity reduces the inverse relationship effect of a perceived psychological contract violation on organizational commitment and intensifies the direct relationship with turnover intention. For organizational commitment, only the subcategory of normative commitment is statistically significant, meaning that the relationship between a psychological contract violation and an employee's feelings of obligation towards the organization are significantly affected by a credible explanation.

I provided useful information in this study for employers and executive managers seeking to understand the relationship of a perceived psychological contract violation from merger and acquisition activities to improve the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction and organizational commitment and reduce turnover intention. Because negative employee attitudes permeate across employees' lives and affect families and communities, managing any negative effects of merger and acquisition activities can benefit the social structure of employees, their families, and their broader communities. In Chapter 5, I provide a discuss and interpret the findings for practical application from the statistical results presented in Chapter 4.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the perception of a psychological contract violation on survivors of mergers and acquisitions in knowledge-based roles in large nation-wide consulting firms in the United States, and the relationship between the attitudinal outcomes of employee job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. I used a credible explanation as the moderating variable to analyze the relationship of a credible motive for the merger and acquisition activity and changes in the relationship between perception of a psychological contract violation, and the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. Psychological contract violation was the predictor variable. I used the dependent variables of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention. The moderating variable was a credible explanation to explain the need for executive management to pursue the merger and acquisition activity. I used a combined single survey with questions selected from established survey tools for each variable.

I have confirmed through the results of this study that psychological contract violation has an inverse relationship with organizational commitment and job satisfaction, and a direct relationship with turnover intention. These findings confirm several prior research claims that organizational change adversely affects these attitudinal outcomes (González, 2016; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994; Rousseau, 1996). I found the specific subcategories of organizational commitment that have a statistically significant relationship were affective commitment and normative commitment. I found the effects of a credible explanation as a moderator to be significant for decreasing the effects of the

relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and organizational commitment, and also for increasing the effects of the relationship between a perceived psychological contract violation and turnover intention.

Interpretation of Findings

I have confirmed through the findings of this study that merger and acquisition activities resulting in a perceived psychological contract violation inversely affect employee job satisfaction and organizational commitment; and directly affect turnover intention. Furthermore, a perceived psychological contract violation affects the subcategories of organizational commitment for affective commitment and normative commitment, which refer to employee emotional attachment to the organization and employee feelings of obligation towards the organization. I found the effects of a psychological contract violation are stronger for affective commitment than for normative commitment, implying that a psychological contract violation causes a greater impact to an employee's emotional attachment to an organization and, while still significant, a lesser impact to feelings of obligation to remain with the company. continuance commitment was not statistically significant, meaning that a perceived psychological contract violation does not affect their perceptions of the cost of leaving the organization. This may be because I assumed the target participants for this study to be knowledge-based professionals that are capable of finding alternative employment options and directing their own career paths.

From a social exchange perspective, this study provides empirical evidence to support diminished job satisfaction when reciprocal exchange is not maintained within

the employer-employee relationship and the perception of fairness is not met during merger and acquisition-induced changes in the organization. Psychological contract violations reflect employee feelings of organizational betrayal when employees believe previously made promises have not been kept (De Clercq et al., 2020). The sense of betrayal associated with the perception of a psychological contract violation can lead to diminished job performance caused by the depletion of energy resources and job-related anxiety and were found by De Clercq et al. (2020) to have a stronger effect in relational contracts than in transactional contracts.

A moderating variable can alter the effects of an existing relationship, either diminishing the effect, or intensifying the effect (Harkiolakis, 2020). I found a relationship through this study supporting the hypothesis that a credible explanation can affect the relationship between a psychological contract violation and attitudinal outcomes. Specifically, the attitudinal outcomes of organizational commitment and turnover intention were shown to be affected, while the attitudinal outcome of job satisfaction was not affected by a credible explanation. These results can be interpreted to mean that management can communicate a credible explanation to help control the effects of a psychological contract violation on normative commitment following merger or acquisition activity. The use of a credible explanation can be used to decrease the erosion of normative commitment when a psychological contract violation is perceived. However, it should be cautioned that I found the use of a credible explanation to have an increasing effect size at higher levels of the modifier for the direct relationship between a psychological contract violation and turnover intention, suggesting that a credible

explanation that is not effective in reducing the perception of a psychological contract violation could worsen employee turnover intention. If executive management can communicate a valid credible explanation that reduces the perception of a psychological contract violation, the resulting erosion of organizational commitment can then also be reduced. A credible explanation may intensify the direct relationship of a perceived psychological contract violation and turnover intention. This may be explained by the perception that a credible explanation for the need for a merger or acquisition may not make employees feel confident about the future of the organization and may have an opposite effect than expected. Additionally, 55.2% of survey respondents were associated to the acquired firm, and therefore may not be comforted by an explanation that deemed their organization as not able to operate independently without needing to be acquired. While the credible explanation may improve organizational commitment, it may also increase turnover intention.

Application for executive management can be interpreted through the results of this study, that communication between employers and survivors of merger and acquisition activities that induce organizational change can help employees understand and make sense of those changes before, during and after their occurrence. Additionally, executive managers can mitigate the loss of employee organizational commitment by communicating a credible explanation for the organizational changes.

Through this study research has been expanded on the effects of merger and acquisition activities on employee attitudes by confirming that the perception of a psychological contract violation decreases job satisfaction and organizational

commitment, while increasing turnover intention. González's (2016) findings, confirmed through this study, that employees do not always hold an organization solely accountable for not fulfilling the terms of the psychological contract by introducing a moderating variable of a credible explanation and the resulting decreasing effects on the inverse relationship between a psychological contract violation and organizational commitment. This study also confirmed the recent research by King et al. (2020) that managers can influence employee reactions to merger and acquisition-induced change through active sensemaking and sense giving communications.

This study can be used to confirm empirical research for the effects of a perceived psychological contract violation on employee attitudes. Results confirmed an inverse relationship with job satisfaction and organizational commitment, and a direct relationship with turnover intention. The results of this study can also be used to confirm the effects of a credible explanation on organizational commitment (negative moderator) and turnover intention (positive moderator). These findings provide a justification for employers and executive managers to communicate a credible explanation for the justification of the merger or acquisition activity that prompted the organizational change if seeking to improve organizational commitment. This study's results can be used for negating the perception of a psychological contract violation via the introduction of a credible explanation can improve the employee attitudinal outcome of normative commitment but may also intensify turnover intention. The findings of this study may contribute to positive social change by understanding how merger and acquisition activity

can affect employee attitudes and creating an awareness of how communicating a credible explanation may benefit both the employee and the organization.

Limitations of the Study

There were several limitations to this study. First, I conducted this study in the United States, which is an economically advanced country. It has been noted by Paustian-Underdahl et al. (2017) that developing economies may have opposite reactions to merger and acquisition activities and perceive organizational changes as positive motivators for career opportunities and growth. Therefore, this study may not be generalizable to other developing nations.

Second, I calculated sample size for an ideal sample size of 384 participants to adequately represent the target population by Qualtrics (2019). I received only 174 participant responses and analyzed them for this study, which may not reflect an adequate sample size. However, the G*Power calculations to predict sample size at an effect size (f^2) of 0.15, error probability of 0.05, and a power of 80% calculated a sample size of 55 for linear regression with 1 predictor variable, and 68 for multiple regression with 2 predictor variables. This study exceeded the predicted G*Power sample size required to achieve an effect size smaller than 0.15.

Third, I evaluated organizational change derived directly from merger and acquisition activities. I excluded additional organizational changes from this research study. It may have been difficult for the target population to discern which activities were directly related to mergers and acquisitions and which activities were the result of

broader organizational change initiatives. The participant responses for this study relied upon each individual to discern the difference.

Fourth, the surveys were self-reported measurement tools. The responses may have included central tendency errors or suffered biases caused by impression management. Individuals may have been prone to placing ratings for survey questions in the middle of the scale, and not as inclined to use the highest and lowest ratings available on the Likert scale. This would result in study findings being less significant than reality. Employees fearing that their supervisors or corporate management may see the results could have reported responses that would be deemed favorably by management.

Fifth, the results relied on employee memory of a past merger and acquisition activity. No results were recorded prior to the merger or acquisition activity. The results may have been different if a survey was taken both before and after the activity. Additionally, the results rely on the individual memory of each participant, which could be influenced by events not actually associated with the merger and acquisition activity.

Sixth, the results of this survey are specific to knowledge-based roles in the consulting industry in the United States and include specific biases for this group. Therefore, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other roles, other industries, or other countries. Because I used snowballing technique, the group responding to the survey may be comprised of similar like-minded individuals.

Recommendations

The results of this study revealed that when employers offer a credible explanation for why the merger or acquisition as necessary, it intensified the resulting

direct relationship with turnover intention. Conducting additional research to broaden our understanding can focus on what factors could contribute to the increase in turnover intention when a credible explanation is offered. Perceptions such as organizational weakness, or loss of corporate independence may be predictor variables worthy of more focused attention. Understanding the differences in perspectives between the different employee roles (acquiring firm, acquired firm, merger) may be helpful in deciphering different reactions to a credible explanation as well. A variety of explanations could also be further studied to understand which explanations are considered credible, such as economic, political, market driven, or competition driven.

The selected participant pool for this study was limited to knowledge-based roles. This implies that the individuals contributing to the study were independently knowledgeable with a competitive advantage in the work force. The target population was not necessarily restricted from finding employment elsewhere if the merger or acquisition activity resulted in a perceived psychological contract violation and had the capability and transferrable skillset to change organizations if they so wished. Future research may include additional market sectors, additional employee levels to include nonknowledge-based roles, or expand to include additional countries. Additionally, only the attitudinal outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention were addressed in this study. Additional attitudinal outcomes were not considered under the scope of this research study. Future research may include additional attitudinal outcomes.

Understanding employee attitudes before a merger or acquisition would provide valuable insight and serve as a benchmark for post-merger and acquisition attitudes. Future research that provides comparative analysis before and after the merger and acquisition activity for employee attitudes would delineate the effects of the activities on the employees and possibly provide an additional level of insight. Additional time brackets that consider the amount of time following the activities may be insightful. This study was conducted with surveys for participants that had experienced a merger or acquisition within the last 5 years, but did not delineate any differences between recent activities, and those multiple years prior. The relationships between employees and their immediate supervisors was also not considered in this study and may be an opportunity for further research to explore the relationships of internal workplace relationships during merger and acquisition activities. The focus of future research could study the strength of employee relationships with their immediate supervisors and determine if there is an effect on employee attitudes following merger and acquisition activity. Additional focus areas for future research could include impacts of organizational change associated with basic employment conditions that contribute to the formation of a psychological contract, such as salary, hours, remote working options, career opportunities, and relocation opportunities.

Finally, I collected specific demographics for the participants in this study, but the results were not stratified by the demographics. An area for further research may include comparisons between different demographic categories. Understanding how employee attitudes differ among different demographics could offer additional insight into the

relationships analyzed in this study. Other demographics could also be collected to categorize comparative responses by geography, family status, level of education, age, professional work history, or family dynamics.

Implications

This study has significant implications for managing employee attitudinal reactions to merger and acquisition-induced organizational change. Organizational leaders and supervisors should be cognizant of the attitudinal outcomes resulting from employee perceptions of betrayal from their company when experiencing organizational change as a consequence of merger or acquisition activities. The results of this study are particularly insightful for understanding the counter-intuitive effect of the moderating role of a credible explanation on turnover intention. Employers should be cautious and intentional when communicating a credible explanation because it may improve organizational commitment but may also cause an increase in turnover intention. Employers wishing to improve the working relationships with employees through the reconstruction of a new psychological contract must first understand how the sense of betrayal experienced by employees is translated into attitudinal outcomes and work to mitigate those negative outcomes. Transforming the psychological contract in advance of this perceived violation should be a focus that accompanies merger and acquisition activities so survivors can restore consistency and predictability in exchanges with their new transformed organization.

At the individual level, understanding how each employee's psychological contract is constructed and what they perceive as a violation of the construct could offer

managers an opportunity to personalize messaging for merger and acquisition activity that resonates with the individual. The reconstruction of a new psychological contract with the transformed organization can evolve organically or be intentionally developed at the individual level because psychological contracts are unique to each employee.

Employers should consider gathering data on the attitudinal outcomes of employees after merger and acquisition activity to understand better how the activity has transformed employee attitudes after the activity.

The broader implication to society is that people are emotionally affected by mergers and acquisitions. These emotions can lead to the perception of a psychological contract violation, which is the personal subjective contract between an employee and employer and can lead to changes in attitudes. Negative changes can affect individuals in and outside of the workplace (Rousseau, 2011), so mitigating negative attitudes in the workplace can benefit employees' overall well-being.

The impacts for positive social change indicated through the results of this study, suggest that employers and executive managers of merger and acquisition activities can mitigate the negative attitudinal outcomes for organizational commitment, specifically normative commitment, by communicating a credible explanation for the purpose of the merger or acquisition activity. Improving employee attitudes and reducing the effects of a perceived psychological contract violation can reduce employee discomfort that permeates into employees' lives and affect personal relationships. Both personal and organizational success depends on the voluntary cooperation of employees with their organization (Rousseau, 2011). Mitigating negative feelings and experiences of distrust

and social inequity in the workplace directly improve the outward flow into the social realm of adjacent families and communities.

This study contributes to a better work environment by providing a deeper understanding of the effects of communicating a credible explanation to support the organizational change induced by merger or acquisition activities and offers insight to executive managers and human resource specialists for mitigating the negative effects of a perceived psychological contract violation. Communication strategies can be developed to convey a specific intention or mitigation effort to support employee needs, promote positive working relationships and improve the employee experience of organizational change during and after a merger or acquisition.

Conclusions

While most merger and acquisition activities are focused on the economic benefits, employers could profit from understanding the negative effects of a perceived psychological contract violation on employee attitudes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intention during merger and acquisition activities and work to reduce those perceptions. By understanding how employees are processing and interpreting the organizational changes, organizations can better manage reactions to merger and acquisition activities and improve the potential for success of the merger by improving resulting employee organizational commitment and job satisfaction and reducing turnover intention.

Employers can manage the downstream negative effects of merger and acquisition activity on the organizational normative commitment by messaging a credible

explanation that explains the purpose of the merger or acquisition activity. As individuals seek to interpret change, a credible explanation can be used to steer the interpretation.

The results of this study confirmed Rousseau's (2011) expectation that a perceived psychological contract violation leads to employee withdrawal from the employer-employee relationship.

References

- Abutabenjeh, S., & Jaradat, R. (2018). Clarification of research design, research methods, and research methodology: A guide for public administration researchers and practitioners. *Teaching Public Administration*, 36(3), 237–258.
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0144739418775787>
- Adams, J. S. (1965). Inequity in social exchange. *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology*, 2, 267–299. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601\(08\)60108-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0065-2601(08)60108-2)
- Ahuja, K. K., Padhy, P., & Srivastava, G. (2018). Performance appraisal satisfaction & organizational commitment. *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 53(4), 675–692. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26536489>
- Akiate, Y. W. D. (2018). Employees' trust towards management and organizational commitment after a bank's merger and acquisition: Mediated by procedural justice. *International Journal of Business & Management Science*, 8(1), 151–166.
- Allen, N. J., & Meyer, J. P. (1990). The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8325.1990.tb00506.x>
- Appelbaum, S. H., Karelis, C., Le Henaff, A., & McLaughlin, B. (2017). Resistance to change in the case of mergers and acquisitions: Part 2. *Industrial & Commercial Training*, 49(3), 139–145. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ICT-05-2016-0033>

- Bebenroth, R., & Thiele, K. O. (2017). When organizational justice matters for affective merger commitment. *Thunderbird International Business Review*, 59(2), 227–241. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tie.21820>
- Bernerth, J. B., Walker, H. J., & Harris, S. G. (2016). Rethinking the benefits and pitfalls of LMX: A reciprocity versus self-protection perspective. *Human Relations*, 69(3), 661–684. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0018726715594214>
- Blau, P. M. (1964). *Exchange and power in social life*. Wiley.
- Boswell, W. R., Olson, B. J. B., & Harris, T. B. (2014). I cannot afford to have a life: Employee adaptation to feelings of job insecurity. *Personnel Psychology*, 67(4), 887–915. <https://doi.org/10.1111/peps.12061>
- Cannella, A. A., & Hambrick, D. C. (1993). Effects of executive departures on the performance of acquired firms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 14(S1), 137–152. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250140911>
- Çelik, M., & Çıra, A. (2013). The mediating role of work overload on the effects of organizational citizenship behavior on job performance and turnover intention. *Ege Academic Review*, 13(1), 11–20. <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/eab/issue/39913/473921>
- Center for Quality. (2015). *Overview of quantitative research methods*. [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cwU8as9ZNI4>
- Cropanzano, R., Anthony, E., Daniels, S., & Hall, A. (2017). Social exchange theory: A critical review with theoretical remedies. *Academy of Management Annals*, 11(1), 1–38. <https://doi.org/10.5465/annals.2015.0099>

- De Clercq, D., Azeem, M. U., & Haq, I. U. (2020). But they promised! How psychological contracts influence the impact of felt violations on job-related anxiety and performance. *Personnel Review*, 50(2), 648–666.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-07-2019-0388>
- Deloitte. (2020). *The state of the deal: M&A trends 2019*.
<https://www2.deloitte.com/us/en/pages/mergers-and-acquisitions/articles/m-a-trends-report.html>
- Devonish, D. (2018). Effort-reward imbalance at work: The role of job satisfaction. *Personnel Review*, 47(2), 319–333. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-08-2016-0218>
- Febriani, D. M., & Yancey, G. B. (2019). The effect of integration approaches and human resources initiatives on changes in organizational culture and employee attitudes during a merger. *The Psychologist-Manager Journal*, 22(2), 108–131.
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/mgr0000084>
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance* (Vol. 2). Stanford University Press.
- Festinger, L., & Carlsmith, J. M. (1959). Cognitive consequences of forced compliance. *The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, 58(2), 203–210.
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/h0041593>
- Fincham, F. D., & Bradbury, T. N. (1992). Assessing attributions in marriage: The relationship attribution measure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 62(3), 457. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/0022-3514.62.3.457>

- FMI Capital Advisors, Inc. (2019). *FMI's 2019 M&A trends for engineering and construction*. https://www.fminet.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/FMI_MA_Study_2019.pdf
- Gallup. (2017). *State of the American workplace*. <https://www.gallup.com/workplace/238085/state-american-workplace-report-2017.aspx>
- Georgalis, J., Samaratunge, R., Kimberley, N., & Lu, Y. (2015). Change process characteristics and resistance to organisational change: The role of employee perceptions of justice. *Australian Journal of Management*, 40(1), 89–113. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0312896214526212>
- Gill, C. (2012). The role of leadership in successful international mergers and acquisitions: Why Renault-Nissan succeeded and DaimlerChrysler-Mitsubishi failed. *Human Resource Management*, 51(3), 433–456. <https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21475>
- González, L. E. Q. (2016). Psychological contract and organizational change: Assessing merger and acquisitions' impact on survivors of pharmaceuticals in Puerto Rico. *In Forum Empresarial*, 21(1), 23–47.
- Gunkel, M., Schlaegel, C., Rossteutscher, T., & Wolff, B. (2015). The human aspect of cross-border acquisition outcomes: The role of management practices, employee emotions, and national culture. *International Business Review*, 24(3), 394–408. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2014.09.001>

- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1975). Development of the Job Diagnostic Survey. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 60*(2), 159–170. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0076546>
- Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1980). *Work redesign*. Addison-Wesley.
- Han, Y., Sears, G., & Zhang, H. (2018). Revisiting the “give and take” in LMX: Exploring equity sensitivity as a moderator of the influence of LMX and change-oriented OCB. *Personnel Review, 47*(2), 555–571. <https://doi.org/10.1108/PR-05-2017-0152>
- Harden, G., Boakye, K. G., & Ryan, S. (2018). Turnover intention of technology professionals: A social exchange theory perspective. *Journal of Computer Information Systems, 58*(4), 291–300. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08874417.2016.1236356>
- Harkiolakis, N. (2020). *Quantitative research methods: From theory to publication*. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform. ISBN: 1543148131/ISBN-13: 9781543148138.
- Harmon-Jones, E., Harmon-Jones, C., & Levy, N. (2015). An action-based model of cognitive-dissonance processes. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 24*(3), 184–189. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0963721414566449>
- Hinojosa, A. S., Gardner, W. L., Walker, H. J., Coglisier, C., & Gullifor, D. (2017). A review of cognitive dissonance theory in management research: Opportunities for further development. *Journal of Management, 43*(1), 170–199. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F0149206316668236>

- Hom, P. W., Lee, T. W., Shaw, J. D., & Hausknecht, J. P. (2017). One hundred years of employee turnover theory and research. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 102*(3), 530–545. <https://doi.org/10.1037/apl0000103>
- Isaac, S., & Michael, W. B. (1995). *Handbook in research and evaluation: A collection of principles, methods, and strategies useful in the planning, design, and evaluation of studies in education and the behavioral sciences* (3rd ed.). EdITS Publishers.
- Kidd, R. F., & Utne, M. K. (1978). Reactions to inequity: A prospective on the role of attributions. *Law & Human Behavior: The Newsmagazine of the Social Sciences, 2*(2), 301–312.
<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&AuthType=shib&db=sih&AN=SM064540&site=eds-live&scope=site>
- King, D. R., Bauer, F., Weng, Q., Schriber, S., & Tarba, S. (2020). What, when, and who: Manager involvement in predicting employee resistance to acquisition integration. *Human Resource Management, 59*(1), 63–81.
<https://doi.org/10.1002/hrm.21973>
- Krishnan, H. A., Miller, A., & Judge, W. Q. (1997). Diversification and top management team complementarity: Is performance improved by merging similar or dissimilar teams?. *Strategic Management Journal, 18*(5), 361–374.
[https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1097-0266\(199705\)18:5%3C361::AID-SMJ866%3E3.0.CO;2-L](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1097-0266(199705)18:5%3C361::AID-SMJ866%3E3.0.CO;2-L)

- Krug, J. A., & Hegarty, W. H. (2001). Predicting who stays and leaves after an acquisition: A study of top managers in multinational firms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 22(2), 185–196. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0266\(200101\)22:2%3C185::AID-SMJ149%3E3.0.CO;2-M](https://doi.org/10.1002/1097-0266(200101)22:2%3C185::AID-SMJ149%3E3.0.CO;2-M)
- Lamertz, K. (2002). The social construction of fairness: social influence and sense making in organizations. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 23(1), 19–37. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.128>
- Lawler, E. E., III (1973). *Motivation in work organizations*. Brooks/Cole Publishing Company.
- Le Mens, G., Hannan, M. T., & Pólos, L. (2015). Age-related structural inertia: A distance-based approach. *Organization Science*, 26(3), 756–773. <https://doi.org/10.1287/orsc.2015.0966>
- Li, S., & Chen, Y. (2018). The relationship between psychological contract breach and employees' counterproductive work behaviors: the mediating effect of organizational cynicism and work alienation. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 9(1273), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2018.01273>
- Locke, E. A. (1969). What is job satisfaction?. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 4(4), 309–336. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073\(69\)90013-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0030-5073(69)90013-0)
- Louis, M. R. (1980). Surprise and sense making: What newcomers experience in entering unfamiliar organizational settings. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 25(2), 226–251. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2392453>

- Lubatkin, M., Schweiger, D., & Weber, Y. (1999). Top management turnover in related M&A's: An additional test of the theory of relative standing. *Journal of Management*, 25(1), 55–73. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063\(99\)80003-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0149-2063(99)80003-8)
- Magano, K. D., & Thomas, A. (2017). Organisational change and the psychological contract at a pharmaceutical company. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15(1), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v15i0.920>
- Malik, M. S., & Kanwal, M. (2018). Impacts of organizational knowledge sharing practices on employees' job satisfaction: Mediating roles of learning commitment and interpersonal adaptability. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 30(1), 2–17. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JWL-05-2016-0044>
- Martin, P. (1995). Performance appraisal. *Management Accounting London*, 73(3), 67–67. <https://eds.p.ebscohost.com/eds/detail/detail?vid=9&sid=35e9e59c-bb3e-4ab5-950f-ee3fbcfb9e5c%40redis&bdata=JkF1dGhUeXB1PXNoaWlmc2l0ZT1lZHMtbGl2ZSZzY29wZT1zaXRl#AN=edsgcl.16786293&db=edsgea>
- Memon, M. A., Salleh, R., Nordin, S. M., Cheah, J., Ting, H., & Chuah, F. (2018). Person-organisation fit and turnover intention: The mediating role of work engagement. *Journal of Management Development*, 37(3), 285–298. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JMD-07-2017-0232>
- Meyer, J. P., & Allen, N. J. (1991). A three-component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1), 61–89. [https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822\(91\)90011-Z](https://doi.org/10.1016/1053-4822(91)90011-Z)

- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., & Topolnytsky, L. (1998). Commitment in a changing world of work. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie Canadienne*, 39(1-2), 83–93.
<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/h0086797>
- Meyer, J. P., & Herscovitch, L. (2001). Commitment in the workplace: Toward a general model. *Human Resource Management Review*, 11(3), 299–326.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822\(00\)00053-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1053-4822(00)00053-X)
- Mobley, W. H. (1977). Intermediate linkages in the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 62(2), 237–240.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.62.2.237>
- Morrison, E. W., & Robinson, S. L. (1997). When employees feel betrayed: A model of how psychological contract violation develops. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(1), 226–256. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AMR.1997.9707180265>
- Moss, A., Rosenzweig, C., & Litman, L. (n.d.). *Pros & cons of different sampling methods*. <https://www.cloudresearch.com/resources/guides/sampling/pros-cons-of-different-sampling-methods/>
- Mowday, R. T., Steers, R. M., & Porter, L. W. (1979). The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14(2), 224–247.
[https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791\(79\)90072-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/0001-8791(79)90072-1)
- Paustian-Underdahl, S. C., Fainshmidt, S., Sanchez, J. I., Misati, E., Zhao, Y., & Zhang, H. (2017). The role of economic development and perceived growth opportunities in employee reactions to M&As: A study of the merger syndrome across 29

countries. *Group & Organization Management*, 42(2), 163–194.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1059601117696674>

Popescu-Ljungholm, D. (2015). The impact of transparency in enhancing public sector performance. *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice*, 7(1), 172–178.

<https://addletonacademicpublishers.com/contents-crlsj/288-volume-7-1->

[2015/2502-the-impact-of-transparency-in-enhancing-public-sector-performance](https://addletonacademicpublishers.com/contents-crlsj/288-volume-7-1-2015/2502-the-impact-of-transparency-in-enhancing-public-sector-performance)

Porter, L. W., Steers, R. M., Mowday, R. T., & Boulian, P. V. (1974). Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 59(5), 603–609.

<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/h0037335>

Qualtrics. (2019). Sample size calculator [Use in 60 seconds]. *Qualtrics*.

<https://www.qualtrics.com/blog/calculating-sample-size/>

Radebe, P. Q., & Dhurup, M. (2018). Relationships between perceived injustice, work related depression, anxiety, and irritation and their effect on turnover intention among employees in a manufacturing company. *International Journal of Business and Management Studies*, 10(1), 30–45.

<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/pub/ijbms/issue/36084/405168>

Rebner, S., & Yeganeh, B. (2019). Mindful mergers & acquisitions. *OD Practitioner*, 51(1), 11–16.

<https://eds.p.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=11&sid=35e9e59c-bb3e-4ab5-950f-ee3fbcfb9e5c%40redis>

- Robinson, S. L., & Morrison, E. W. (2000). The development of psychological contract breach and violation: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 21(5), 525–546. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379\(200008\)21:5%3C525::AID-JOB40%3E3.0.CO;2-T](https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379(200008)21:5%3C525::AID-JOB40%3E3.0.CO;2-T)
- Robinson, S. L., & Rousseau, D. M. (1994). Violating the psychological contract: Not the exception but the norm. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 15(3), 245–259. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030150306>
- Rousseau, D. M. (1989). Psychological and implied contracts in organizations. *Employee Responsibilities & Rights Journal*, 2(2), 121–139. [https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379\(200008\)21:5%3C525::AID-JOB40%3E3.0.CO;2-T](https://doi.org/10.1002/1099-1379(200008)21:5%3C525::AID-JOB40%3E3.0.CO;2-T)
- Rousseau, D. M. (1995). *Psychological contracts in organizations: Understanding written and unwritten agreements*. Sage. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452231594>
- Rousseau, D. M. (1996). Changing the deal while keeping the people. *Academy of Management Executive*, 10(1), 50–59. <https://doi.org/10.5465/AME.1996.9603293198>
- Rousseau, D. M. (2001). Schema, promise and mutuality: The building blocks of the psychological contract. *Journal of Occupational & Organizational Psychology*, 74(4), 511–541. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317901167505>
- Rousseau, D. M. (2011). The individual–organization relationship: The psychological contract. In *APA handbook of industrial and organizational psychology, Vol 3: Maintaining, expanding, and contracting the organization* (pp. 191–220). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/12171-005>

- Rousseau, D. M. (2016). Free will in social and psychological contracts. *Society & Business Review*, 11(2), 210–216. <https://doi.org/10.1108/SBR-04-2016-0031>
- Rozen-Bakher, Z. (2018). Comparison of merger and acquisition (M&A) success in horizontal, vertical and conglomerate M&As: Industry sector vs. services sector. *The Service Industries Journal*, 38(7-8), 492–518. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2017.1405938>
- Scandura, T. A., & Pellegrini, E. K. (2008). Trust and leader-member exchange: A closer look at relational vulnerability. *Journal of Leadership & Organizational Studies*, 15(2), 101–110. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1548051808320986>
- Schirmer, B. R., Lockman, A. S., & Schirmer, T. N. (2016). Identifying evidence-based educational practices: Which research designs provide findings that can influence social change? *Journal of Educational Research and Practice*, 6(1), 33–42. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1118448.pdf>
- Schwab, D. P. (2013). *Research methods for organizational studies*. Psychology Press. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781410611284>
- Shaver, K. G. (2012). *The attribution of blame: Causality, responsibility, and blameworthiness*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Smith, K. (2016). Coming together: Getting the cultural integration right following a merger or acquisition can be crucial for success. *Best's Review*, 1(1), 63–66. <https://eds.p.ebscohost.com/eds/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=2&sid=ae26e058-02e5-4c4f-a80b-489e17382941%40redis>

- Spillane, J. P., & Anderson, L. (2014). The architecture of anticipation and novices' emerging understandings of the principal position: Occupational sense making at the intersection of individual, organization, and institution. *Teachers College Record, 116*(7), 1–42. <https://doi.org/10.1177%2F016146811411600705>
- Taber, K. S. (2018). The use of Cronbach's alpha when developing and reporting research instruments in science education. *Research in Science Education, 48*(6), 1273–1296. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11165-016-9602-2>
- Tett, R. P., & Meyer, J. P. (1993). Job satisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intention, and turnover: Path analyses based on meta-analytic findings. *Personnel Psychology, 46*(2), 259–293. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1744-6570.1993.tb00874.x>
- Vough, H. C., & Caza, B. B. (2017). Where do I go from here? Sensemaking and the construction of growth-based stories in the wake of denied promotions. *Academy of Management Review, 42*(1), 103–128. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amr.2013.0177>
- Vroom, V. H. (1964). *Work and motivation*. Jossey-Bass.
- Walsh, J. P. (1989). Doing a deal: Merger and acquisition negotiations and their impact upon target company top management turnover. *Strategic Management Journal, 10*(4), 307–322. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250100402>
- Walsh, J. P., & Ellwood, J. W. (1991). Mergers, acquisitions, and the pruning of managerial deadwood. *Strategic Management Journal, 12*(3), 201–217. <https://doi.org/10.1002/smj.4250120304>

- Wang, W. T., & Hou, Y. P. (2015). Motivations of employees' knowledge sharing behaviors: A self-determination perspective. *Information and Organization*, 25(1) 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2014.11.001>
- Wayne, S. J., Shore, L. M., & Liden, R. C. (1997). Perceived organizational support and leader-member exchange: A social exchange perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 40(1), 82–111. <https://doi.org/10.2307/257021>

Appendix A: Permissions for Instrument Use

RE: Permission request for use of the Psychological Contract Violation measurement tool

RS Robinson, Sandra   Reply all | 
 Wed 1/2, 5:59 PM
 Kathrine Martin; 

Inbox

 Action Items 

Dear Kathrine

You have permission to use and adapt our scales. Here is the info below.

Good luck and wishing you a happy 2019.

Sandra

"The statements below ask about how well, in general, your organization has fulfilled the implicit and explicit promises made to you when you were hired. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the statements by circling the appropriate number.

Strongly disagree 1...strongly agree 2... neutral 3... agree 4...strongly agree 5

I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions.

So far, my employer has done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me. (reverse score)

Almost all the promise made by my employer during recruitment have been kept thus far. (reverse score)

I feel that my employer has come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired. (reverse score)

My employer has broken many of its promises to me even though I have upheld my side of the deal.

From: Kathrine Martin

Sent: Saturday, December 29, 2018 6:26 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: Re: Permission request for use of the Psychological Contract Violation measurement tool

Apologies, resending with the corrected email address for Dr. Morrison.

From: Kathrine Martin

Sent: Saturday, December 29, 2018 8:23 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: Permission request for use of the Psychological Contract Violation measurement tool

Dear Dr. Morrison and Dr. Robinson:

My name is Kathrine Martin and I am a doctoral student at Walden University pursuing a PhD in Business Management with a concentration in Leadership and Organizational Change.

I am working on my dissertation prospectus that includes psychological contract violation perceptions for merger and acquisition survivors and found your work to be instrumental in measuring psychological contract violation perceptions. I am requesting your permission to use portions of your measurement tool as part of my data collection for research purposes only, and would be grateful for an email confirming your permission if you are in agreement. Would you also please send an electronic copy of your questionnaire that I can modify to fit my research?

RE: Permission request for the use of the Job Satisfaction measurement instrument

Oldham, Greg R

Sun 12/30/2018 6:50 PM

To: Kathrine Martin

Ms. Martin,

Thanks for your message. You have my permission to use the Job Diagnostic Survey (JDS) in your research.

The JDS is available in the following book: Hackman, J. R., & Oldham, G. R. (1980). *Work redesign*. Reading, MA: Addison Wesley (A division of Pearson Education).

The book includes the long form of the JDS, instructions for its use, and the scoring key.

Work Redesign may be purchased on Amazon.

Good luck with your research.

Regards,

Greg Oldham

From: Kathrine Martin

Sent: Saturday, December 29, 2018 6:51 PM

To:

Cc:

Subject: Permission request for the use of the Job Satisfaction measurement instrument

Dear Dr. Oldham:

My name is Kathrine Martin and I am a doctoral student at Walden University pursuing a PhD in Business Management with a concentration in Leadership and Organizational Change.

I am working on my dissertation prospectus and found your work to be instrumental in measuring job satisfaction. I would like to use a portion of the Job Satisfaction measurement survey originated by you and Dr. Hackman. I am requesting your permission to use portions of your questionnaire as part of my data collection for research purposes only, and would be grateful for an email confirming your permission if you are in agreement. I would also request an electronic copy of the Job Diagnostics Survey that I may modify to fit my research if you have the availability to send.

I am happy to share further details of the study if you would like more information. I appreciate your assistance and look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Kathrine Martin

Fw: Permission request for use of the Organizational Commitment Scale

KM Kathrine Martin
Fri 3/15/2019 4:49 PM



From: Natalie Jean Allen
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 2:54 PM
To: Kathrine Martin
Subject: Re: Permission request for use of the Organizational Commitment Scale

Hello Kathrine,

Thank you for your interest in using the Three-Component Model (TCM) Employee Commitment Survey in your research. You can get information about the measure, a Users' Guide, and the measure itself at:

<http://employeecommitment.com/>

For academic / research purposes, please choose the Academic Package. (There is no charge for this package.) I wish you well with your research!

Best,
Natalie Allen

From: Kathrine Martin
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 3:47 PM
To: Natalie Jean Allen
Cc: Casey Martin
Subject: Re: Permission request for use of the Organizational Commitment Scale

Hello Dr. Allen,

I am following up on a request for permission to use and modify the Organizational Commitment Scale originated by you and Dr. Meyer (1990). If you are amenable, could you please respond with a statement granting me permission to use a portion of the scale for my dissertation?

Thank you for your time,

Kathrine Martin

Re: Permission request for use of the Turnover Intention measurement questionnaire

Sandy J. Wayne

Sat 12/29/2018 9:06 PM

To: Kathrine Martin

Dear Kathrine,

You have my permission to use the turnover intentions measure from my 1997 article. Good luck with your research.

Sandy Wayne

Sandy J. Wayne, Ph.D.
Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs
College of Business Administration
Professor of Management
Faculty Director, UIC Business Scholars Program
Director, UIC Institute for Leadership
Excellence and Development (ILEAD)

Department of Managerial Studies
University of Illinois at Chicago



On Dec 29, 2018, at 8:14 PM, Kathrine Martin

wrote:

Dr. Sandy J. Wayne
Dept of Managerial Studies
University of Illinois at Chicago

Dear Dr. Wayne:

My name is Kathrine Martin and I am a doctoral student at Walden University pursuing a PhD in Business Management with a concentration in Leadership and Organizational Change.

I am working on my dissertation prospectus and found your work to be instrumental in measuring turnover intention. I would like to use a portion of the Turnover Intention measurement survey originated by you, Shore, and Linden (1997). I am requesting your permission to use portions of your questionnaire as part of my data collection for research purposes only, and would be grateful for an email confirming your permission if you are in agreement.

I am happy to share further details of the study if you would like more information. I appreciate your assistance and look forward to your response.

Respectfully,

Kathrine Martin

Appendix B: Survey

Part-1: JS

1. Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job.
2. I frequently think of quitting this job.
3. I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job.
4. Most people on this job are very satisfied with the job.
5. People on this job often think of quitting.

Part-2: OC

Affective Commitment

1. I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.
2. I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
3. I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.
4. I feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.
5. I feel like "part of the family" at my organization.
6. This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.

Continuance Commitment

7. Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.
8. It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.
9. Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.
10. I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.
11. If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.
12. One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.

Normative Commitment

13. I feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.
14. Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.
15. I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.
16. This organization deserves my loyalty.
17. I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.
18. I owe a great deal to my organization.

Part-3: TI

1. As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave the organization.

2. I am actively looking for a job outside of the organization
3. I am seriously thinking of quitting my job at this organization.
4. I often think of quitting my job at this organization.
5. I think I will still be working at this organization five years from now.

Part-4: CE

1. When a promise was not fulfilled, it was usually due to changing circumstances that were beyond my employer's control.
2. In most cases when my organization failed to fulfill a promise it was due to factors that could not have been foreseen.
3. The credible explanation provided by my organization for the merger or acquisition prevented them from fulfilling their promises.

Part-5: PCV

1. I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions.
2. So far, my employer has not done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me.
3. Almost all the promise made by my employer during recruitment have not been kept thus far.
4. I feel that my employer has not come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired.
5. My employer has broken many of its promises to me even though I have upheld my side of the deal.
6. I feel betrayed by my organization.
7. I feel a great deal of anger toward my organization.
8. I feel that my organization has violated the contract between us.
9. I feel extremely frustrated by how I have been treated by my organization.

Appendix C: Demographics Survey Tool

Please enter the demographic information that pertains to you at the time of the merger or acquisition that you recall most vividly and will be referencing for the survey questions.

Demographic	Responses						
1 Gender	<input type="checkbox"/> Male	<input type="checkbox"/> Female	<input type="checkbox"/> Other				
2 Age	<input type="checkbox"/> 18 to 25	<input type="checkbox"/> 26 to 35	<input type="checkbox"/> 36 to 45	<input type="checkbox"/> 56 to 65	<input type="checkbox"/> 66+		
3 Marriage status	<input type="checkbox"/> Married	<input type="checkbox"/> Not Married					
4 Level of education	<input type="checkbox"/> High School	<input type="checkbox"/> Trade/Technical	<input type="checkbox"/> Associate Degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor degree	<input type="checkbox"/> Graduate		
5 Country of origin	<input type="checkbox"/> USA	<input type="checkbox"/> US Territory	<input type="checkbox"/> Mexico	<input type="checkbox"/> Canada	<input type="checkbox"/> Other		
6 Salary range	<input type="checkbox"/> Less than \$50,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$50,000 - \$100,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100,000-150,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150,000 - 200,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$200,000-250,000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$250,000+	
7 Part-time or full time employee	<input type="checkbox"/> Part time	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time	<input type="checkbox"/> Contract				
8 Supervision of other employees?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No					
9 Management or non-management position	<input type="checkbox"/> Management	<input type="checkbox"/> Non-Management					
10 Year of merger or acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/> 2020	<input type="checkbox"/> 2019	<input type="checkbox"/> 2018	<input type="checkbox"/> 2017	<input type="checkbox"/> 2016	<input type="checkbox"/> 2015 or earlier	
11 Years with firm prior to merger/acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/> 5 yrs or less	<input type="checkbox"/> 6-10 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 11-15 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 16-20 years	<input type="checkbox"/> 20+ years		
12 Years after firm following the merger/acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-1 year	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-3 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> 3-5 yrs	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 5 yrs		
13 Still employed at the merged/acquired/acquiring firm?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No					
14 Role in the merger or acquisition	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquired firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Acquiring firm	<input type="checkbox"/> Merger				
15 Size of firm prior to the merger or acquisition?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 100	<input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 2,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 2,001 to 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 to 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 to 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 25,000	
16 Size of combined firm after the merger or acquisition?	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 100	<input type="checkbox"/> 101 to 2,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 2,001 to 5,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 5,001 to 10,000	<input type="checkbox"/> 10,001 to 25,000	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 25,000	

Appendix D: Research Survey Tool

		Strongly Disagree (1)	Moderately Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Moderately Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
Part-1: JOB SATISFACTION								
1	JS-1	Generally speaking, I am very satisfied with this job						
2	JS-2	I frequently think of quitting this job						
3	JS-3	I am generally satisfied with the kind of work I do in this job						
4	JS-4	Most people on this job are very satisfied with the job						
5	JS-5	People on this job often think of quitting						
Part-2: ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT								
Affective Commitment								
6	OC-1	I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career with this organization.						
7	OC-2	I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.						
8	OC-3	I feel a strong sense of "belonging" to my organization.						
9	OC-4	I feel "emotionally attached" to this organization.						
10	OC-5	I feel like "part of the family" at my organization.						
11	OC-6	This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.						
Continuance Commitment								
12	OC-7	Right now, staying with my organization is a matter of necessity as much as desire.						
13	OC-8	It would be very hard for me to leave my organization right now, even if I wanted to.						
14	OC-9	Too much of my life would be disrupted if I decided I wanted to leave my organization now.						
15	OC-10	I feel that I have too few options to consider leaving this organization.						
16	OC-11	If I had not already put so much of myself into this organization, I might consider working elsewhere.						
17	OC-12	One of the few negative consequences of leaving this organization would be the scarcity of available alternatives.						
Normative Commitment								
18	OC-13	I feel any obligation to remain with my current employer.						
19	OC-14	Even if it were to my advantage, I do not feel it would be right to leave my organization now.						
20	OC-15	I would feel guilty if I left my organization now.						
21	OC-16	This organization deserves my loyalty.						
22	OC-17	I would not leave my organization right now because I have a sense of obligation to the people in it.						
23	OC-18	I owe a great deal to my organization.						

		Strongly Disagree (1)	Moderately Disagree (2)	Somewhat Disagree (3)	Neutral (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Moderately Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (7)
Part-3: TURNOVER INTENTION								
24	TI-1	As soon as I can find a better job, I'll leave the organization.						
25	TI-2	I am actively looking for a job outside of the organization						
26	TI-3	I am seriously thinking of quitting my job at this organization.						
27	TI-4	I often think of quitting my job at this organization						
28	TI-5	I think I will still be working at this organization five years from now.						
Part-4: CREDIBLE EXPLANATION								
29	CE-1	When a promise was not fulfilled, it was usually due to changing circumstances that were beyond my employer's control.						
30	CE-2	In most cases when my organization failed to fulfill a promise it was due to factors that could not have been foreseen.						
31	CE-3	The credible explanation provided by my organization prevented them from fulfilling their promises.						
Part-5: PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT VIOLATION								
32	PCV-1	I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions.						
33	PCV-2	So far, my employer has not done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me.						
34	PCV-3	Almost all the promise made by my employer during recruitment have not been kept thus far.						
35	PCV-4	I feel that my employer has not come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired.						
36	PCV-5	My employer has broken many of its promises to me even though I have upheld my side of the deal.						
37	PCV-6	I feel betrayed by my organization						
38	PCV-7	I feel a great deal of anger toward my organization						
39	PCV-8	I feel that my organization has violated the contract between us						
40	PCV-9	I feel extremely frustrated by how I have been treated by my organization						