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A SOCIAL PROJECTION PERSPECTIVE TO PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT
OVERFULFILLMENT AND EMPLOYEE GRATITUDE

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PhD

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A Social Projection Perspective to
Psychological Contract Overfulfillment and Employee Gratitude

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

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Yuen Lam BAVIK

A Social Projection Perspective on Psychological Contract Overfulfillment and Employee Gratitude

Abstract

This dissertation sheds light on the implications of psychological contract overfulfillment. The predominant theoretical views in the psychological contract literature suggest that employees often reciprocate with reactions in accordance to their psychological contract is fulfilled. This implies that psychological contract overfulfillment would generally result in more positive employee reactions, but empirical findings have not been entirely consistent with this view. This study proposes a model that examines whether, when, and how psychological contract overfulfillment is related to positive employee reactions. Drawing on social projection theory, I argue that psychological contract overfulfillment is more positively related to gratitude among employees low in social dominance orientation, because they attribute the overfulfilled inducements to their employer's prosocial motives based on their own ideological belief. To test the theory, three studies were conducted in the context of individualized employment relationships. Study 1 consisted of semi-structured interviews with 45 foreign domestic helpers and 33 individual employers to explore the presence and the form of psychological contract overfulfillment in the targeted research context. Study 2 was a field survey study that used a critical incident approach to test the main effect of psychological contract overfulfillment (Hypothesis 1) and its interaction effect with social dominance orientation (Hypothesis 2) on employee gratitude. To allow causal inference concerning the effect of psychological contract overfulfillment, in Study 3, a scenario-based experiment was conducted to test the full research model which also includes the mediation and moderated mediation hypotheses (Hypotheses 1 to 4). Overall, findings across three studies provided general support for the hypotheses. Finally, I discuss the

contributions and limitations of this dissertation, and the potential directions for future research.

Keywords: Psychological contract, social dominance orientation, attribution, gratitude

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Over the past few decades, more dynamic forms of employment relationships have emerged, such as entrepreneurial start-ups, family-owned businesses, and the employment of independent contract workers (Bidwell, Briscoe, Fernandez-Mateo, & Sterling, 2013; Petriglieri, Ashford, & Wrzesniewski, 2019). These new forms of work arrangements commonly involve two individuals coming into an employment agreement, which is labelled as ‘individualized employment relationships’ in this dissertation. In individualized employment relationships, employers usually face low pressure to comply with organizational policies (Devers, Cannella, Reilly, & Yoder, 2007; Shin, 2016), which increases their discretion to specify and the power to alter the inducements given to their employees.

According to the literature on employment relationships, employees are vigilant in monitoring their degree of psychological contract fulfillment—a subjective evaluation of the disparity between the inducements initially promised to them and what have actually been delivered by the employer (Lambert, Edwards, & Cable, 2003). The concept of psychological contract fulfillment is a continuum that ranges from ‘underfulfillment’ (i.e., the delivered inducements fall short of the promised inducements) to ‘overfulfillment’ (i.e., the delivered inducements exceed the promised inducements), with ‘fulfillment’ (i.e., the delivered inducements equal the promised inducements) being at the mid-point.

The literature on psychological contracts consists of two major streams of work. The first stream focuses on the degree of psychological contract fulfillment as a directional concept that covers all the three states (underfulfillment, fulfillment, overfulfillment) on the continuum (e.g., Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Robinson & Morrison, 2000). The second stream of work focuses on the degree of breach at a specific end pole on the continuum,

which takes psychological contract fulfillment as a non-directional concept. Thus far, in this second stream of work, scholars have extensively investigated the consequences of psychological contract underfulfillment (see Alcover, Rico, Turnley, & Bolino, 2017; Coyle-Shapiro, Pereira Costa, Doden, & Chang, 2019, see relevant reviews). These studies often do not explicitly differentiate fulfillment from overfulfillment at the low end of underfulfillment. Therefore, comparatively less direct attention has been given to the implications of psychological contract overfulfillment. Considering the increasing prevalence of individualized employment relationships in which inducements delivered by individual employers could more easily deviate from initial promises in any direction, it is important to understand how psychological contract overfulfillment may impact employee psychological reactions and outcomes. Better understanding of employee reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment provides valuable insights into whether resources employers invest on their employment relationships would yield positive and beneficial outcomes. This study advances this area of work by exploring the cognitive and affective consequences of psychological contract overfulfillment.

In the psychological contract literature, theories adopted for predicting and interpreting employee reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment are limited. The majority of the existing work draws on perspectives such as social exchange theory, affective event theory, and needs theory to investigate employee outcomes of psychological contract underfulfillment. Accumulated findings demonstrate that variants of psychological contract underfulfillment (e.g., psychological contract breach, psychological contract violation) are generally associated with negative employee reactions (see Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2019; Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski, & Bravo, 2007 for relevant reviews). Being at the positive end of the psychological contract fulfillment continuum, psychological contract overfulfillment may be reasonably assumed to predict favorable employee reactions. However, scholars have argued

that the effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on positive employee reactions is more complex than assumed (Lambert et al., 2003; Montes & Irving, 2008). Indeed, related findings demonstrate that receiving more (un)promised inducements from an employer does not guarantee more positive employee outcomes, such as better in-role performance or organizational citizenship behavior (Turnley, Bolino, Lester, & Bloodgood, 2003). To illuminate the complex psychological process underlying the experience of psychological contract overfulfillment, this study explores the boundary condition that determines when psychological contract overfulfillment results in positive employee cognitions and emotions.

In addition to the limited knowledge about whether and when psychological contract overfulfillment predicts positive employee reactions, existing studies have also overlooked the proposition that employees' subjective sense-making precedes their affective reactions to unexpected outcomes in their employment (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). The majority of prior research has examined employees' sense-making and interpretation of deviations from psychological contract fulfillment as an exogenous factor. For instance, Chao, Cheung, and Wu (2011) investigated employees' attribution style as a moderating factor that could influence whether psychological contract breach relates to employees' counterproductive work behavior. Similarly, Costa and Neves (2017) examined whether the target of employees' blame attribution (attributing blame to their organization versus attributing blame to the economic context) moderated the relationship between psychological contract breach and employee reactions. While informative, it leaves the question of what cognitive processes explain employee reactions to their evaluation of psychological contract fulfillment largely unanswered.

In light of the aforementioned opportunities for theoretical and empirical advancement, this research aims to seek insights for three research questions. First, is psychological contract overfulfillment generally related to positive employee reactions? As

psychological contract overfulfillment entails the recognition of favorable outcomes and unexpected resources given beyond employers' obligation to employees (Atkinson, Matthews, Henderson, & Spitzmueller, 2018; Doden, Grote, & Rigotti, 2018), one positive and proximal reaction that is likely evoked is gratitude. Gratitude has been conceptualized as a positive emotion experienced when one receives something of value intentionally given by another party (McCullough, Kilpatrick, Emmons, & Larson, 2001). Extant empirical research has shown that gratitude is positively associated with virtuous and prosocial behaviors (e.g., Bartlett & DeSteno, 2006; Sun, Liden, & Ouyang, 2019). Considering the value of gratitude for fostering other positive consequences in the work context, this study pioneers an attempt to explore whether psychological contract overfulfillment is positively related to employee feelings of gratitude towards their employer.

Moreover, research on employment relationships asserts that there exists salient power asymmetry between employers and employees (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Offe & Wiesensthal, 1980). Specifically, employers have high discretion and power to control and alter the inducements provided to employees (Frege & Kelly, 2013). Taking the feature of power asymmetry into consideration, a second research question that guides the current study concerns whether employees' emotional response to psychological contract overfulfillment would be influenced by their ideological belief about hierarchical difference and inequality across groups. In the literature, individuals' preference for and endorsement of inequality among social groups is well captured by the concept of social dominance orientation. To reconcile the inconclusive findings in previous research, this study investigates social dominance orientation as a trait factor that may moderate the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude.

Third, as prior research suggests that employees' affective reactions to deviations from psychological contract fulfillment are driven by cognitive processes (e.g., Bordia,

Restubog, & Tang, 2008), what would be the cognitive mechanism that accounts for the interaction effect between psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation on employee gratitude? To seek insights for this question, this study focuses on examining employees' attributional process as a mediating factor. Attribution refers to "the perception or inference of cause" (Kelley & Michela, 1980, p. 458) that may arise subsequent to either positive or negative outcomes and that accounts for employees' affective reactions to social experiences (Barclay, Skarlicki, & Pugh, 2005; Eberly, Holley, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2017). To seek insights for this research question, the current study proposes and investigates employees' attribution of employer motive as a mediating factor that explains the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude.

To seek insights and answers for the above questions, the current study investigates *whether*, *when*, and *how* psychological contract overfulfillment triggered by employers' provision of unpromised inducements may be related to employee gratitude. Based on the predominant views and accumulated findings in the psychological contract literature, I first propose that psychological contract overfulfillment has a general and positive association with employee gratitude. Drawing on social projection theory, I further propose that social dominance orientation moderates the indirect effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on employee feelings of gratitude through an attributional process. Social projection theory asserts that, under the circumstances that involve conflicts between self-interests and others' interests, people often draw on self-relevant cues and own characteristics for making inferences about interaction partners' motives, attitudes, and behaviors (Allport, 1924; Krueger, 2008). Specifically, I argue that employees low in social dominance orientation—who do not endorse inequality across social groups (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994)—are more grateful to their employer when experiencing psychological contract overfulfillment, because they project their own benign and cooperative view about intergroup

relations onto their employer. Such a projected view increases their likelihood to attribute the overfulfilled inducements to their employer's prosocial motives and subsequently results in their intense feelings of gratitude. On the contrary, employees high in social dominance orientation—who legitimize hierarchical and power differences across groups in the society (Pratto et al., 1994)—are expected to project a less benign and non-cooperative view about the relationships between social groups onto their employer. Such a tendency may make those employees less likely to associate their receipt of overfulfilled inducements with employers' prosocial motives, making them less grateful to their employer.

The dissertation is structured to cover a total of seven chapters. Following the current chapter, in Chapter 2, I first review the psychological contract literature by introducing the conceptualization of psychological contract and psychological contract overfulfillment. Then, I provide a brief overview of the prevailing theoretical perspectives adopted in past research to explain employee reactions to the degree of psychological contract fulfillment, followed by a summary of the consequences of employee evaluation of psychological contract fulfillment. In Chapter 3, I develop the hypotheses concerning the main effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on employee gratitude, and when and how the main effect would hold. In Chapter 4, I introduce the targeted research context and preliminary insights gained from an exploratory study (Study 1). In Chapter 5, I explain the details and findings of a field survey study (Study 2) which tested the hypothesized main effect (Hypothesis 1). In Chapter 6, I present the details and findings of a scenario-based experiment (Study 3) which examined the full research model. Finally, in Chapter 7, I discuss my findings, contributions, and limitations, followed by a summary of possible directions for future research.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Conceptualization of Psychological Contracts

A psychological contract, “the perception of an exchange agreement between oneself and another party” (Rousseau, 1989; Rousseau, 1995; Rousseau, 1998, p. 665), encompasses all mutual expectations between an employer and an employee (Levinson, Price, Munden, Mandl, & Solley, 1962). While early research focuses on expectations in shaping employees’ perception of psychological contracts, Rousseau’s work has chartered a turning point in the management literature by proposing employer promises as a more important component in influencing psychological contracts. As Rousseau specified, a psychological contract (or ‘promissory contract’; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993, p. 5) is defined as “an individual’s belief in reciprocal obligations arising out of the interpretation of promises” (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998, p. 681).

Based on Rousseau’s conceptualization, an essential element in psychological contracts is employers’ promises. Promises can be either implicit or explicit in nature (Guest, 1998). *Explicit* promises involve one’s interpretations of both written and verbal statements that communicate an exchange party’s commitment to a future intent, while *implicit* promises concern one’s subjective beliefs and assumption about the terms of the exchange agreement (Guest, 1998; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). In the employment context, explicit promises are formed when employees believe that their employer has made an explicit promise concerning the inducements the employees may receive in the future. That is, explicit promises need not be actually or intentionally conveyed by employers in written or verbal format in reality. For instance, job candidates may form promissory expectation about the opportunity for on-job learning and task varieties based on written or verbal statements concerning future job specifications made by the recruiters, regardless of whether the

recruiters explicitly state such opportunities being promised (Monte & Zweig, 2009, p. 1244). Implicit promises, on the other hand, are formed based on employees' subjective beliefs, understanding, and assumptions about the exchange terms based on their repeated and consistent pattern of exchange with their employers in the past (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2019). Both implicit and explicit promises can be shaped by other social, organizational, or contextual factors, such as social comparison and shared norms (Ho, 2005).

The emphasis on promises in conceptualizing psychological contracts has brought important changes to the literature. More specifically, while employees' expectations can be influenced by a broad variety of external factors, employees' perceptions of promises are mainly shaped by cues emitted through interactions with the employer. Therefore, the focus on promises increases the significance of the role played by employers in creating and shaping employees' psychological contract (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2019). In this regard, researchers have specifically pinpointed that promises often induce expectations, while expectations are not necessary or solely associated with promises (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). Moreover, an emphasis on promises (as opposed to expectations) helps enhance the predictive validity of psychological contracts. Research has shown that unmet promises correlated more strongly with negative employee outcomes (e.g., job dissatisfaction, turnover) than unmet expectations did (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Robinson & Rousseau, 1994).

In addition to the emphasis on promises, Rousseau's seminal work also highlights another unique feature of psychological contracts: the element of subjectivity. Employees' subjective perception consists of beliefs about what employers and employees are entitled to receive and obligated to provide in exchange for their contributions to the employment relationship (Levinson et al., 1962). It is likely that employers make dissimilar promises to

different employees, making it crucial to study psychological contracts in employment relationship at the dyadic level (Ho, 2005).

Distinguishing Psychological Contracts and Related Constructs

The subjective nature of a psychological contract is one important feature that distinguishes it from other related concepts, such as a *legal contract*, which is formed with an explicit offer, an explicit acceptance of the offer, and parties' consideration regarding the resources being bargained for and given in the employment relationship (Suazo, Martínez, & Sandoval, 2009). A psychological contract differs from a legal contract in that it does not necessarily involve explicit offer and acceptance. Rather, it is highly dependent on employees' subjective assumptions and beliefs about their exchange agreement with the employer based on what they have been implicitly and/or explicitly promised. Besides, unlike the binding nature of a legal contract, a psychological contract is dynamic in nature and may evolve overtime (Schein, 1980; Suazo et al., 2009). A psychological contract should also be differentiated from an *implied contract*, which focuses on perceived obligations derived from social consensus based on legal or cultural factors rather than one party's subjective evaluation (Rousseau, 1989). In contrast to perceived breach or violation of a psychological contract, which involves the belief that one has fulfilled his/her obligations while the exchange party failed to live up the promises, violation of an implied contract concerns a sense of uncertainty in predicting the future pattern of the exchange relationship (Rousseau, 1989).

Types of Psychological Contracts

While classic work on employment relationships focuses on work for pay, Rousseau's seminal work on psychological contracts (Rousseau, 1989; Rousseau, 1990; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993) advances scholars' understating of employment relationships by summarizing contracts into two major forms, including *promissory contracts* which

essentially concern work for financial payment, and *social contracts* which refer to normative, shared, and collective beliefs regarding appropriate behavior demonstrated by exchange parties. The framework summarizing promissory and social contracts offers a foundation for subsequent work to differentiate psychological contracts into four major types, namely (1) *transactional*, (2) *relational*, (3) *balanced*, and (4) *transitional contracts*.

According to Rousseau and colleagues (Rousseau, 1989; Rousseau, 1990, 1995; Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998), transactional psychological contracts have low stability, narrow scope, high tangibility, and focus on short-term and economic exchanges of resources. The terms included in transactional contracts are often specific and clear, with a specific time frame for exchange. On the contrary, relational psychological contracts are characterized by high stability, broader scope, and low tangibility, with an emphasis on longer-term exchange of social and symbolic objects in an employment relationship. However, in most cases, employment relationships involve a combination of both transactional and relational obligations. Such hybrid forms of exchange relationships are called balanced psychological contracts. Balanced psychological contracts consist of both financial and social resource exchange between employees and employers, with relatively long time periods and clearly-specified terms. Finally, transitional psychological contracts (or sometimes labelled as uncertain psychological contracts; Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998) are characterized by high ambiguity in time frame and performance requirements.

Content of Psychological Contracts

Limited research has systematically examined the content of psychological contracts. Broadly speaking, the content of employee psychological contracts encompasses two major categories: (a) financial inducements that are monetary, objective, and largely quantifiable in nature (e.g., salary, bonus pay, overall benefits package; Lester, Kickul, & Bergmann, 2007), and (b) non-financial inducements that are non-monetary, abstract, and largely subject to

employees' subjective perceptions (e.g., personal respect, fair treatment, job autonomy, job security; Chen, Tsui, & Zhong, 2008; Lester et al., 2007). Table 1 illustrates some examples of psychological contract elements discussed or examined in past research.

The combination of psychological contract content is one characteristic that informs the type of psychological contract, among other factors (e.g., time frame, stability, scope). Generally, psychological contracts mainly composed of financial terms and shorter-term exchange are transactional in nature, while those consisting of non-monetary, open-ended, and longer-term exchanges can be classified as relational in nature (Rousseau, 1989). Balanced forms of psychological contracts encompass a combination of both financial and non-financial inducements. The content of psychological contracts can vary across occupations and job contexts. For instance, Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron (1994) conducted an empirical study to understand the psychological contract of expatriate managers and its relationship with managers' retention-related outcomes. Expatriates are employees being sent on overseas assignment for a specific period of time, typically 2 to 3 years, before they are repatriated back to their home country (Guzzo et al., 1994). Because the acceptance of an overseas assignment involves the relocation of employees' family members, the psychological contract of expatriate managers may cover financial (e.g., housing allowance, subsidies for child education, spousal employment, assignment extension bonus) and non-financial inducements (e.g., extended vacation for returning to their home country, training on local language and cultural customs in the host country) that are different from general employees. Therefore, to gain insight on the effect of psychological contracts on employee outcomes, it is crucial for researchers to first understand the content of the psychological contract in the context of interest.

Table 1

Content of Psychological Contract

Article	Type	Sample	Content of Employee Psychological Contract	
			Financial	Non-financial
Rousseau (1990)	Empirical	MBA students	Salary	Career advancement Job security
Guzzo et al. (1994)	Theoretical	Expatriate managers	Tax benefits Housing differential Subsidized health care Allowance Completion bonus Assignment extension bonus	Leave entitlement Training Assistance with settling in the job and city Repatriation support Club membership Personal services (e.g., translation) Career development Assistance in locating schools for children and new house Training for local culture's customs Assistance with spousal employment
Herriot, Manning, and Kidd (1997)	Qualitative, empirical	Employees and managers in UK	Pay Employee benefits	Training Fairness Discretion Recognition Humanity Justice Job security

Article	Type	Sample	Content of Employee Psychological Contract	
			Financial	Non-financial
Turnley and Feldman (1998)	Qualitative	Managers	Base salary Overall benefits Health care benefits Retirement benefits Bonuses for exceptional work	Job security Input into decisions Opportunities for advancement Responsibility and power Feedback Organizational support to personal problems Regularity of pay raises Job challenge and excitement Supervisor support to work problems Career development Training
Porter, Pearce, Tripoli, and Lewis (1998)	Empirical	Executives and employees	Provide bonus pay or incentives based on performance. Increase salaries if organization makes greater profit.	Give overt recognition and approval for a job assignment well done. Provide bonus pay or incentives based on performance. Offer meaningful, interesting, challenging work. Offer development opportunities (i.e., training and education paid by the organization) on ongoing basis. Offer increasing responsibility and autonomy as employees feel they are ready. Guarantee job security for at least one year. Explicitly take into consideration the employee's interests when making decisions which affect the employee. Opportunity to offer input into all the employee's decisions which may affect the employee.

Article	Type	Sample	Content of Employee Psychological Contract	
			Financial	Non-financial
Turnley and Feldman (2000)	Empirical	Managers	Salary Pay raises Bonuses Overall benefits Retirement benefits Health care benefits	Training Advancement opportunities Career development Decision-making input Job responsibility Job challenge Feedback on job performance Supervisory support Organizational support Job security
Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, and Bolino (2002)	Empirical	MBA students who are full-time employees	Pay Overall benefit package	Advancement opportunities The work itself Resource support Good employment relationship
Lambert et al. (2003)	Empirical	Student employees in a university	Pay	Recognition Relationship with others Variety Skill development Career training

Article	Type	Sample	Content of Employee Psychological Contract	
			Financial	Non-financial
Lester et al. (2007)	Empirical	Employees in a hotel and resort company	<p>A competitive salary (a salary comparable to that paid by similar organizations).</p> <p>A fair salary (a salary that is reasonable for the job I do).</p> <p>Pay tied to my level of performance.</p> <p>Rewards based on my level of performance.</p> <p>The overall benefits package that my organization provides.</p> <p>The health-care benefits that my organization provides.</p> <p>The major medical insurance that my organization provides.</p> <p>The supplemental health coverage provided (e.g., dental care, eye care, disability coverage).</p> <p>The paid time off benefits (e.g., vacation, holidays, sick leave) that my organization provides.</p> <p>The retirement benefits (e.g., 401-K programs) that my organization provides.</p>	<p>A job that is challenging.</p> <p>A job that has high responsibility.</p> <p>A job that is interesting.</p> <p>A job that provides a high level of autonomy.</p> <p>A job that provides the opportunity to learn new skills.</p> <p>The opportunities that I have to grow and advance.</p> <p>The opportunities I have for career development.</p> <p>The opportunities that I have to receive promotions.</p> <p>The job training opportunities that I receive.</p> <p>The career guidance and mentoring opportunities I receive. Off-the-job training opportunities (e.g., tuition reimbursement). Constructive feedback regarding development on performance reviews.</p> <p>The materials and equipment needed to perform my job.</p> <p>The resources necessary to perform my job.</p> <p>The tools needed to perform my job.</p> <p>The amount of job security I have.</p> <p>The extent to which I am treated with respect and courtesy.</p> <p>The quality of working conditions.</p> <p>The extent to which I am treated fairly.</p> <p>The amount of personal support I receive from management.</p> <p>The open communication that I receive from management.</p>

Article	Type	Sample	Content of Employee Psychological Contract	
			Financial	Non-financial
Chen et al. (2008)	Empirical	Supervisor-subordinates in China	Employee benefits	Performance-linked wage Personal respect Fair treatment Training Opportunity for promotion Job autonomy Job responsibilities
Lambert (2011)	Empirical	College students	Monetary payment	N/A

Psychological Contract Overfulfillment

Conceptualization. Employees' evaluation of psychological contract fulfillment involves their comparison between what had been promised and what was actually delivered by their employer (Ho, 2005; Lambert et al., 2003). This evaluative process results in one of three conclusions: (1) psychological contract underfulfillment—employees believe that their employer delivered less than what had been promised, (2) psychological contract fulfillment—employees believe that their employer delivered what had been promised, and (3) psychological contract overfulfillment—employees believe that their employer delivered more than what had been promised.

Approaches of Operationalization. Related empirical research has adopted one of the four major approaches in operationalizing the three concepts along the continuum of psychological contract fulfillment (Lambert et al., 2003). The first one refers to the direct comparison approach which asks participants to indicate the extent to which their employers have fulfilled their promised inducements on a scale ranging from underfulfillment to overfulfillment, with fulfillment being at the mid-point of the scale (e.g., Lester et al., 2002; W. H Turnley & D. C Feldman, 2000).

The second approach asks participants to evaluate the extent to which they agree with a series of measurement items concerning their employers' underfulfillment (Dulac, Coyle-Shapiro, Henderson, & Wayne, 2008; Robinson & Morrison, 2000) or fulfillment of the psychological contract (e.g., Baer et al., 2018; Birtch, Chiang, & Van Esch, 2016; Gardner, Huang, Niu, Pierce, & Lee, 2015). Thus far, however, no studies have adopted this second operationalization approach in assessing psychological contract overfulfillment.

The third one is the discrepancy approach which asks participants to first indicate the extent to which their employer had promised to provide a series of inducement, followed by another set of questions asking them to evaluate the extent to which their employer had

actually delivered those inducements. In turn, the degree of psychological contract fulfillment can be assessed with the yielded algebraic difference score (Guzzo et al., 1994; Robinson, 1996).

Finally, Lambert and colleagues criticized the above three operationalization approaches for confounding the promised and delivered inducements. The authors proposed an expanded view on operationalizing the degree of psychological contract fulfillment, which teases apart the effect of promised and delivered inducements using quadratic regression equations and polynomial regression analyses (Lambert, 2011; Lambert et al., 2003). This expanded approach allows researchers to take the absolute levels of the degree of psychological contract fulfillment into consideration, enabling researchers to understand the different effects of positive psychological contract breach (i.e., overfulfillment) and negative psychological contract breach (i.e., underfulfillment) on employee outcomes.

Employee Reactions to the Degree of Psychological Contract Fulfillment. A substantial portion of the psychological contract literature focuses on the consequences associated with the degree of psychological contract fulfillment. As illustrated in Table 2, cumulative findings showed that the degree of psychological contract fulfillment plays a major role in affecting employee work outcomes, including their cognition (e.g., attribution; Lester et al., 2002), affect (e.g., anger, negative affect, satisfaction; Achnak, Griep, & Vantilborgh, 2018; Wang & Hsieh, 2014), behavior (e.g., organizational citizenship behavior, cynicism; Andersson, 1996; Turnley et al., 2003), and performance (e.g., in-role and extra-role performance; Suazo et al., 2009).

Scholars have commonly drawn upon five major perspectives to explain and predict the effect of the degree of psychological contract fulfillment on employee outcomes. Thus far, however, most research drawing on these theoretical lenses has focused on examining employee reactions to psychological contract underfulfillment, with limited attention being

directed to the consequences of psychological contract fulfillment and overfulfillment. Therefore, one can only infer the employee outcomes of psychological contract overfulfillment based on the premises of these views and findings. Below I provide an overview of these theoretical perspectives, including social exchange theory, equity theory, needs theory, and affective event theory. Table 3 summarizes the key premises of these theoretical perspectives, exemplar studies that adopted these perspectives to examine employee reactions to the degree of psychological contract fulfillment, and their findings.

Major Theoretical Perspectives

Social exchange theory. Social exchange theory is among the major paradigms used to understand employee reactions to the degree of psychological contract fulfillment. The theory posits that social relationships are established and maintained on the basis of reciprocal exchange of resources (Blau, 1964). Based on this premise, the transfer of resources from one party should lead to the recipient's obligations to provide positive reciprocation in compliance to the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960). Accordingly, psychological contract underfulfillment can be taken as a form of imbalance in resource exchange which would motivate employees' negative responses to restore the balance. Supporting this argument, empirical and meta-analytic studies have demonstrated that the degree of psychological contract fulfillment was related to positive responses towards the resource exchange party such as employee citizenship behaviors directed at the organization (Turnley et al., 2003) and performance (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012). By contrast, psychological contract underfulfillment predicted undesirable reactions, such as fewer innovation-related behaviors and lower organizational commitment (Ng, Feldman, & Lam, 2010), as well as reduced trust, job satisfaction, and affective commitment (Bal, de Lange, Jansen, van der Velde, 2008).

Table 2

Empirical Studies Examining Psychological Contract Overfulfillment

Article	Method	N	Sample	Operationalization of psychological contract overfulfillment	Findings
Turnley & Feldman (1998)	Interview	541	Managers and executives	On a 5-point scale (-2=receive much more than promised, 2=receive much less than promised), participants were asked to indicate the amount of 16 inducements they had actually been provided compared to the amount their organization initially promised them.	Employees' perception of psychological contract violation (receiving less inducements than what had been promised) during corporate restructuring plays a significant role in influencing their exit intention, voice, loyalty, and neglect of performance at work. The effects depended on the extent of psychological contract violation and other mitigating factors, such as justice, perceived likelihood of future violations, and quality of the existing working relationships.
Turnley & Feldman (2000)	Survey	804	Managers	On a 5-point scale (1=receive much more than promised, 3=receive about the same as promised, 5=receive much less than promised), participants were asked to indicate the amount of 16 inducements they had actually been provided compared to the amount their organization initially promised them.	Psychological contract violations (receiving less inducements than what had been promised), compared to the states of fulfillment and overfulfillment, was positively related to intention to quit, neglect of in-role job performance, and was negatively related to extra-role performance. The main effects were generally mediated by unmet expectation and job satisfaction.

Article	Method	N	Sample	Operationalization of psychological contract overfulfillment	Findings
Lester, Turnley, Bloodgood, & Bolino (2002)	Survey	134	Supervisor-subordinate dyads recruited through MBA programmes	On a 5-point scale (-2=receive less than promised, 2=receive much more than promised), participants were asked to indicate the amount of various inducements they had actually been provided compared to the amount their organization initially promised them.	Supervisors reported significantly higher levels of psychological contract (over)fulfillment in terms of pay, advancement opportunities, and a good employment relationship than subordinates did. Compared to supervisors, subordinates were more (less) likely to attribute psychological contract breach (underfulfillment) to renegeing and incongruence (disruption). Subordinates' perceived psychological contract breach predicted significantly lower levels of supervisor-rated performance.
Lambert, Edwards, and Cable (2003)	Survey	213	Student employees at a large Southeastern public university	On a 7-point scale (1=not at all, 7=very much), participants were first asked to indicate the amount of various inducements (pay, recognition, relationship with others, variety, skill development, career training) they had been promised by their employer in the Time 1 survey. In the Time 2 survey, they reported the amount of each inducement they actually received.	The study testified different theoretical perspectives concerning individuals' reactions to the degree of psychological contract fulfillment. Results provided little support for ... but corroborated with needs theory. The effect of psychological contract breach on satisfaction depends on whether the breach represents deficient or excessive inducements in comparison to initial promises.

Article	Method	N	Sample	Operationalization of psychological contract overfulfillment	Findings
Lo & Aryee (2003)	Survey	152	Full-time employees taking an MBA course in a Hong Kong university	On a 5-point scale (1=received much more than promised, 5=received much less than promised), participants indicated the amount of ten inducements being delivered by their employer compared to what they had been promised.	Organizational change and history of contract breach were positively related to employee turnover intention and psychological withdrawal behavior through psychological contract breach. The effect of psychological contract breach on psychological withdrawal behavior, civic virtue, and turnover intention was mediated by trust.
Lester, Kickul, & Bergmann (2007)	Survey	195	Employees in a hotel and resort company	On a 5-point scale (-2=receive less more than promised, 2=receive much more than promised), participants were asked to indicate the amount of various inducements they had actually been provided compared to the amount their organization initially promised them.	Time 1 perception of psychological contract type predicted Time 2 perception of psychological contract type through the mediating roles of social accounts and the degree of psychological contract fulfillment.

Article	Method	N	Sample	Operationalization of psychological contract overfulfillment	Findings
Monte & Irving (2008)	Survey	342	Undergraduate students who entered a short-term education work contract	On a 5-point scale (1=minimally or not at all, 5=to a very large extent), participants rated the extent to which their employer had promised to provide five inducement items and then the extent to which their employer had actually provided each of the same eight inducements.	Underfulfillment (overfulfillment) of transactional inducement was negatively related to employee satisfaction and positively related to feelings of violation and employment intentions, indicating linear relationships. The effect of negative breach (underfulfillment) on employee outcomes was stronger than that of positive breach (overfulfillment). Trust played a stronger mediating role in the indirect relationship between negative breach and employee outcomes than that of positive breach.
Chen, Tsui, & Zhong (2008)	Survey	273	Supervisor-subordinate dyads recruited from a shoe manufacturing company in China	On a 5-point scale (-2=received much less than promised, 2=received much more than promised), participants indicated the extent to which each inducement was delivered by their employer compared to what they had been promised.	Perceived inducement breach was negatively related to organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and work performance among employees low in traditional cultural orientation.

Article	Method	N	Sample	Operationalization of psychological contract overfulfillment	Findings
Bal, Chiaburu, & Diaz (2011)	Survey	245	Study 2 (the Netherlands)	On a 5-point scale (1=receive much less than promised, 5=receive much more than promised), participants indicated the extent to which the amount of inducement they received from their organization compared to that being promised.	Psychological contract breach (underfulfillment of promised inducement) was more negatively related to employee taking charge behavior
Lambert (2011)	Experiment	162	College students	Psychological contract overfulfillment corresponded to the condition of delivered pay exceeding promised pay.	Delivered amount of inducement played a more important role in explaining individual satisfaction than the promised amount of inducement.

Despite scant studies examining the implications of psychological contract overfulfillment based on this perspective, the lens of social exchange theory would suggest that psychological contract overfulfillment motivates positive reactions as a form of reciprocation to employers in order to restore the imbalance in resource exchange. When employees receive more inducements than what they were initially promised, they may experience more positive emotions and favorable cognition, and exhibit desirable behaviors such as increased work effort, contributions, and performance, such that the resource exchange between themselves and their employer are balanced.

Equity theory. Another popular perspective adopted in the psychological contract literature is equity theory (Adams, 1965), which asserts that employees are vigilant in comparing their inputs and the outputs in employment relationships. In such an input-to-output comparison, employees focus on their contributions to their exchange partner and inducements received from the partner. Based on equity theory, when employees perceive their contributions are being compensated with equivalent inducements, they react the most positively. When there is inequity in resource exchange between partners—both in the case of contributions exceeding inducements (negative equity) and the case of inducements exceeding contributions (positive equity), individuals are expected to respond less positively (Adams, 1965; Adams & Freedman, 1976).

However, psychological contract research applying equity theory has yielded mixed results. Several studies found evidence in support of this premise. Employers' underfulfillment of employees' psychological contracts was found to be related to undesirable employee reactions such as turnover intentions, withdrawal, abuse, production deviance, and civic virtue (e.g., Jensen, Opland, & Ryan, 2010; Lo & Aryee, 2003). Subsequent studies also have demonstrated that employees' perception of their input-to-output ratio in their employment could vary over time (Payne, Culbertson, Lopez, Boswell, &

Barger, 2015) and that employees' individual differences in their equity sensitivity can influence their reactions to an imbalance of the input-to-output ratio. For instance, Restubog, Bordia, and Tang (2007) conducted an empirical study on a sample of sales executives and their supervisor and demonstrated that the effect of psychological contract breach in the form of underfulfillment on organizational citizenship behavior was moderated by executives' equity sensitivity. Specifically, compared to executives who are sensitive to the inputs (contributions) in employment relationships, those who are sensitive to outcomes (delivered inducements, psychological contract breach) were more negatively related to organizational citizenship behaviors. However, other studies have failed to yield evidence supporting equity theory. For instance, Lambert (2011) conducted experimental studies to examine employees' reactions to the (im)balance among contributions and inducements that are promised and delivered in employment relationships. The author found evidence in support of needs theory but not discrepancy and equity theories.

Although researchers have yet to investigate employees' reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment based on equity theory, the theory implies that psychological contract overfulfillment—employee perception of a positive inequity between their contributions and received inducements—would predict more behaviors enacted to restore the state of equity. Related to this argument, early research on equity theory has long shown that employees who are better off (e.g., receiving overpay) could experience heightened motivation to exert increased work effort (Adams & Rosenbaum, 1962). Therefore, consistent with these findings, it would be reasonable to presume that psychological contract overfulfillment is associated with employee positive reactions directed at the employers to redress the positive inequity.

Needs theory. Alternative to the views of social exchange and equity theories, Lambert and colleagues proposed that the relationship between the degree of psychological

contract fulfillment and employee reactions can be more effectively explained from the perspective of needs theory. The perspective of needs theory (Dawis, 1992; Highhouse & Hoffman, 2001) was adopted from the person-environment fit literature and asserts that employees' preferences for contract terms and their reactions to the degree of psychological contract fulfillment depends on their needs. That is, whether psychological contract fulfillment, underfulfillment, and overfulfillment is related to higher levels of satisfaction can vary across individuals, depending on the extent to which their perceptions fulfill their needs in one or multiple domains (e.g., psychological, financial, physical, and social). This view has gained empirical support in both field survey studies (e.g., Lambert et al., 2003) and experiments (e.g., Lambert, 2011). Lambert and colleagues found that the degree of psychological contract overfulfillment had a linear and positive association with employee satisfaction and outcomes, depending on the type of inducements being overfulfilled. More specifically, the linear and positive relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee satisfaction was evident mainly for financial inducements but not non-financial inducements. The researchers reasoned that compared to non-financial inducements, financial inducements could satisfy individuals' needs in multiple and probably more domains, resulting in a more linear and positive association with employee positive reactions.

The views of needs theory suggest that whether psychological contract overfulfillment predicts positive employee reactions may depend on whether the overfulfilled inducements fulfill or match with employees' psychological and physical needs. This implies that whether or not psychological contract overfulfillment would predict positive employee reactions may depend on employees' personal characteristics or contextual factors that relate to their needs in the employment relationships. However, to date, limited research has investigated this line of inquiry.

Affective event theory. Another perspective commonly applied by research to investigate employee reactions to psychological contract evaluative outcomes is affective event theory. Based on affective event theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996), episodic events that have occurred both at and outside work may affect employees' affective experiences. Commonly identified organizational events are negative and stress-inducing, which trigger negative affect (Ashton-James & Ashkanasy, 2005). In the psychological contract literature, research that adopts affective event theory has demonstrated that experiencing psychological contract underfulfillment could engender negative affect (e.g., feelings of violation) and subsequently influence employees' behaviors (e.g., proactive behaviors, citizenship, deviance) (Atkinson et al., 2018; Bal, Chiaburu, & Diaz, 2011; Bordia et al., 2008).

According to Weiss and Cropanzano (1996), however, employees' affective experiences at work can be influenced by both negative events that signal goal incongruence and positive events that imply goal congruence which lead to a change in circumstances and people's emotions (Bledow, Schmitt, Frese, & Kühnel, 2011). The excessive inducements received in psychological contract overfulfillment can be considered as a favorable outcome because inducements cover one or a bundle of resources that help address employees' psychological needs (Levinson et al., 1962). Therefore, based on affective event theory, it is expected that psychological contract overfulfillment would elicit positive reactions among employees.

Summary

This chapter reviewed the major theoretical perspectives in the psychological contract literature and the consequences of employees' evaluation of psychological contract fulfillment. So far, the majority of the available theoretical perspectives have been applied to explain and predict employees' reactions to the negative end (underfulfillment) of the psychological contract fulfillment continuum. The accumulated findings show that

employees generally respond negatively to psychological contract underfulfillment. A meta-analytic study conducted by Zhao et al. (2007) demonstrated that psychological contract breach was significantly related to a broad variety of employee work outcomes, such as higher turnover intention, lower job satisfaction, and lower in-role performance. Although there are limited attempts to examine the consequences of psychological contract overfulfillment, most theories presume that employees react positively towards employers' provision of excessive inducements beyond promises.

An implicit assumption in the theories reviewed is that psychological contract overfulfillment would be generally appreciated by employees on the basis of the principle of social exchange and equity theory (Coyle-Shapiro, 2002; Karagonlar, Eisenberger, & Aselage, 2016; Montes & Irving, 2008). However, this assumption is inconsistent with some scholars' arguments which conceptualize psychological contract overfulfillment as a breach of promise, such that it may not always predict more positive outcomes than psychological contract fulfillment (Lambert et al., 2003). This assumption also contradicts empirical findings showing that the amount of (un)promised inducement paid is not positively associated with employee outcomes, such as in-role performance and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g., Turnley et al., 2003). Moreover, research shows that beneficiaries of resource provision do not always attribute the favorable outcome to resource providers' altruistic motives (Johnson, Erez, Kiker, & Motowidlo, 2002). Given the inconsistency in the literature, whether and under what conditions psychological contract overfulfillment predicts positive employee reactions warrants more attention and investigation (Tsui, Pearce, Porter, & Tripoli, 1997).

This dissertation seeks to shed light on this area and provide insight into the mixed empirical findings in the literature. Specifically, I propose social projection theory as a lens for understanding whether, how, and when employees may or may not react positively to

psychological contract overfulfillment. In the following chapter, I develop the hypotheses concerning the main relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude felt towards their employer, the moderating role of social dominance orientation in determining the strength of the main effect, and the mediating role of attribution in explaining the interaction effect between psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation on employee gratitude.

Table 3

Key Theoretical Perspectives in the Psychological Contract Literature

Theory	Key Premise and Prediction	Sample Articles	Findings
Social exchange theory (Blau, 1964)	Psychological contract breach engenders inequality in resource exchange within an employment relationship. In turn, employees reciprocate with lower contributions input to their employment relationships.	Turnley et al. (2003)	Using a sample of MBA students and their supervisors, psychological contract fulfillment was more positively related to employee citizenship behaviors directed at the organizations than to those directed at coworkers.
		Ng, Feldman, and Lam (2010)	Using data collected through a professional research organization, the study found that increase in the perception of psychological contract breach was associated with decrease in employees' innovation-related behaviors through organizational commitment.
Equity theory (Adams, 1965)	Employees constantly monitoring the ratio of their contributions and received inducements in comparison to that of a reference point, which can be either other employees or system referents such as the initial promises made by their employer.	Lo and Aryee (2003)	Based on a sample of Hong Kong employees, organizational change and history of psychological contract breach were found to be positively related to present perception of psychological contract breach. In turn, present perception of psychological contract breach was positively related to turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal behavior, and negatively associated with civic virtue among employees, through the mediating effect of trust in organization.

Theory	Key Premise and Prediction	Sample Articles	Findings
Need theory (Edwards, Caplan, & Van Harrison, 1998; Locke, 1976)	Psychological contract underfulfillment is expected to engender negative employee reactions because their needs are left unfulfilled, delivered inducements in excessive of promises would be related to increased positive outcomes because surplus inducements may be used to fulfill needs in multiple domains.	Chen et al. (2008)	Based on a sample of Chinese supervisor-subordinate dyads, psychological contract breach was more negatively related to organizational commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and work performance among employees low in traditional values. Among leaders, however, the pattern was different—psychological contract breach by employees was more negatively related to leader mentoring when the leader was low in benevolence.
		Lambert et al. (2003)	The authors found that the relationship between delivered inducements and employee satisfaction depended on the type of inducements. While overfulfilled inducement in form of pay, recognition, and relationships were positively associated with employee satisfaction, overfulfilled task variety, skill development, and career training were however associated with decrease in satisfaction. The findings showed that overfulfillment of inducement promotes employee satisfaction only when it fulfills employees' needs and desire.
		Lambert (2011)	Consistent with needs theory, results of an experiment based on a sample of college students showed that delivered pay was positively related to satisfaction.
		Kim, Laffranchini, Wagstaff, and Jeung (2017)	Congruence between employees' and employers' psychological contract fulfillment was positively related to affective commitment and occupational commitment.

Theory	Key Premise and Prediction	Sample Articles	Findings
Affective event theory (Weiss & Cropanzano, 1996)	Episodes of negative events can engender negative emotional responses and subsequently, trigger undesirable individual behaviors and outcomes.	Bal, De Lange, Jansen, and Van der Velde (2008)	The meta-analytic study showed that psychological contract breach was negatively related to trust and organizational commitment, particularly among younger workers. Psychological contract breach was however more negatively related to job satisfaction among older workers.
		Wei and Si (2013)	Psychological contract breach from the perception of supervisors was positively related to their abusive supervision through organizational identification. Such an indirect relationship was more pronounced among supervisors high in negative reciprocity belief.
		Atkinson et al. (2018)	Using an experiment, the study found evidence in supportive of affective events theory that experiencing psychological contract breach was negatively related to target-specific organizational citizenship behaviors via feelings of violation and reassessment of relational contracts. Relational psychological contract is more strongly related to breach perception when unmet promises or expectations were severe.

Chapter 3

Theory and Hypotheses Development

Social Projection Theory

In this dissertation, I draw on social projection theory to predict employees' cognitive and affective reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment. As early as the 1920s, researchers observed that people make inferences about others' attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors based on self-relevant information (Allport, 1924b). In more recent decades, scholars have more formally theorized this process as social projection, which refers to “the process by which people come to believe that others are similar to them” (Krueger, 2008, p. 2). Social projection is an automatic process in which neither awareness nor effort is a prerequisite for its occurrence (Krueger, 2008; Krueger, DiDonato, & Freestone, 2012).

Extant studies demonstrate that the process of social projection is sensitive to the social context. Under the context of cooperation, negotiation, and social dilemma in which interaction partners' choices are uncertain, social projection is particularly salient in helping people to make rational decisions and to maximize their self-interests (Ames, Weber, & Zou, 2012; Krueger, 2012, 2013). As psychological contract overfulfillment represents an experience linked to the self-interests of employees and involves employers forgoing their own resources, social projection processes may operate to help guide employees' cognitive and affective reactions. Building on social projection theory, I propose that employees make inferences about their employer's motive behind the provision of overfulfilled inducements based on their own beliefs about the legitimacy of hierarchical and power differences between social groups.

The perspective of social projection may advance the psychological contract literature in two key ways. First, as a form of psychological contract breach, psychological contract overfulfillment may motivate employees to attribute a cause for why their employers would

deliver more inducements than they needed to. Past research on attribution of psychological contract breach often investigates employee attribution as a moderating factor, which assumes that employees' attributional processes operate in a vacuum (e.g., Chao et al., 2011; Costa & Neves, 2017). By testing whether employees' own characteristics may influence how they project and interpret employers' motives for overfulfilling inducements, this study illuminates the factors affecting employee attribution subsequent to psychological contract overfulfillment.

Building on the existing findings in the psychological contract literature, this study aims to shed light on the consequences of psychological contract overfulfillment as the positive end of the concept continuum. In this chapter, I first develop the hypothesis concerning the direct and positive association between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude. Next, I propose employees' social dominance orientation as a boundary condition that influences their feelings of gratitude in response to psychological contract overfulfillment. Finally, I develop a moderated mediation hypothesis, arguing that employees' attribution is the underlying mechanism that explains the interaction effect between psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation on gratitude. Figure 1 depicts the hypothesized research model.

Psychological Contract Overfulfillment and Employee Gratitude

Evaluation of psychological contract fulfillment results in one of the three conclusions—underfulfillment, fulfillment, or overfulfillment (Alcover et al., 2017; Lambert et al., 2003). These three perceptual states are determined by employees' receipt-promise disparity (Ho, 2005)—the comparison between what was promised and what was delivered. Psychological contract overfulfillment occurs when employees perceive that the inducements being delivered to them exceed what had been implicitly or explicitly promised (Alcover et al., 2017; Rousseau, 1989; Turnley et al., 2003). Whereas explicit promises are shaped by

employees' subjective interpretations of verbal and formal written arrangements provided by employers, implicit promises are influenced by employees' understanding of the exchange terms based on their repeated and consistent pattern of social exchange with their employers (Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2019). This implies that the provision of unpromised inducements and the experience of psychological contract overfulfillment will likely lead employees to perceive their employers as going beyond their formal obligations. The subjective perception of psychological contract overfulfillment should, to a certain extent, exceed employees' expectations and subjective understanding of what and how much they would have received.

The perception of oneself receiving unpromised and favorable outcomes from an employer, such as in psychological contract overfulfillment, may increase one's positive feelings (Conway & Briner, 2002). A positive affect commonly experienced towards benefactors is gratitude, or "a feeling of appreciation in response to an experience that is beneficial to, but not attributable to the self" (Fehr, Fulmer, Awtrey, & Miller, 2017, p. 363). A fundamental premise of psychological contract theory suggests that employers are obligated to provide employees with inducements in exchange for their contributions (Ford, Wang, Jin, & Eisenberger, 2018; Morrison & Robinson, 1997). When employers go beyond their role obligations to provide inducements beyond their promised inducements or obligations, employees form positive perceptions of their employers and the employers' supportiveness towards employees' well-being (Anand, Vidyarthi, Liden, & Rousseau, 2010). Surplus inducements may induce positive affect because they can fulfill employees' needs (Lambert et al., 2003), thereby promoting their overall well-being. Moreover, as reflected from the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), the receipt of benefits from another party in a social exchange relationship generally motivates employees' reciprocation of positive reactions (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005).

Gratitude is a feeling of appreciation commonly triggered by the perception of oneself receiving a positive outcome that is not necessarily deserved or earned but that is due to the behavior of another individual (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). Under normal circumstances, employers are believed to have no rational reasons to provide more-than-promised inducements to their employees (Zajac & Westphal, 1994). When psychological contract overfulfillment does occur, however, employees are expected to attribute the favorable outcome, in part, to employers' intentional good-will. This is because psychological contract overfulfillment conveys cues about employers' positive attributes, such as their supportiveness and benevolence that go beyond the intention to compensate for employees' contributions, which may increase employees' gratitude (Ford et al., 2018). Therefore, I predict that psychological contract overfulfillment has a positive association with employee gratitude.

Hypothesis 1: Psychological contract overfulfillment is positively related to employee gratitude.

The Moderating Role of Social Dominance Orientation

In this research, I build upon social projection theory to propose employees' social dominance orientation—a representative form of ideology concerning hierarchical differences and inequality between dominants and subordinates (Pratto et al., 1994)—as an essential boundary condition that affects employees' gratitude toward psychological contract overfulfillment. Given employers' direct control over resources and discretion to exercise changes in resource allocation in individualized employment relationships, employees' general beliefs about the legitimacy of power difference across social groups may influence their responses to social interactions with their employers.

According to social projection theory, in situations where individuals need to consider their personal interests in comparison to others' interests, they may assume others hold

intentions, preferences, and attitudes that are similar to their own for guiding their decision making and behaviors (Allport, 1924b; Krueger, 2008). On the basis of social projection theory, I argue that, in individualized employment relationships, employees' feeling of gratitude accompanying psychological contract overfulfillment is contingent on their social dominance orientation which can influence their tendency to engage in social projection.

Social dominance orientation is defined as "one's degree of preference for inequality among social groups" (Pratto et al., 1994, p. 741). It indicates individuals' endorsement to hierarchical differences and power inequality. The concept of social dominance orientation consists of two subdimensions: (1) support for dominance over subordinate members, which focuses on maintaining the inferior status of others in subordinate groups with overt oppression and aggression, and (2) intergroup anti-egalitarianism, which concerns the preference for intergroup inequality maintained on the basis of hierarchy-enhancing systems, policies, and myths (Ho et al., 2015; Ho et al., 2012). Social dominance orientation plays a key role in directing individuals' attitudes (e.g., prejudice; Dru, 2007), affect (e.g., anger; Jost et al., 2012), cognition (e.g., identification with union; Green & Auer, 2013), and behaviors (e.g., leaders' abusive supervision directed at subordinates; Khan, Moss, Quratulain, & Hameed, 2018) exhibited during interactions with members in other social groups as well as work outcomes (e.g., career progression; Aquino, Stewart, & Reed, 2005).

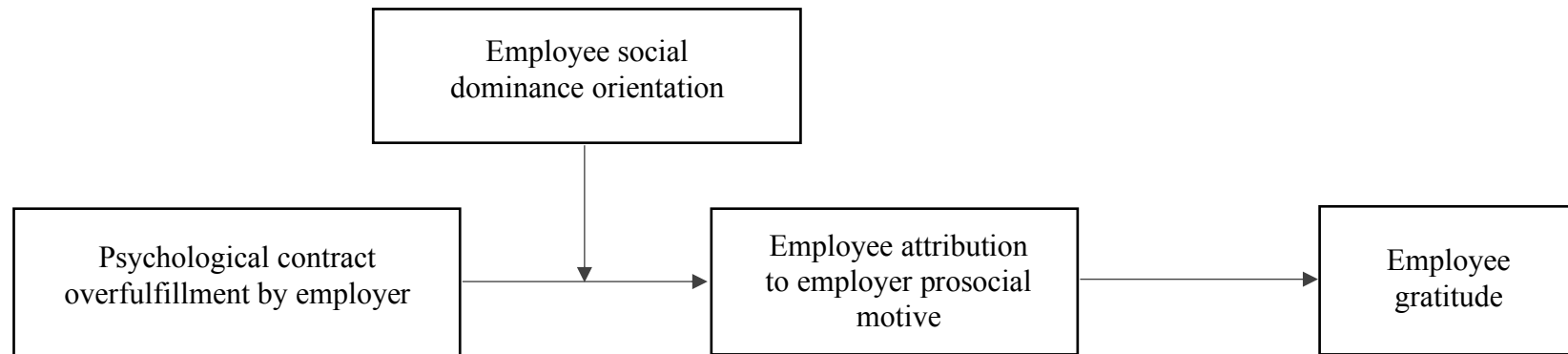
Considering the feature of power asymmetry inherent in employment relationships, social dominance orientation is a particularly relevant personal factor that influences employees' responses to psychological contract overfulfillment. In social relationships characterized by high power asymmetry and hierarchical difference, receiving unpromised inducements from an employer who has a lower degree of dependence on the relationship creates a situation of ambiguity in which employees may be motivated to engage in social projection to guide their reactions (van Lange & Rusbult, 2012). Employees low in social

dominance orientation are individuals who generally hold a more benign, egalitarian, and cooperative view towards intergroup relations (Jost, Pelham, Sheldon, & Ni Sullivan, 2003; Pratto et al., 1994). These employees have low endorsement of the superiority of some and the disadvantages of others, believing that members of different social groups can interact on an equal footing without the existence of social hierarchy. Such a relatively benign and non-hierarchical view towards intergroup relations held by these employees may lead them to project a similar view onto their employer. Assuming employers hold a similarly benign view towards their relationship, when employees low in social dominance orientation experience psychological contract overfulfillment, they are expected to respond with positive affective reactions that are consistent with their projection. Supporting this argument, related research shows that individuals low in social dominance orientation tend to exhibit more appreciation of others (Pratto et al., 1994). Therefore, among employees low in social dominance orientation, they should be more likely to project their own benign, positive, and cooperative view towards intergroup relations to their employer's behavior, which leads them to experience higher levels of gratitude.

In contrast, employees high in social dominance orientation believe that uneven distribution of power and resources across groups is legitimate, fair, and even inevitable (Ho et al., 2012; Jost et al., 2003). These people also believe the world to be a "dog-eat-dog" environment governed by zero-sum competition (Ho et al., 2012). Employees high in social dominance orientation may assume that employers hold a similarly competitive and hostile belief towards their relationship, and they may see their employers' behaviors as being motivated to keep subordinate others in their place (Magee & Galinsky, 2008). Under this circumstance, psychological contract overfulfillment would be incongruent with the ideology of employees high in social dominance orientation and their projected beliefs concerning how employers would and should behave. Overfulfilled inducements would be less likely to be

Figure 1

Theoretical Model



taken as resources that are truly beneficial to the recipients due to these employees' biased beliefs, resulting in lower levels of gratitude.

Accordingly, I predict that psychological contract overfulfillment would be positively related to employee gratitude only among employees low in social dominance orientation, and unrelated to employee gratitude among those high in social dominance orientation.

Hypothesis 2: Social dominance orientation moderates the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude, such that the relationship will be positive among employee low in social dominance orientation but not among employees high in social dominance orientation.

Attribution of Employers' Prosocial Motives as the Underlying Mechanism

When powerful employers provide unpromised inducements to employees, the overfulfilled inducements would be unexpected and arouse questions about the employers' motive. In another word, psychological contract overfulfillment can place employees in a state of ambiguity, motivating their need to engage in causal attribution for the favorable outcome received (van Lange, Kruglanski, & Higgins, 2011), which in turn influences their affective outcomes. Based on social projection theory, I further propose that employee attribution of employers' prosocial motives serves as a major cognitive process that mediates the interaction effect between psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation on gratitude. Research on attribution has long suggested that individuals' causal attribution can be influenced by their subjective beliefs about social consensus, or what some called "egocentric attribution bias" (Krueger, Alicke, & Dunning, 2005; Ross, Greene, & House, 1977, p. 281). Building on related work and arguments, I propose social dominance orientation as a personal factor that could influence employees' attribution of employers' prosocial motives for psychological contract overfulfillment and their subsequent feelings of gratitude.

Individuals' attributional process can be affected by three factors, including *information*, *motivation*, and *beliefs* (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Despite its favorable nature, psychological contract overfulfillment requires a lack of consistency between the *information* received by employees initially and in a later stage of their employment. Past research has argued that excessive inducements are a form of breach (Lambert et al., 2003; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). When breach—a difference between what employees expected to get based on previous information and what they actually received—occurs, employees are likely to engage in causal attribution. In addition, employees' *motivation* to make a causal attribution about the other party's motive and characteristics is heightened when dependence on that party is high (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Given that employees generally have asymmetrically higher dependence on employers than employers do on employees (Friedman, 1990; Morrison & Robinson, 1997), psychological contract overfulfillment may motivate employees to engage in causal attribution of the positive outcome to an employer-related motive.

Hypothesis 3: Attribution to employers' prosocial motives mediates the indirect relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude.

Social dominance orientation may alter the personal qualities that employees project onto their employer and hence the factors being attributed as the cause of psychological contract overfulfillment. In other words, social dominance orientation may influence employees' attribution by shaping their *beliefs* about employers' intention. While attribution theory asserts that most causes for certain outcomes could be attributed either internally (self-related) or externally (outside of self) based on locus, degree of stability, and controllability (Allport, 1924b; Kelley & Michela, 1980; Weiner, 1985), increasing research suggests that the current level of specification based on the classic attributional perspective is limited in that it does not offer adequate explanatory power to understand individuals' interpretation of

events and complex sense-making processes (Carson, 2019; Martinko, Harvey, & Douglas, 2007). It is therefore unsurprising to witness a surge of studies going beyond the differentiation of internal-external attribution to explore more specific forms of attribution, such as one's relationship with others or third parties (Carson, 2019; Eberly, Holley, Johnson, & Mitchell, 2011), and other's prejudice or discrimination (Kaiser & Miller, 2001; Schmitt & Branscombe, 2002). Consistent with research focusing on sense-making for positive behavior and treatment from others (Bowler, Halbesleben, & Paul, 2010; Cheung, Peng, & Wong, 2014; Adam M. Grant & David M. Mayer, 2009; Hui, Lam, & Law, 2000), I propose attribution to employers' prosocial motives as a mediating mechanism that explains the interaction effect between psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation on employee gratitude.

Prosocial motive concerns the desires to benefit others (Rioux & Penner, 2001). I propose that employees low in social dominance orientation would be more likely to attribute the overfulfilled inducements to their employers' prosocial motives when experiencing psychological contract overfulfillment, thereby inducing higher feelings of gratitude. Specifically, employees low in social dominance orientation are predisposed to believe in and pursue a non-hierarchical view towards intergroup relations (Pratto et al., 1994). These employees endorse a more benign, egalitarian, and cooperative view toward dominant and subordinate groups, and believe that members of both groups should be taken as similar if not equal (Pratto et al., 1994). Their support for equality between groups may enhance their tendency to make sense of their employers' behaviors using self-relevant information. Therefore, employees low in social dominance orientation may presume that their employers are being considerate of employees' welfare when overfulfilling inducements and ascribe more positive, prosocial motives to their actions, resulting in more intensified feelings of gratitude. Therefore, among employees low in social dominance orientation, psychological

contract overfulfillment is predicted to be more positively associated with attribution to employers' prosocial motives.

In turn, attribution of specific outcomes can influence individuals' subsequent cognition and affect (Weiner, 1985). I argue that the attribution of psychological contract overfulfillment to employers' prosocial motives will enhance employees' gratitude. Conceptualized as an attribution-dependent emotional state (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Weiner, 1985), gratitude is commonly evoked when one receives positive and unearned increments of value due to the influence of an external source (Emmons & McCullough, 2003). In another words, this positive emotion is tied to one's attribution of favorable outcomes to benefactors' prosocial motives which transcend an expectation for reciprocity (Spence, Brown, Keeping, & Lian, 2014), such as the benefactors' intent to promote the beneficiaries' sense of self-worth, social-worth, welfare, and personal growth (Fehr et al., 2017; Sun et al., 2019).

On the contrary, employees high in social dominance orientation are predisposed to legitimize a pyramidal structure of resource allocation across groups (Pratto et al., 1994). Because these employees endorse a competitive and zero-sum view of their resource exchange relationship with powerful others, they may project a similar belief onto their employers (Krueger, Acevedo, & Robbins, 2006; Ross et al., 1977). Specifically, employees high in social dominance orientation presume and endorse that their interactions with employers operate to reinforce the hierarchical structure and inequality within the relationship. Employers' prosocial concern for employees (as a member of subordinate groups) represents an opposing force that would destabilize the status quo and inequality in the relationship. As a result, employees high in social dominance orientation are unlikely to respond positively to psychological contract overfulfillment, nor would they perceive overfulfilled inducements as unconditional benefits motivated by the employer's altruistic

concern. Past research has shown that resource sharing by dominant people may be enacted with utilitarian intention, such as keeping subordinates in their place (Nadler, 2002). I expect that employees high in social dominance orientation may be particularly receptive to such a utilitarian intention of high-power and dominant others and would therefore be unlikely to attribute increased provision of inducements by employer and psychological contract overfulfillment to employers' prosocial motives.

Thus, I posit that attribution to employers' prosocial motives is a conducive mechanism that translates psychological contract overfulfillment into gratitude only among employees low in social dominance orientation but not among those high in social dominance orientation.

Hypothesis 4: Social dominance orientation moderates the indirect relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude through attribution to employers' prosocial motives, such that the indirect relationship will be observed only among employees low in social dominance orientation but not among employees high in social dominance orientation.

An Overview of Studies

I explore the phenomenon of interest and test the proposed hypotheses using both qualitative and quantitative data from three studies conducted in the context of individualized employment relationships. First, in Study 1, I conducted exploratory interviews on a sample of foreign domestic helpers and individual employers of foreign domestic helpers to gain preliminary insights into employers' provision of unpromised inducement and employees' perception of psychological contract overfulfillment. Study 2 was a field survey study on a sample of foreign domestic helpers using a critical incident technique to explore the main effect of psychological contract overfulfillment (Hypothesis 1) and its interaction with social dominance orientation on employee gratitude (Hypothesis 2). Study 3 was an experiment that

manipulated the degree of psychological contract overfulfillment to test the full theoretical model (Hypotheses 1 to 4) and to garner causal evidence for the predictions. In the following sections, I discuss the methodology, procedures, and results of the three studies conducted.

Chapter 4

Exploratory Interviews (Study 1)

The purposes of this exploratory study are three-fold. First, in the literature, scant research has examined the social dynamics and the interactions between employers and employees in individualized employment relationships. Therefore, this exploratory study helps ascertain overfulfillment of promised inducements as a prevalent phenomenon in the context of individualized employment relationships. Second, the perception of psychological contract overfulfillment emerges when employees are aware of their employer's provision of inducements beyond promises (Lambert et al., 2003). Considering this feature of subjectivity underlying the concept of psychological contracts, this exploratory study provides insights into employees' awareness and subjective perception of psychological contract overfulfillment. Third, to the author's knowledge, there exists no studies that qualitatively investigate psychological contract overfulfillment. Scholars' understanding of the form of inducements (e.g., salary, bonus pay, opportunities for skill development, etc.) being commonly overfulfilled by employers remains limited. Therefore, this study illuminates the form of inducements being commonly overfulfilled and reported by respondents.

Research Context

The employment of foreign domestic helpers to alleviate the pressure of household chores is common in Asian and Middle Eastern regions. Foreign domestic helpers are workers hired by individual employers from oversea countries (e.g., the Philippines, Indonesia) to provide full-time and live-in domestic services. Foreign domestic helpers (hereafter abbreviated as FDHs) work at their employer's residence to serve members of their employers' household. Their work duties commonly include household cleaning, grocery shopping, child care, and elderly care.

In the employment context of foreign domestic helpers, although employers are obliged to provide at least the minimum wage specified by the labor law to helpers (Labour Department, 2019), employers have the discretion to specify any amount of financial inducements beyond that, either equivalent to or beyond the minimum payment on their employment contract. This context was chosen to investigate the phenomenon of interest for several reasons. First, as individuals, employers of helpers hold high levels of discretion in determining the type and amount of inducements to promise and deliver to their employees. Within this context, more variance in employees' evaluation of the degree of psychological contract fulfillment is expected. Second, employers' high control over decision-making and power to alter the delivered inducements manifest relatively high levels of power inequality in this context. Power inequality is a key pillar supporting the theorization concerning the moderating effect of social dominance orientation in this study. Third, considering that most helpers receive the minimum wage and financial remuneration that are necessary for their basic needs—such as a food allowance (or free food) and accommodation—helpers are expected to be particularly vigilant in monitoring and sensitive in reacting to their employers' fulfillment (or deviation) of their psychological contract. Moreover, I expect high levels of subjectivity to influence helpers' perception of employer promises and their psychological contract. In this employment context, implicit promises are expected to play an important role in shaping helpers' psychological contract evaluation for two major reasons. First, helpers and employers reside in the same apartment. Their intimate exchange relationship with employers may provide more opportunities for helpers to form assumptions and beliefs about what their employer will offer based on repetitive exchange directly with their employer. Second, helpers' perception of promises may be influenced by the information shared by their peers who are in the same job type through their frequent interactions and socialization.

Identifying a context representing an ‘extreme’ case of the concerned phenomenon offers more in-depth insights to researchers (Starbuck, 1992).

In this study, samples consist of foreign domestic helpers and individual employers of helpers residing in three major cities: Hong Kong, Macau, and Singapore. The employment of foreign domestic helpers in these cities is regulated by the labor laws, such that employers are required to provide their foreign domestic helpers with a minimum wage, financial support for food, statutory holidays, annual leave, medical insurance, and long service payment, and to fulfill the live-in requirement by offering helpers accommodation in the same apartment. However, employers of foreign domestic helpers, as individual beings, have the flexibility to negotiate on the exact terms offered to helpers through either verbal or written arrangement, and the discretion to deliver different types or amounts of inducements compared to their initial promises.

Method

Participants. To obtain more comprehensive insights concerning the phenomenon of psychological contract overfulfillment from the perspectives of different stakeholders, I recruited 46 foreign domestic helpers and 34 employers of foreign domestic helpers. The helpers and employers who participated in this study were independent samples who were not in employment relationships with each other. Among the 46 foreign domestic helpers, 98% were female. They had an average age of 38.02 ($SD = 8.94$) and have worked in their existing job for 3.05 years ($SD = 3.06$). 98% of them held a high school diploma or higher level of education. Seventy percent of them were Filipinos, 28% were Indonesians, and 2% were Vietnamese. The majority of them resided in Hong Kong (28%), followed by Macau (37%), and Singapore (2%).

Among the 34 individual employers of foreign domestic helpers, 74% were female. They had an average age of 38.82 ($SD = 8.20$). Eighty-two percent of them held a tertiary

degree or higher level of education. The majority of the employers were Chinese (41%). They were residing in either Hong Kong (85%) or Macau (15%). Table 4 shows a summary of the demographic characteristics of all the participants.

Procedure. Participants were recruited using a combination of convenience and snowball sampling methods (Given, 2008; Miles, Huberman, Huberman, & Huberman, 1994). Specifically, to recruit foreign domestic helpers, I first visited places commonly crowded with eligible participants, such as parks, fast food chain stores, and supermarkets. I randomly approached helpers to invite them to participate in this study. Some helpers completed the interview and referred their friends who met the sampling criteria to take part in this study. Employers of foreign domestic helpers were identified by visiting online forums and social media platforms such as Facebook.

The interviews were largely exploratory in nature at the time of implementation. At the initial stage, I aimed to obtain insights into factors that could influence the emotions of employees working for individual (as opposed to institutional) employers. Data was collected in two steps: (1) semi-structured interviews, and (2) questionnaires. All the semi-structured interviews were audio-taped and conducted in person with the exception of one conducted via Skype. The interviews lasted for an average of 38.57 minutes.

During the interviews, participants were first informed that this study examines the factors that influence the emotions of foreign domestic helpers. After participants gave consent to take part in this research, I began asking a series of questions about the FDH participants' employment history (employer participants' history in hiring FDHs), their work duties (work duties of employer participants' FDHs), financial inducements provided by employers beyond what had been promised in the employment package, and daily interactions with their employers (FDHs). The interview protocols used in the interviews with

FDHs and employers are illustrated in the Appendix I and Appendix II respectively. Finally, participants completed a questionnaire about their demographics.

Content Analyses. The interview data was analyzed using a content analysis approach. From the content analysis approach, qualitative data are collected from participants in verbal form and re-coded into quantifiable format based on major themes (Krippendorff, 1980; McClelland, 1961). The content analysis aimed to identify and quantify the types of overfulfilled terms of psychological contracts from the perspectives of FDHs and employers. The analysis was conducted in several steps. First, from each transcribed interview, relevant phrases that indicated specific inducements that were overfulfilled by employers were extracted. Second, another researcher from the Department of Management and Marketing at the Hong Kong Polytechnic University and I independently reviewed and coded the extracted phrases in a subset of the transcripts (30% of all the transcripts). We then developed a code book of inducement type based on discussions and a review of existing literature (e.g., Guzzo et al., 1994; Lambert et al., 2003; Turnley & Feldman, 2000). Next, we independently coded the extracted phrases from all transcripts, by assigning corresponding inducement types to the phrases. We went through iteration processes that involved repetitive discussions to resolve disagreement. After the processes, the overall percentage of agreement between the two coders was 94% and Krippendorff's alpha was .75, indicating a satisfactory level of agreement (Hallgren, 2012; Krippendorff, 1980).

Table 5 presents representative quotes for the identified key elements of overfulfilled inducements reported. The quotes in the right panel were reported by foreign domestic helpers while those in the left panel were reported by employers of foreign domestic helpers.

Results and Discussion

The results of the content analysis showed that employers in this context commonly and voluntarily provide inducements beyond what had been implicitly or explicitly promised.

Although the employment terms and conditions are subject to the governance of labor laws, employers exercise discretion to provide more-than-promised inducements to their FDHs. Through the coding process, five types of overfulfilled financial inducements and four types of non-financial inducements were identified. Specifically, the major types of overfulfilled financial inducements include “bonus pay”, which refers to irregular cash payment beyond salary (e.g., holiday bonus, random bonus, and non-promised payment for extra work); “salary raise”, which refers to fixed and regular increments in monthly salary; “extra allowance and benefits”, which includes supplementary financial support for employees’ personal needs (e.g., daily expenses for food, utilities and transportation, medical care, and leisure activities); “holidays”, which refer to the granted off-days beyond FDHs’ entitled leaves; and “gifts with financial value”, which refers to tangible objects with non-negligible monetary values (e.g., smartphones and luxury products) given on special occasions (e.g., birthday, Christmas).

The major types of overfulfilled non-financial inducements cover “positive interpersonal treatment”, which includes social behaviors that communicate closeness and respect; “personal support”, which refers to psychological, financial, and interpersonal support given to fulfill helpers’ personal needs in non-work domains; “opportunities for skill development”, which refer to resource provision for enhancing helpers’ future employability and intrinsic motivation; and “autonomy”, which concerns increasing FDHs’ control over the way they complete their work tasks and allocate their time.

Employer Reports of Overfulfilled Inducements. As shown in the left panel of Table 5, employers more frequently reported the overfulfillment of financial inducements than non-financial inducements. Specifically, among all employers, 71% mentioned that they had provided at least one type of excess financial inducement, while 21% of employers reported overfulfilling at least one type of non-financial inducements. Twenty-six percent did not

report any incidents of overfulfilled inducements. The left panel of Table 5 presents the percentage of employers reporting each type of overfulfilled inducement. Among those who reported overfulfilled financial inducements, gifts with financial value was the category mentioned by most employers (67%), followed by bonus pay (63%), salary raise (50%), extra allowance and benefits (33%), and holidays (33%). Among those who reported overfulfilled non-financial inducements, most mentioned the provision of positive interpersonal treatment (86%), followed by personal support (29%), and opportunities for skill development (4%).

FDH Reports of Overfulfilled Inducements. Consistent with the pattern of the employers' responses, there were more reports of overfulfilled financial inducements than those of non-financial inducement among foreign domestic helpers. In particular, 43% of the participants reported at least one type of overfulfilled financial inducements, while 22% reported at least one type of overfulfilled non-financial inducements. 48% did not report any incidents of overfulfilled inducements. The right panel of Table 5 presents the relative frequency of each inducement type reported by the helpers. For helpers who reported overfulfilled financial inducements, most mentioned bonus pay (44%), followed by gifts with financial value (39%), salary raise (39%), holidays (33%), and extra allowance and benefits (11%). Among those who reported overfulfilled non-financial inducements, most mentioned positive interpersonal treatment (80%), followed by personal support (70%), opportunity for skill development (70%), and autonomy (20%).

Overall, the findings of this exploratory study demonstrated that, in the context of foreign domestic helpers' employment, it is more prevalent for both employers and employees to report the overfulfillment of financial inducements. This implies that psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements is likely a frequent phenomenon and allows for the detection of employee responses in the concerned research context than overfulfillment in the form of nonfinancial inducements. Such findings

corroborate past research suggesting that financial inducements constitute the most fundamental and common terms in employment relationships (Lambert, 2011). Indeed, financial inducements (e.g., salaries, bonus pay, and salary raise) are objective and quantifiable in nature, such that employees are more vigilant in monitoring the extent to which employers have met their promises (Morrison & Robinson, 1997).

Theoretically, in the employment context of foreign domestic helpers, underlying the power asymmetry and unequal dependence between employers and employees is the significantly higher degree of control over financial resources and benefits possessed by employers. In the case of psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements, the surplus resources are associated with the same domain in which power asymmetry between helpers and employers exists. The receipt of overfulfilled financial inducements from employers would therefore present a violation of the hierarchical and unequal structure of the employment relationship. Research on social dominance orientation suggests that people high in social dominance orientation endorse behaviors enacted to maintain inequality across groups and to preserve the privileges possessed by groups with high power; in contrast, people low in social dominance orientation tend to respond positively to behaviors and resource reallocation that reduce inequality between groups (Pratto et al., 1994). Hence, in their employment relationship, helpers' social dominance orientation is expected to interact with psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements to predict their attribution and emotions.

Taken these findings and theoretical arguments together, I focused on examining employee reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements in Study 2 and more specifically, salary payment, in Study 3.

Table 4

A Summary of Demographic Characteristics of the Interviewees (Study 1)

	FDH		Employer	
	Female	Male	Female	Male
Gender	45	1	25	9
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	38.02	8.94	38.82	8.20
Tenure in the existing job (in years)	3.05	3.06	-	-

Level of education	FDH		Employer	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Primary school of below	1	2%	4	12%
High school	24	53%	2	6%
Tertiary level	5	11%	13	38%
University or above	15	33%	15	44%

Nationality of FDH		
	Number	Percentage
Filipino	32	70%
Indonesian	13	28%
Vietnamese	1	2%

Nationality of Employer		
	Number	Percentage
American	4	12%
Australian	4	12%
Belgian	1	3%
British	1	3%
Chinese	14	41%
Filipino	2	6%
Indian	5	15%
Indonesian	1	3%
Portuguese	1	3%
Venezuelan	1	3%

Current location of residence	FDH		Employer	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Hong Kong	28	61%	29	85%
Macau	17	37%	5	15%
Singapore	1	2%	-	-

Note: FDH = Foreign domestic helper. Variance in sample size was due to missing responses.

Table 5

Representative Quotations of Overfulfilled Inducements in Individualized Employment Relationships (Study 1)

Category 1: Overfulfilled Financial Inducement	
Sample Quotations from Employers	Sample Quotations from FDHs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonus pay (63%) “I pay her the amount required by the government. But I also pay her extra like a couple hundred dollars during the new year and round up the number for her monthly salary.” (Employer #05, Hong Kong) <p>“There may be consequences, because we upgrade a bonus every month for her, in addition to her salary. So, there is consequence like, overall if that month she does something more that is not meeting our expectation, then we won’t pay her the bonus. But if she is doing relatively fine, okay, relatively well, then will give her that additional bonus” (Employer #20, Hong Kong)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary raise (50%) “I will adjust (the helper’s salary) accordingly with reference to the government. Even by the time that we signed (the employment contract) was HK\$4,410 (the minimum wage the respondent should pay to the helper), when the government adjusted, I give accordingly to that.” (Employer #01, Hong Kong) <p>“Actually, including the extra pocket money we give her, her actual salary now is more than HK\$8,000 on average per month. We are very good in treating her. She joined our family when my daughter was two years old. At that time, my mother-in-law and father-in-law, including myself, would give her HK\$1,000 to HK\$1,500 extra each month”. (Employer #15, Hong Kong)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra allowance and benefits (33%) “The other thing is I know a lot of families will pay for a trip back to home country. And so, my wife is like, "Well, we won't pay just for one, we'll pay for two." Just as an incentive to get you enthused about working here.” (Employer #33, Macau) <p>“She likes to go to cinema, so I just tell her, “Go. Take a friend. Go to cinema”. And I pay for it or she likes to see new things, so I would... I’ve bought her tickets for Ocean Park, for Disneyland or somethings, you know, there are some travel agencies, they do a little trip to somewhere in Hong Kong. I buy her these so she can go with friends” (Employer #12, Hong Kong)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bonus pay (44%) “Every year, they will give me a Christmas bonus. And then every Chinese New Year, they give me like little money like HK\$500 or more.” (Helper #04, Hong Kong) <p>“Sometimes when she has, like the, what's it called? The job... because she has business. So, (the business) is growing, and then when we (helpers) go, and (the employer) give some, like money.” (Helper #46, Hong Kong).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary raise (39%) “Because our employer spent money for us to learn driving. So, I passed it. And then my boss increased my salary.” (Helper #08, Hong Kong) <p>“My boss gave me first \$3,800 (in the beginning of the employment) then when baby was born they give me now \$4,300.” (Helper #26, Macau)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra allowance and benefits (11%) “And then they will give me transportation allowance, food allowance, and the full salary for the vacation. And he’s good with that, he is okay with that.” (Helper #4, Hong Kong)

Sample Quotations from Employers

- **Gifts with financial value (67%)**

“I always reward fashion. Always fashion. Give all the clothes or give something like that” (Employer #24, Hong Kong)

“Oh yes, my husband and I bought her a new phone... I bought her a new phone because I know that is something important to her. Helpers use their phone for communicating with their own family” (Employer #34, Hong Kong)

- **Holidays (33%)**

“If my husband and I take a holiday at say Easter time, going away for one week, we will also let her (the helper) go home for one week. It's not consistent every year because it depends on whether we take a holiday or not, but she gets much more than the standard number of holidays. Also, we give her all the, not the statutory holidays but all the public holidays because my husband and I have off all the public holidays so we will let her have off on those days.” (Employer #09, Hong Kong)

“I don't ask her to do that on weekends (both Saturdays and Sundays). If I ever ask her to come in, like it's for an hour or two on the weekend to babysit. Like if my wife and I have to go some places, or we have a dinner or something like that. Maybe I'll ask her to work a couple of hours.” (Employer #33, Macau)

Sample Quotations from FDHs

- **Gifts with financial value (39%)**

“But even if she goes to the hotel or the restaurant, she brings me a food and dress. She is going to Hong Kong and buy too many, like that. Always she has a present to me.” (Helper #38, Macau)

“My madam has bought me some clothes and bags. My employer is a very good person. He/she knows that I have kids in my family and asked me what I want to buy for the kids and she/he will help. And, I said, “Yes, I want to buy this and that. And I will pay for those things.” But my employer said, “No, I buy it for them.”. (Helper #40, Macau)

- **Holidays (33%)**

“All the red (all the statutory holidays and public holidays in Hong Kong calendar) in calendar. They give me all the red in calendar.” (Helper #04, Hong Kong)

“If they (the respondent's employer) have some vacations outside the country, so they allow me to take my day offs as well.” (Helper #35, Macau)

Category 2: Overfulfilled Non-financial Inducements

Sample Quotations from Employers

- **Positive interpersonal treatment (86%)**

“I celebrate her birthday, and I also give her some clothes for her... back home for her family, and gave her some food which she loves, like the Indian food, she loves some of it. I packed that with her when she was going back to Philippines for holidays, and I told her that you can enjoy with your mother. She was very happy. Always, something or the other.” (Employer #19, Hong Kong)

“We also treat her a meal during her birthday every year. We also give her red packets on her son’s birthday and the new year in Indonesia. She is very contented. People are fair. When you treat them well, they would also treat you well” (Employer #15, Hong Kong).

- **Personal support (29%)**

“But some of my, before my first helper, is like my relatives. I help them to finish and then after two years I help them to go to Canada... now they are resident already. So, they are very happy. Because they make me as a steppingstone. I like helping them. I like helping people.” (Employer #24, Hong Kong)

“I help them (the respondent’s helpers) to finish (the work contract in Hong Kong) and then after two years, I helped them to go to Canada. Directly we helped them to find my friend in Canada. Now, they are (Canadian) residents already. So, they are very happy, because they make me as a steppingstone. I like helping them. I like helping people” (Employer #24, Hong Kong)

- **Opportunities for skill development (4%)**

“Yeah, understand the helper. Not the relation, understand the helper first, how she is, what are her strengths. Like my helper, she's excellent in cooking. She cooks very well. So, I always appreciate her. I see her challenge, "You should excel in this, you're very good at it. Probably this is your biggest challenge, you should develop it and you should grow bigger. Not helper, you should probably open a restaurant or something like that." She is more than happy and always ask me to give me recipe and tells me to share books with her. I encourage her for the positive thing.” (Employer #19, Hong Kong)

Sample Quotations from FDHs

- **Positive interpersonal treatment (80%)**

“When we are out, we consider me as a family. Not a helper. Not really a helper. They treat me like a member of their family. When we are outside, they make sure that I am not hungry or thirsty, but they give me my meal.” (Helper #45, Singapore)

“My employer is a very good person. She knows that I have kids in my family and asked me what I want to buy for the kids and she will help. And I said yes... I want to buy this and that and I will pay for those things”. But my employer said no, she buys for them (the respondent’s kids).” (Helper #40, Macau)

- **Personal support (70%)**

“If me have problem, sick, help me like this. And then money problem in Indonesia and then I ask my boss, and they give. Good. They asked why. I want to borrow. They give. And then every month I give (pay pack).” (Helper #44, Macau)

- **Opportunities for skill development (70%)**

“Because our employer spent money for us to learn driving.” (Helper #08, Hong Kong)

Sample Quotations from Employers	Sample Quotations from FDHs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy (0%) No relevant quotation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autonomy (20%) “The other helper is just to stay at home, clean the house and sometimes if the kid (one of the two kids) is at home, she will take care also when the other kid relies on me, especially the activities of the kids. Like when they are at the school. I used to pick them up and bring them to their school, bring the lunch box, and for their extra-curricular activities. I am the one to manage their (the kids’) time. So sometimes my boss asked me to fix the time of their kids to have extra-curricular activities outside. So, I help her also to decide for the kids.” (Helper #3, Hong Kong)

Note: The numbers in parentheses refer to the percentage of participants who indicated incidence of the specific components in comparison to the total cases in the same overfulfillment (financial or non-financial) category.

Chapter 5

A Field Survey Study (Study 2)

Based on the insights gained from the exploratory interviews, Study 2 empirically tested the main effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on gratitude (Hypothesis 1) and its interaction with social dominance orientation in predicting gratitude (Hypothesis 2). Moreover, this study aimed to further illuminate employees' psychological experience of psychological contract overfulfillment by garnering qualitative evidence for their attribution.

Method

Participants and Procedure. The sample of this study consisted of 97 female foreign domestic helpers, with an average age of 38.36 ($SD = 7.60$). All the participants were Filipino and residing and working in Hong Kong at the time of data collection. A critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954) was adopted to probe the psychological experience of psychological contract overfulfillment among participants and to assess their reactions specific to the recalled experience. The use of a critical incident technique enables researchers to more effectively capture the contextual details and participants' subjective perception of the recalled event (Lee, Bradburn, Johnson, Lin, & Chang, 2019). Specifically, participants were asked to recall and describe: (1) the monthly payment and other financial inducements promised by their employer, (2) a time when their employer ever provided more inducements than promised, and (3) the possible reasons for their employer's provision of unpromised inducements. After recalling, participants filled out the questionnaire which measured their gratitude and social dominance orientation. Because the measures focused on employees' experience and reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment, one participant who indicated a score below 4 (which indicates psychological contract underfulfillment) for the item measuring psychological contract fulfillment was excluded.

Measures

Psychological contract overfulfillment. Psychological contract overfulfillment was assessed with the 1-item measure from Turnley et al. (2003) on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *much less than promised*, 7 = *much more than promised*). The item reads “How much of financial inducements did you actually receive compared to what your current employer had initially promised you?”. This operationalization approach was used because it helps narrow down participants’ perception of psychological contract overfulfillment to a specific type of inducement and facilitates the capture of psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements. While viable alternatives include estimating the exact quantity of financial inducements actually delivered by employers and the amount initially promised by employers, and the polynomial regression approach proposed by Lambert and colleagues, it could be challenging for participants to accurately recall and quantify different types of the financial inducements respectively promised and actually delivered by their employer. Besides, psychological contract researchers are recommended to choose an assessment approach based on the research context of interest—a subjective assessment approach in which participants are asked to evaluate their employer’s overfulfillment in specific inducements based on their own experiences is deemed appropriate, when the employment is characterized by radical shifts and highly subjective interpretation of the meaning of psychological contract terms. By contrast, standardized measurement approach in which participants are asked to evaluate their employers’ overfulfillment in a pre-determined list of inducements presumes universal types of inducements received by participants (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). Therefore, in this study, I adopted a 1-item measure to capture participants’ perception of the degree to which their employer has fulfilled their psychological contract in the form of financial inducements as an aggregated component.

Gratitude. Gratitude was captured using three items adapted from an instrument used in past research (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Spence et al., 2014). The items, “I felt grateful towards my employer”, “I felt a warm sense of appreciation towards my employer”, and “I am thankful towards my employer”, were rated on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree*, 7 = *strongly agree*). Cronbach’s alpha was .93, which suggests a satisfactory level of internal consistency.

Social dominance orientation. The 16-item measure from Pratto et al. (1994) was used to assess social dominance orientation on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = *very negative*, 7 = *very positive*). The instrument evaluates participants’ attitude towards a series of statements about inequality between social groups and consists of two subdimensions: dominance and egalitarianism. Items under egalitarianism were reverse coded. Sample items are “Some groups of people are simply inferior to other groups”, “It’s probably a good thing that certain groups are at the top and other groups are at the bottom”, and “We should strive to make incomes as equal as possible” (reverse coded). Cronbach’s alpha was .82, with a satisfactory level of internal consistency.

Results

Table 6 presents descriptive statistics and correlations among study variables. Preliminary examinations of the correlations among variables showed that psychological contract overfulfillment had a positive association with gratitude ($r = .21, p < .05$), showing that the direction of the psychological contract overfulfillment-gratitude aligns with my prediction.

Hypotheses testing. To test Hypothesis 1, regression analyses were performed. Hypothesis 1 posited that psychological contract overfulfillment would be positively related to employee gratitude. As shown in Table 7, results showed that psychological contract overfulfillment was positively related to gratitude ($b = .19, SE = .09, p < .05$), providing

support for Hypothesis 1. Hypothesis 2 predicted that social dominance orientation would weaken the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and gratitude.

Results revealed that the interaction term of psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation was negatively related to employee gratitude ($b = -.38$, $SE = .13$, $p < .01$). To probe the interaction pattern, I plotted and tested the simple slopes; see Figure 2.

The effect of psychological contract overfulfillment was significant and positive when social dominance orientation was low (effect = $.37$, $SE = .11$, $p < .01$) but was insignificant when social dominance orientation was high (effect = $-.22$, $SE = .15$, ns).

Supplementary analyses. As a supplementary analysis, following the analyses on the survey data, I assessed participants' qualitative responses to the interview question about their attribution of their employers' provision of unpromised inducements. This process helps explicate the participants' underlying cognitive reasoning and the psychological experience of psychological contract overfulfillment. Specifically, I transcribed and analyzed the narrative data provided by participants during recall. The coding and analytic processes involved iterative steps. First, I culled the quotes that were related to employees' sensemaking for their employers' overfulfillment of inducement. Next, I invited the same researcher who analyzed the interview data in Study 1 to take part in a coding process in which we independently coded a subsample of cases (approximately 30% of all cases), we discussed and came up with a code book that lists eleven first-order codes that reflect participants' attribution of employers' provision of unpromised inducements, including "past work, behavior, or personal qualities", "cultural norm or tradition", "empathy", "generosity", "helping", "care", "family identification", "exchange for future work", "retention reward", "liking", and "trust".

Then, we discussed the categorization and the pattern of the aggregate codes while we continuously examined and coded the data. The overall percentage of agreement between the

two coders was 96% and Krippendorff's alpha was .82, indicating a satisfactory level of agreement (Hallgren, 2012; Krippendorff, 1980). After the coding process, we further discussed and resolved cases with disagreement. We then proceeded to group the eleven first-order codes into five major themes in relation to attribution, including (1) "employee internal attribution", which concerns FDHs' personal factors; (2) "employee external attribution", which refers to factors irrelevant to the participants and their employers; (3) "attribution to employers' prosocial motives", which concerns factors related to employers' altruistic and benevolent qualities; (4) "attribution to employer instrumental motives", which concerns factors related to employers' expectations for particular outcomes; and (5) "employee relational attribution", which concerns interpersonal factors related to participants and their employers. Figure 3 presents the coding process and illustrative quotes for each of the identified themes.

Among all participants, 41% indicated employee internal attribution, followed by 38% for attribution to employers' prosocial motives, 24% for employee relational attribution, 10% for attribution to employer instrumental motives, and 8% for employee external attribution. 38% of participants did not provide or could not think of any possible reasons for their receipt of unpromised inducements. Consistent with my theorizing, prosocial motives represent a major category of employer motives being attributed by the participants. Below I offer a more detailed discussion on the major types of attributions.

Internal-external attribution. Based on attribution theory, factors being attributed as the causes of certain outcomes can be broadly differentiated into either internal (factors related to self) or external (factors outside of self) (Kelley & Michela, 1980). Consistent with this notion, some helpers reasoned that their personal qualities and/or behaviors are responsible for their receipt of overfulfilled financial inducements from employers. On one hand, it is rather common for helpers to report internal causes being accountable for their

favorable outcomes, such as “hardworking”, “good performance”, and “personal character”. Specifically, helpers believed that their receipt of unpromised inducements were given as rewards for their hard work and superior performance in carrying out job tasks, or that their employers liked them as a person. On the other hand, a small portion of helpers reported external factors that are neither related to self nor employer motives, including “cultural customs” and “job context”. In particular, some helpers believed that their employers provided them with bonus pay during festive seasons because of their cultural practices and that their job tasks are demanding which justified their receipt of unpromised inducements.

The finding concerning a higher portion of helpers reporting internal attribution than external attribution is generally consistent with research on attribution which suggests that individuals generally exhibit biases in attributing positive and favorable outcomes to internal rather than external factors due to self-enhancement motives (Kelley & Michela, 1980). While informative, internal-external attribution is not derived from the theoretical perspective of interest in this study. Specifically, social projection theory explains why individuals come to assume that others share a similar belief, value, attitude, and perceptions as they do (Allport, 1924b; Krueger, 2008). Applying this theoretical perspective to examine the moderating role of social dominance orientation which concerns individuals’ beliefs about intergroup inequality and intergroup relations (Pratto et al., 1994). Building on this conceptualization, social dominance orientation should influence individuals’ sense-making and attribution focusing on neither simply self nor merely another person, but how another outgroup (more powerful) member sees and intends towards oneself.

Attributions to employer motives. Consistent with organizational research on positive behaviors in the workplace and my theorizing, employer motives represent another major category of factors being attributed as the cause of employer provision of unpromised inducements. Prosocial motives concern individuals’ altruistic motives to voluntarily engage

in behaviors without the expectation to obtain rewards or returns from the beneficiaries (Organ, 1988; Rioux & Penner, 2001). Helpers who attribute their receipt of unpromised financial inducements to employers' prosocial motives mentioned several factors, including their employers' personal characteristics related to prosociality (e.g., generosity, empathy, care) and their other-oriented behaviors (e.g., intending to care for the helper, showing concerns for the helpers' personal needs, expressing appreciation for the helper's contributions, genuine intention to help, engaging in perspective taking).

In addition to employers' prosocial motives, helpers also mentioned employers' instrumental motives as a plausible cause of their receipt of unpromised inducements. Instrumentality concerns individuals' expectations to obtain desirable outcomes in the future on the basis of one's current behaviors (Hui et al., 2000). Consistent with research suggesting that instrumental and self-centered concerns underlie individuals' positive behaviors (Cheung et al., 2014; Adam M. Grant & David M. Mayer, 2009), findings in this study demonstrated that helpers who attributed their receipt of unpromised inducements to employers' instrumental motives focused on describing several types of returns anticipated by their employer (e.g., increase in work effort, improvement or maintenance of good performance, increase in the helpers' dependency and hence loyalty to the job) and conditions on which unpromised inducements were given (e.g., superior performance exhibited by the helper, overtime work hours previously inputted to the job).

Relational attributions. Finally, some helpers attributed their employers' provision of unpromised inducements to factors regarding the relationship quality and interactions with their employers. In the literature, attributing an outcome or incident to relational factors in dyadic relationships is captured by "relational attribution" (Eberly et al., 2011). This form of attribution can be distinguished from internal-external attribution in that it represents an independent locus of causality and involves ascribing the cause of overfulfilled inducements

to factors concerning both a self- and other-related component (both parties in a social relationship). Specifically, helpers in this study commonly indicated interpersonal liking from their employer or their employers' family members, their employer's trust, and/or mutual trust between them and their employer as a cause for the favorable outcomes received. Our findings are consistent with prior research on employees' attributional process subsequent to social experience in dyadic relationships (e.g., Burton, Taylor, & Barber, 2014; Krasikova & LeBreton, 2012).

Based on these findings, I build upon social projection theory to propose attribution to employers' prosocial motives as a central mechanism accounting for why employees experience varied levels of gratitude towards employers following psychological contract overfulfillment depending on their social dominance orientation. Although employers' instrumental motives are also a plausible attribution for the cause of unpromised inducements from employers, prior research has yielded inconclusive evidence regarding recipients' positive reactions to instrumental others, making it difficult for us to argue for a definite relationship between attribution to employers' instrumental motives and employee gratitude. For instance, Allen and Rush (1998) investigated the relationship between followers' citizenship behavior and supervisor reactions. Their findings showed that only altruistic attribution (but not instrumental attribution) of follower citizenship behavior was predictive of supervisors' evaluation and reward recommendations for the followers. Moreover, compared to high power others, low-power individuals have been found to be less likely to engage in cynical and instrumental attributions about others' intention when they receive resources from another party in their social relationships (Inesi, Gruenfeld, & Galinsky, 2012). Therefore, I did not theorize attribution to employers' instrumental motives as a competing mechanism that mediates the interaction effect of psychological contract overfulfillment and social dominance orientation on gratitude.

Discussion

Building on the insights garnered from the exploratory study, Study 2 was a survey study conducted using the critical incident technique approach to probe the psychological and attributional processes of foreign domestic helpers who experienced different levels of psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements. Results provided preliminary support for the main effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on gratitude and its interaction effect with social dominance orientation on gratitude. Closer inspections of the recalled data revealed that helpers may perceive multiple explanations for the positive outcome (the receipt of unpromised inducements and their experience of psychological contract overfulfillment). Based on social projection theory and the analyzed data, I found that helpers may simultaneously attribute the receipt of unpromised inducements to one or multiple causes. Attribution to employers' prosocial motives was identified as a particularly theoretically plausible explanation accounting for how and why social dominance orientation could influence employee gratitude felt toward their employer following the perception of psychological contract overfulfillment. To empirically test the full research model, I conducted a scenario-based experiment (Study 3) which is reported in the following chapter.

Table 6

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations of Key Variables (Study 2)

Variables	Mean	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3
1. Psychological contract overfulfillment	4.98	1.01	-		
2. Gratitude	6.11	.93	.21*	(.93)	
3. Social dominance orientation	2.88	.76	-.12	-.32**	(.82)

Note. $N=97$. Where appropriate, Cronbach's alphas are displayed on the diagonal in parentheses.

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

Table 7

Results of Regression Analyses (Study 2)

Predictor	Dependent variable: Gratitude			
	Model 1		Model 2	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Constant	6.07***	.09	6.07***	.09
Psychological contract overfulfillment (PCO)	.19*	.09	.08	.09
Social dominance orientation (SDO)			-.39**	.11
PCO x SDO			-.38**	.13
<i>R</i> ²	.04		.17	
ΔR^2	.04*		.17***	

Note. *N*=97.

* *p*<.05. ** *p*<.01 *** *p*<.001.

Figure 2

Simple Slope Plot for the Interaction Effect of Psychological Contract Overfulfillment and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) on Employee Gratitude (Study 2)

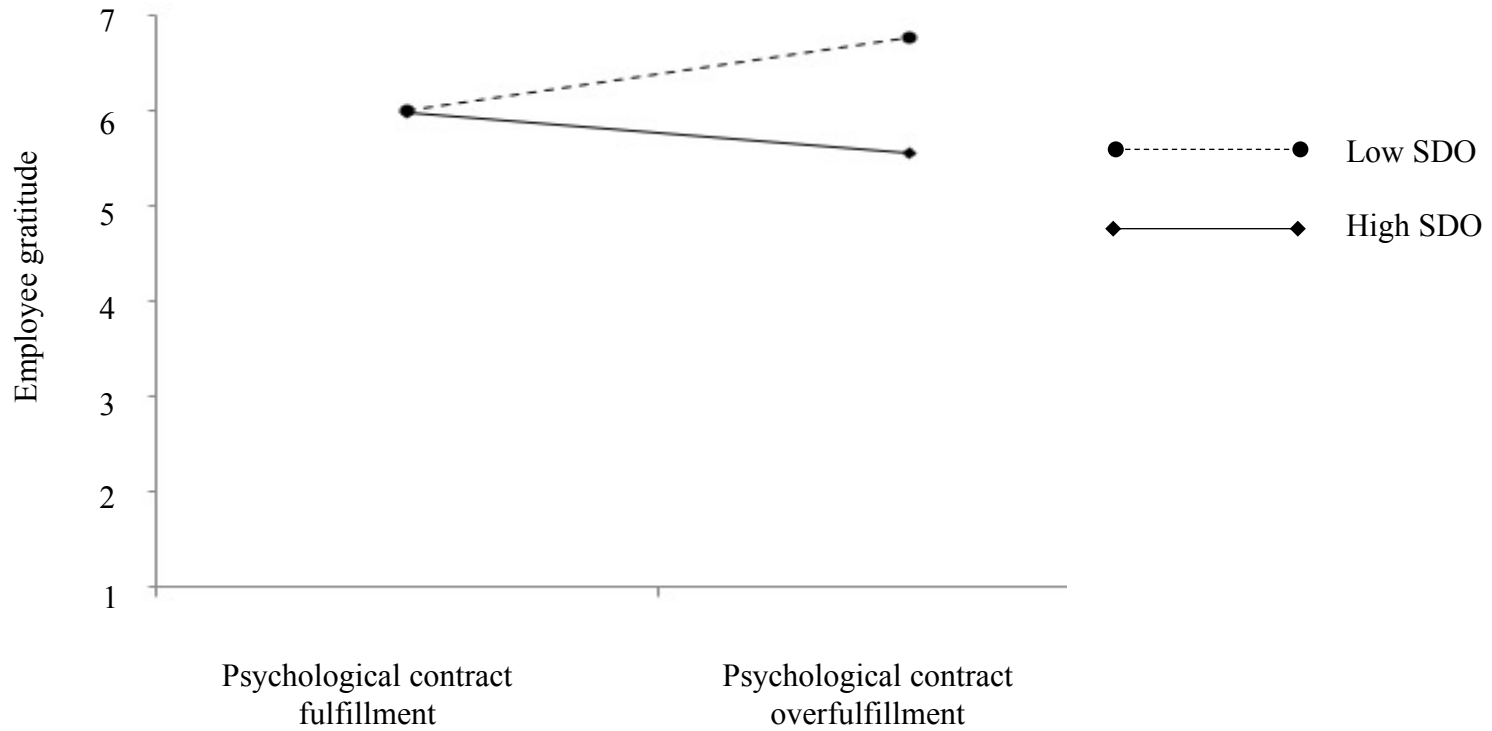
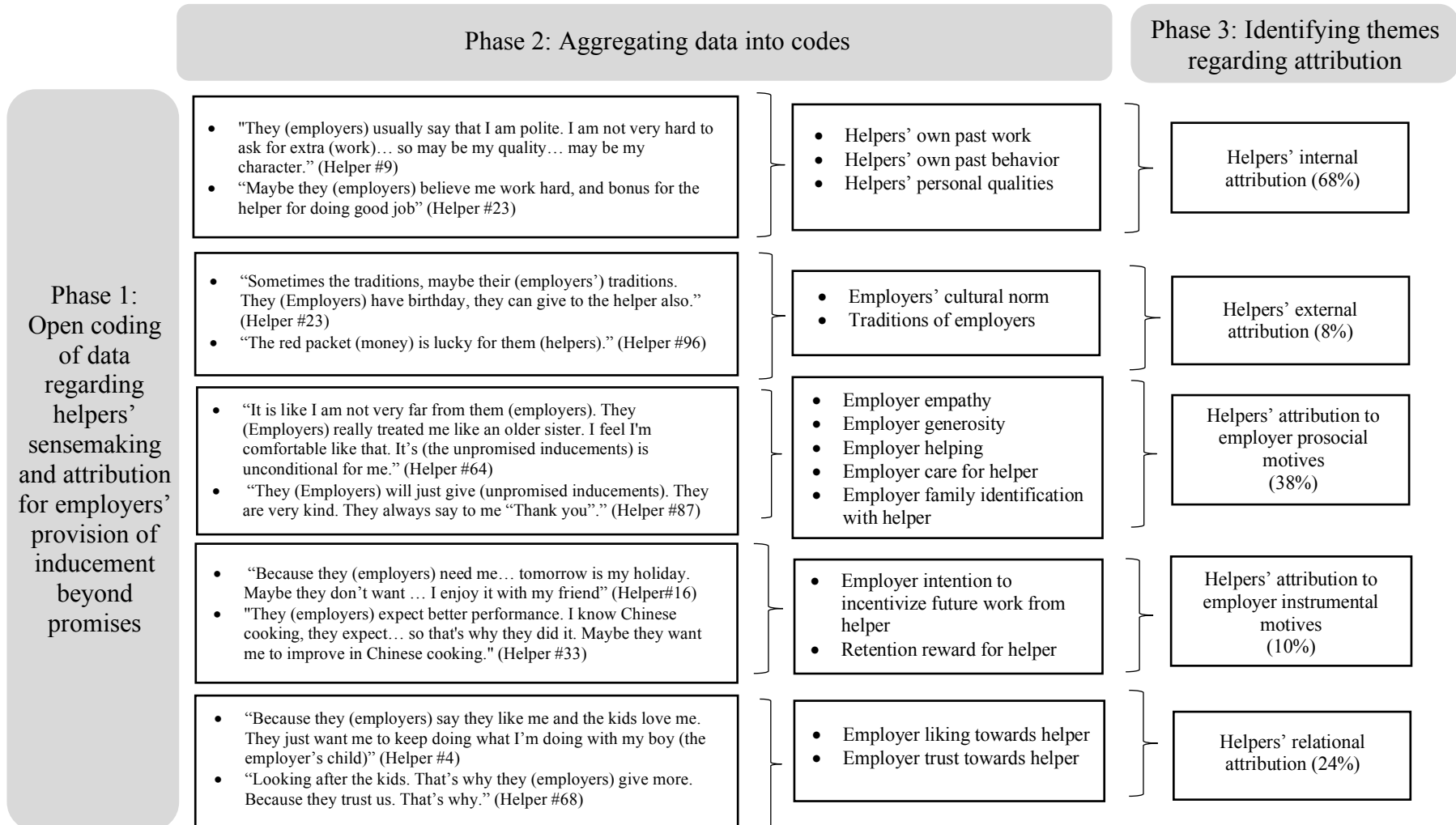


Figure 3
Coding Process for Mechanisms Related to Employer-Related Attributions (Study 2)



Note: The numbers in parentheses refer to the percentage of participants who indicated responses corresponding to the specific themes in relation to attribution.

Chapter 6

An Experiment (Study 3)

Study 3, a scenario-based experiment, was conducted with a few objectives. First, this study facilitates constructive replication of the findings yielded in Study 2. Second, I performed a test of all the hypotheses in the proposed theoretical model. Third, by adopting an experimental approach to explicitly manipulate individuals' perception of psychological contract overfulfillment and assess their subsequent attribution and emotion, I sought to address the methodological limitation associated with common method biases in Study 2 and to strengthen causality for the findings.

Method

Participants and Design. Participants were 192 participants from Academic Prolific, a UK-based online crowdsourcing platform. Because majority of the foreign domestic helpers who took part in Studies 1 and 2 were female (with the exception of one male participant in Study 1), only female participants were recruited for this study to rule out alternative explanations concerning participants' demographic background in this replication attempt. All participants received £1.25 for completing the online experiment. Participants had an average age of 33.40 ($SD = 11.61$). The majority of them were White (92.20%). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions (psychological contract overfulfillment: high vs. low). The sample size was predetermined by posting 200 available participant slots with the aim of obtaining at least 80 per cell. Eight participants who indicated their gender as male were excluded.

In the beginning of the study, participants were presented with information about the objectives of this research and were then asked to provide consent to participate in this study. Participants were informed that they would take part in a scenario study about employee emotion in employment relationships. They were asked to imagine themselves looking to

work as a nanny and think about how they may feel and react. The degree of psychological contract overfulfillment was manipulated by varying the final amount of salary payment delivered by the employer. After reading the scenario, participants were asked to respond to a series of questions which serve as manipulation checks and assess their attribution, gratitude, social dominance orientation, and other personal and demographic characteristics.

Manipulation. In the presented scenario, participants were told to imagine themselves as a nanny looking for a family to work for through an employment agency. The agency informed the participants about the tasks that nannies typically have and later invited the participants to attend an interview with a potential employer. During the interview, the potential employer explained. “I am looking for a live-in nanny to take care of my child and handle regular household chores for my family. The nanny's tasks and work hours will vary daily according to my schedule and needs. When the nanny is needed no more, I will provide one-month prior notice and return to the agency for the termination procedure.” Next, the scenario informed the participants that the potential employer decided to offer them the job after more discussions. The employer promised to pay them the monthly salary of £2000 and to compensate for their overtime work based on a rate of £5 per hour. The participants then read that they agreed with the employment terms and took the offer. The scenario then went on to explain that the participants followed the employer’s instructions and tried to fulfill their obligations during the first month of the employment. This information serves to hold participants’ perception of their own contributions to the employment relationships constant, because such a perception may influence their evaluation of the degree to which the employer fulfilled their psychological contract (Lambert, 2011). At the end, the scenario stated that the employer was expected to pay the participants a total monthly salary of £2030 (i.e., £2000 stated salary + £30 overtime pay) and the amount of monthly salary they actually received from the employer.

In the condition of high psychological contract overfulfillment, participants read that their employer paid them £2500, which is £470 more than the amount they were initially promised. In the condition of low psychological contract overfulfillment, participants read that their employer paid them £2050, which is £20 more than the amount they were initially promised. Please see Appendix III for the full text of the scenario used for manipulation.

Measures

After imagining themselves to be in the assigned scenario, participants first answered two manipulation check questions. The first question required participants to indicate the exact amount of salary payment they received from the employer: “According to the scenario, how much of total monthly salary (including overtime pay) did you actually receive compared to what the employer had promised you during the interview?” (1 = £2050, 2 = £2500). Next, participants were asked to indicate their response to a 1-item measure adapted from Turnley et al. (2003) to measure psychological contract fulfillment on a 7-point Likert scale (1 = *much less than promised*, 7 = *much more than promised*).

Then, participants indicated their level of attribution to employers’ prosocial motives. The approach of operationalizing attribution greatly varies depending on the nature of attribution. Therefore, I followed prior research (e.g., Hershcovis & Barling, 2010) to develop a 3-item scale to measure attribution to employers’ prosocial motives. This scale was pilot tested with an independent sample of foreign domestic helpers. The scale of attribution to employers’ prosocial motives was validated in an independent study conducted on a sample of 196 foreign domestic helpers. Results showed that the scale has a satisfactory level of reliability with a Cronbach’s alpha of .88. The items include “The employer has a genuine concern for my welfare”, “The employer wants to help me”, and “Because my employer cares about my interests”. After reporting their attribution, participants responded to the same items used to measure gratitude and social dominance orientation as in Study 2.

Results

Table 7 presents the descriptive statistics and intercorrelations among the key variables.

Manipulation check. Whereas all participants in the low overfulfillment condition correctly indicated that they received £2050, 96.9% of the participants in the high overfulfillment condition correctly reported that they received £2500 from the employer. All participants' responses were included for data analyses. Regarding the second manipulation check question, results of ANOVA showed that, compared to those in the low overfulfillment condition, participants in the high overfulfillment condition reported higher scores for this item ($M_{\text{high overfulfillment}} = 6.61$, $SD_{\text{high overfulfillment}} = .67$; $M_{\text{low overfulfillment}} = 5.07$, $SD_{\text{low overfulfillment}} = .30$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .69$). Thus, I conclude that the manipulation was effective.

Hypotheses testing. An ANOVA was performed to test Hypothesis 1. Results showed that participants in the high overfulfillment condition reported a significantly higher level of gratitude than those in the low overfulfillment condition ($M_{\text{high overfulfillment}} = 6.24$, $SD_{\text{high overfulfillment}} = .82$; $M_{\text{low overfulfillment}} = 5.60$, $SD_{\text{low overfulfillment}} = 1.31$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .08$). Therefore, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

To examine Hypothesis 2, a moderated regression analysis was conducted. Results demonstrated that the interaction term between treatment condition and social dominance orientation had a negative association with gratitude ($b = -.48$, $SE = .17$, $p < .01$). Specifically, as shown in Figure 4, results of simple slope analyses showed that psychological contract overfulfillment was positively related to gratitude among participants low in social dominance (effect = 1.08, $SE = .22$, $p < .001$) but unrelated to gratitude among those high in social dominance orientation (effect = .19, $SE = .22$, *ns*).

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics and Intercorrelations of Key Variables (Study 3)

Variables	Mean	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4
1. Condition ^a	5.85	.93	-			
2. Attribution to employer prosocial motive	5.05	1.16	.10	(.92)		
3. Gratitude	5.93	1.14	.27**	.66**	(.95)	
4. Social dominance orientation	2.07	1.06	.002	-.11	-.06	(.93)

Note. $N=192$. Where appropriate, Cronbach's alphas are displayed on the diagonal in parentheses.

^a Condition (1=high overfulfillment, 0=low overfulfillment).

* $p < .05$. ** $p < .01$.

To test the mediating role of attribution to employers' prosocial motives specified in Hypothesis 3, I conducted analyses using the SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017, Model 4). Results of bootstrapping based on 5,000 resamples showed that attribution to employers' prosocial motives did not mediate the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude (effect = .15, $SE = .11$, 95% CI [-.05, .38]). Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was not supported.

Next, I tested the first-stage moderated mediation model specified in Hypothesis 4 using SPSS PROCESS macro (Hayes, 2017, Model 7). Results of bootstrapping based on 5,000 resamples showed that the indirect relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and gratitude through attribution to employers' prosocial motives was significantly positive among participants low in social dominance orientation (effect = .46, $SE = .19$, 95% CI [.15, .88]), because the 95% lower and the upper confidence intervals did not encompass zero. However, the relationship became significantly negative among those high in social dominance orientation (effect = -.17, $SE = .14$, 95% CI [-.45, -.11]). The 95% confidence intervals around the index of moderated mediation did not include zero (effect = -.34, $SE = .13$, 95% CI [-.63, -.11]). Therefore, Hypothesis 4 was also supported.

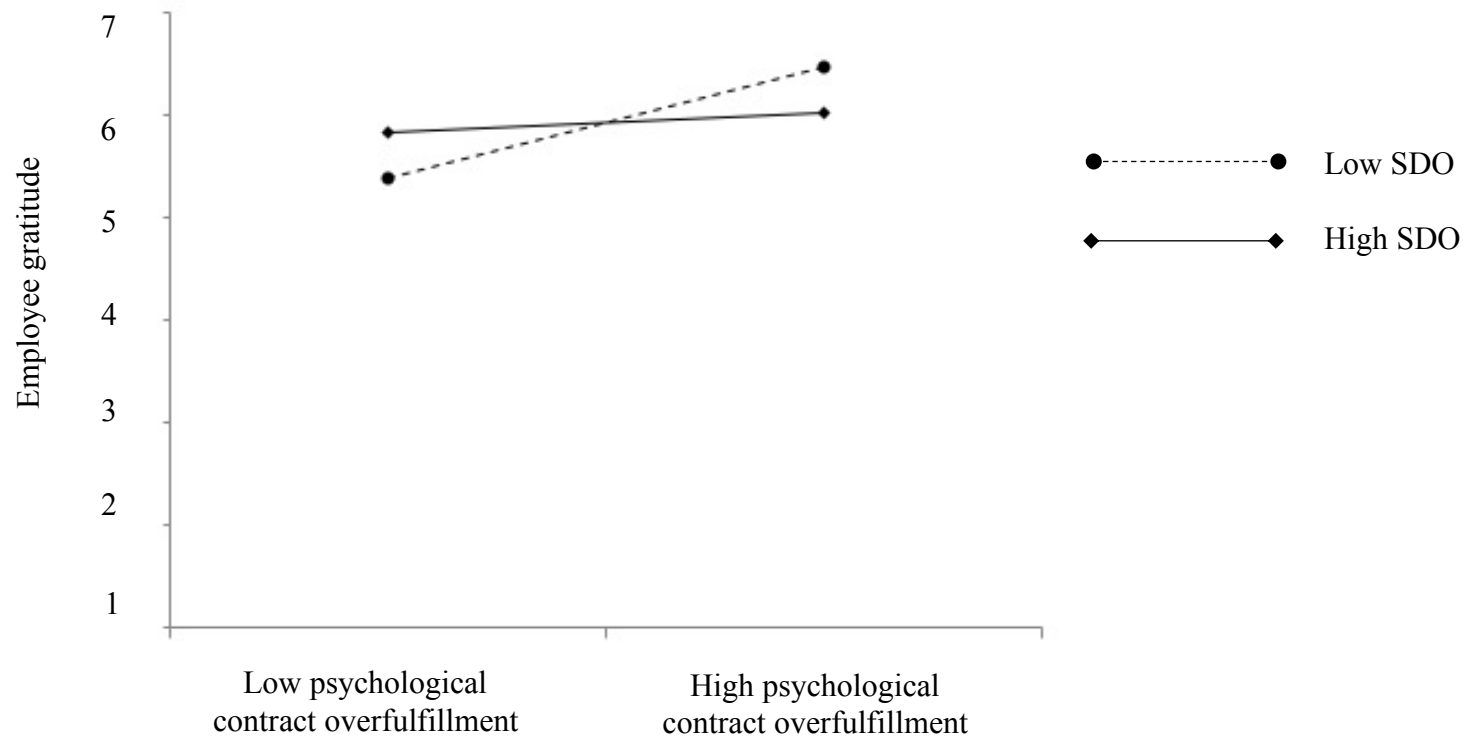
Discussion

The results of Study 3 established strengthened empirical support for the causal relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and gratitude. Using a scenario-based experiment, I find that psychological contract overfulfillment was positively associated with gratitude. However, attribution to employers' prosocial motives did not account for the positive relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude. Rather, the positive indirect association between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude was contingent on employees' social dominance orientation: among employees low in social dominance orientation, psychological contract overfulfillment

engendered higher feelings of gratitude by leading employees to attribute unpromised inducements as a favorable outcome motivated by employers' prosocial motives, whereas employees high in social dominance orientation did not exhibit similarly positive cognitive and affective reactions.

Figure 4

Simple Slope Plot for the Interaction Effect of Psychological Contract Overfulfillment and Social Dominance Orientation (SDO) on Employee Gratitude (Study 3)



Chapter 7

General Discussion

Summary of Findings

To better understand individuals' reactions to the provision of surplus inducements in individualized employment relationships, this study explores the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and employee gratitude. Drawing on social projection theory, this dissertation study investigated employees' social dominance orientation as a boundary condition that determines their cognitive and affective responses to psychological contract overfulfillment. Three studies have been conducted to illuminate the phenomenon and to test the hypotheses. The findings of an exploratory study (Study 1) showed that provision of surplus inducements, particularly those financial in nature, is prevalent in individualized employment relationships. The results of a field survey study (Study 2) provided preliminary support for a positive association between psychological contract overfulfillment and gratitude. The findings also demonstrated that only employees low in social dominance orientation, but not those high in social dominance orientation, experienced a higher degree of gratitude following the perception of psychological contract overfulfillment. Results yielded from an experimental study (Study 3) replicated the findings from Study 2. Although there was no support for the mediating role of attribution to employers' prosocial motives in the relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and gratitude, results of Study 3 showed that the mediating role of attribution to employers' prosocial motives was contingent on social dominance orientation, such that only employees low in social dominance orientation would come to attribute the provision of unpromised inducements to employers' prosocial motives and hence experience higher levels of gratitude.

Implications for Theory

This research provides several contributions to the literature. First, the findings of this study contribute to the psychological contract literature by providing a complementary lens for understanding and predicting employee reactions to psychological contract appraisal. Social exchange theory has been one of the most important theoretical perspectives for investigating the consequences of psychological contract breach (Zhao et al., 2007). The central premise of these perspectives (Blau, 1964) is that employees may recalibrate their behaviors according to what they receive from their employer as the major resource exchange partner in the relationship. This view has received substantial support in past studies—employees have negative reactions towards concepts associated with the negative end of psychological contract fulfillment (e.g., psychological contract breach, psychological contract violation) (see Alcover et al., 2017 for relevant reviews; Coyle-Shapiro et al., 2019). Following the perspective of social exchange theory, it can be presumed that psychological contract overfulfillment would lead to employee reciprocation of positive cognitions and emotions. This study found evidence supporting that psychological contract overfulfillment has a generally positive relationship with employee gratitude. Besides, it yielded findings concerning how and when employees experience higher levels of gratitude following psychological contract overfulfillment. Specifically, consistent with the perspective of social projection theory, findings in Studies 2 and 3 showed that employees' feelings of gratitude towards their employer subsequent to perceiving psychological contract overfulfillment depends on their social dominance orientation as an individual characteristic.

Findings in this study also enrich our understanding of the implications of psychological contract overfulfillment as an under-explored concept in the literature. Thus far, research on psychological contracts has been largely interested in how psychological contract breach and violation that concerns a deficiency in received inducements compared to

employers' initial promises may impair employees' functioning and result in undesirable work outcomes (Alcover et al., 2016; Coyle-Shapiro, Costa, Doden, & Chang, 2019). By recruiting participants with experience receiving unpromised inducements from employers in a field survey study (Study 2) and directly manipulating the degree of psychological contract overfulfillment in an experiment (Study 3), this research offers insights into whether, how, and when employees may or may not positively respond to psychological contract breach and violation that concerns the receipt of surplus inducements in comparison to employer initial promises.

Moreover, the findings from this research shed light on the element of power asymmetry inherent in the nature of employment relationships. While existing theoretical perspectives in the psychological contract literature are insightful in explaining employees' reactions to varied degrees of psychological contract fulfillment, limited propositions account for how employees make sense of and respond to variations in resource provision by their powerful employer. This research showed that providing unpromised financial inducements generally promotes a positive feeling of appreciation among employees; however, the positive effect of overfulfillment on gratitude was not identical across employees. On the basis of social projection theory (Allport, 1924a; Krueger, 2008), the evidence from this study supports the argument that employees' endorsement of power and hierarchical difference between social groups could be generalized to influence their perception of employment relationships. Employees' social dominance orientation influences their tendency to engage in social projection to guide their responses to the interactions with their employer. Specifically, only employees low in social dominance orientation are likely to attribute overfulfilled inducements to employers' prosocial motives and subsequently feel more grateful to their employer. Among employees high in social dominance orientation, psychological contract overfulfillment was not linked to attribution to employers' prosocial

motives nor gratitude (rather than a negative indirect relationship between psychological contract overfulfillment and gratitude through attribution to employers' prosocial motives). One possible explanation is that employees high in social dominance orientation perceive greater psychological distance from their employer, making them experience a breakdown of social projection processes rather than motivating their projection of a hostile and competitive intergroup view onto their employer (Ames, 2004; Ames et al., 2012).

Relatedly, drawing on social projection theory, this study also advances the psychological contract literature by exploring the boundary conditions under which favorable appraisal of psychological contracts can be translated into positive and functional outcomes. Prior studies have explored the moderating role of ideology in the relationship between degree of psychological contract fulfillment and individual outcomes (Edwards, Rust, McKinley, & Moon, 2003). For example, Lee, Chaudhry, and Tekleab (2014) found that the negative association between psychological contract breach and employee task performance was the strongest when employees had high exchange ideology and low perceived organizational support. The authors reasoned that, given that employment relationships are maintained with a reciprocal exchange of resources between employers and employees, the degree to which employees endorse the norm of reciprocity in social relationships should influence their reactions to deficient receipt of promised resources. This research further adds to this line of work by highlighting another key feature of employment relationships: power asymmetry, in which employers have a disproportionately higher degree of power and control over valued resources and major decisions in the employment than employees (Morrison & Robinson, 1997). Taking this feature of power asymmetry into consideration, I propose on the basis of social projection theory that employees' ideological belief about power inequality may affect how likely low-power parties (employees) may project their own beliefs and characteristics onto higher-power parties (employers) in an employment relationship and

hence, their subsequent attribution and feelings of gratitude. Results of a field survey study (Study 2) and an experiment (Study 3) yielded empirical evidence supporting employees' social dominance orientation as an individual trait that plays a role in social projection and attributional processes.

The findings in this study corroborate prior research by demonstrating that attribution is a proximal and cognitive mechanism that explains employees' emotion experienced toward psychological contract appraisal. Lester et al. (2002) found that psychological contract breach in the form of deficit inducement can lead employees to attribute conscious intent to organizations failing to live up their promises; employees and other agents in a higher hierarchical rank within an organization attributed psychological contract breach to different causes. Their study provides preliminary evidence showing the role of objective (or actual) power difference in affecting individuals' attribution of psychological contract underfulfillment by employers. Extending Lester et al. (2002)'s work, the findings in this study further demonstrated that individuals' subjective beliefs about power differences across social groups influence their attribution of psychological contract appraisal and in turn, their emotion.

Finally, this study also advances the intergroup relation literature by showing the implications of social dominance orientation for low-power individuals. Social dominance orientation is a central concept in social dominance theory, which was established to explain why and how societies are structured in a hierarchical way to minimize group conflict by creating consensus on ideologies that maintain and promote the superiority of one group over others (Pratto et al., 1994; Sidanius, Pratto, Martin, & Stallworth, 1991). Thus far, research has focused on understanding how social dominance orientation may influence members of superior groups to suppress policies that threaten their existing privileges and engage in behaviors (e.g., prejudice, discrimination, aggression) that suppress the rise of inferior groups

(Khan et al., 2018). By showing social dominance orientation as a personal attribute that affects employees' gratitude experienced subsequent to psychological contract overfulfillment, the findings of this study may shed light on the implications of social dominance orientation for members in low-power and inferior groups.

Implication for Practice

This research offers important practical implications for compensating and motivating employees with contractual terms in employment relationships. To attract and retain talent, organizations may opt to provide an assortment of inducements and benefits to their employees—sometimes more than what they were obligated to offer. As Susanna Gallani pinpointed in a recent article featuring her research, employees tend to go beyond their role expectations at work to restore the balance if they feel they are being provided with more than what they thought they would earn (Blanding, 2018). This notion is consistent with the dominant view of social exchange theory in the psychological contract research—the greater the provision of inducements, the merrier employees would be and the more contributions they would put into their employment relationship for reciprocation.

This research suggests that this well-documented social exchange perspective may not necessarily hold for all employees. The primary implication of this study is that, although providing more inducements than promises generally increases employees' appreciation, some employees may feel indifferent to such a positive treatment. Results of the current research showed that only employees with a more egalitarian ideology toward power hierarchy would come to appreciate unpromised and non-obligatory inducements provided by employers. Although ideology is an individual trait which is mostly non-malleable, individual employers and organizations may focus on designing interventions, implementing policies, and recalibrating social interactions that signal cues of lower hierarchical and power difference between themselves and employees.

Limitations and Discussion for Future Research

This study is subject to several limitations. One major limitation is the focus on psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements, leaving unanswered questions concerning the applicability of social projection theory to understand employee reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of non-financial inducements. The decision to focus on psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements was motivated by both theoretical and empirical rationale. Theoretically, financial contract terms are transactional, observable, and calculative in nature, such that employees are generally more vigilant in monitoring employers' payment (Morrison & Robinson, 1997) and that employee appraisals of specific episodes of psychological contract overfulfillment would be less affected by their interaction history with employers (Montes & Irving, 2008; Rousseau, 1995; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993). Empirically, insights obtained in the exploratory interviews in Study 1 revealed that employer overfulfillment of financial contract terms was more common in the employment context of interest. However, future research is needed to replicate the findings in this study with psychological contract terms that are non-monetary in nature (e.g., opportunities for skill development, respect, job security, fairness in treatment).

Although this study provides insights into the implications of psychological contract overfulfillment to employee cognitive and affective outcomes, the findings of this research could not address the question of whether and how psychological contract underfulfillment and overfulfillment may be conceptually and qualitatively different from each other. Based on social projection theory, this research suggests that employees low in social dominance orientation tend to react to psychological contract overfulfillment more favorably by exhibiting attribution to employers' prosocial motives and increased feelings of gratitude due to their more benign and cooperative view of intergroup relations. Employees high in social

dominance orientation tend to be indifferent to surplus inducements and psychological contract overfulfillment by employers. However, it is unclear whether the same theoretical perspective and logic would apply to explain employees' reactions to psychological contract underfulfillment. Following the same perspective associated with social projection theory, employees high in social dominance orientation may also be expected to be indifferent to psychological contract underfulfillment and deprivation by higher-power others such as their employer due to their endorsement and internalization of inequality across social groups and the privileges possessed by higher-power others. To further illuminate the conceptual distinction and implications of psychological contract overfulfillment and underfulfillment, future studies may adopt a research design and instruments to capture both employees' perceptions of overfulfillment and underfulfillment.

Another limitation of this study refers to the sample characteristics, which raises concerns about the generalizability of the findings across other occupational contexts. Specifically, the samples in the exploratory study (Study 1) and the field survey (Study 2) consist of female foreign domestic helpers. Past research has shown that, compared to males, females generally hold lower levels of social dominance orientation due to lower status ascribed to their social category (Sidanius, Levin, Liu, & Pratto, 2000; Sidanius & Pratto, 1999). In order to rule out participant gender as an alternative explanation in the findings, only females were recruited for Study 3. This decision does introduce the question of how generalizable the findings are to male employees. Relatedly, due to the salient power difference between foreign domestic helpers and their individual employers, responses of the participants in field survey study might be subject to social desirability bias (Arnold & Feldman, 1981). This concern has been reflected in the generally high levels of gratitude reported by participants in Study 2. To address these limitations, I encourage future work to replicate my findings with mixed-gender or male samples.

Moreover, this research focuses on attribution to employers' prosocial motives as a mediating mechanism but there could be alternative factors being attributed as the cause of psychological contract overfulfillment. From the attribution theory perspective, individuals can simultaneously attribute an outcome to multiple causes (Weiner, 1985). In support of this notion, research has demonstrated evidence showing that beneficiaries can attribute benefactors' positive behavior to multiple motives of the benefactors (e.g., Adam M Grant & David M Mayer, 2009). Hence, future research is encouraged to test alternative forms of attribution in mediating the effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on employee outcomes.

Finally, this study can be further extended to consider other, more distal forms of employee outcomes in response to psychological contract overfulfillment, such as employee work effort and in-role and extra-role performance. This study is among the first to provide direct evidence linking employee emotion and the perception of psychological contract overfulfillment. Gratitude has been widely argued and supported as a functional emotion associated with various positive behaviors, including prosocial behavior (Sun et al., 2019), organizational citizenship behavior (Spence et al., 2014), and moral behavior (McCullough et al., 2001). To provide more informed and practical insights concerning the effects of psychological contract overfulfillment to managers and organizations, future research may build upon my findings to further investigate the direct effect of psychological contract overfulfillment on other downstream consequences, and whether gratitude may translate the positive experience of psychological contract overfulfillment into other functional behaviors.

Conclusion

Psychological contract overfulfillment has been an underexplored concept in the literature. With the rise of individualized employment relationships in the modern work context, in this study I built upon prior research and social projection theory to examine

whether, how, and when employee psychological contract overfulfillment is positively related to gratitude. Across three studies, I found that, contrary to the implicit assumptions associated with the existing theories in the literature, psychological contract overfulfillment does not always predict feelings of appreciation. When experiencing psychological contract overfulfillment in the form of financial inducements, only employees with low social dominance orientation feel grateful towards their employer, because they believe the provision of overfulfilled financial inducements was motivated by their employer's prosocial motives. This research sheds light on the psychological implications of psychological contract overfulfillment and individual difference in ideological beliefs as a moderating factor that influences employee reactions to psychological contract overfulfillment.

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Appendix I

Interview Protocol (Foreign Domestic Helper Interviews in Study 1)

All interviews were conducted in semi-structured format. This protocol shows the main categories of questions and the follow-up questions used as probes when the respondents did not address the points with their general narrative. Some follow-up questions asked during the interviews were not listed below.

About Employment and Background

1. Tell me about your employment history and the current employment status.
 - a. Have you worked in other countries before you came to Hong Kong?
 - b. How long have you been working for the current employer?
2. Tell me about the profile of your employer.
 - a. What is the occupation of your employer?
 - b. How many people and pets are there in your employer's family unit?
 - c. Are you the only domestic helper in your employer's family unit?
 - d. Are you staying in your employer's apartment or in boarding house?
3. Tell me about your employment package, including salary and fringe benefits.
 - a. Does your employer pay you based on the standard of minimum wage or more than that?
 - b. Does your employer grant you more holidays than the statutory holidays in Hong Kong?
 - c. Does your employer offer you any other subsidies and fringe benefits?
4. Tell me about your daily work routine.
 - a. What time do you get up? What time do you go to bed?
 - b. What are your main work duties? [In cases where there are more than one domestic helpers in the employer's family unit] What are the main work duties of other domestic helpers?
 - c. How do you feel about our work routine?

About Interactions with Peers

5. Tell me about your activities during holidays.
 - a. Who do you usually hang out with during holidays?
 - b. What do you usually do during holidays?
 - c. What do you usually talk about with your friends during holidays?
6. Tell me about your friends.
 - a. What are the ethnicities of the friends you hang out with in Hong Kong?

- b. How would you describe Filipinos as a group?
 - c. How would you describe Indonesians as a group?
7. How do you see your employment and package compared to those of your friends?
- a. Are there any friends you consider as 'lucky' helpers? If so, in what ways?
 - b. Do you ever compare with your friends? If so, who do you compare with and about what?
 - c. Do you ever desire something your friends have or wish that you are the one, rather than your friends, to have those desirable things? If so, what are they?
 - d. Have these comparisons influenced the way you see your own situation (financial, etc.)? If so, how?
 - e. Have these comparisons influenced the way you feel about your friends? If so, how? Can you describe those feelings? Is there anything may help you feel better? / If no, why?
 - f. Have these comparisons influenced the way you behave toward your friends? If so, how? If no, why?
 - g. Have these comparisons influenced your relationship with your friends? If so, how?
 - h. Have you ever tried to do something to get what your friends have, or at least to reduce the differences between yourself and your friends?
 e.g., attempt changing employer
 e.g., attempt negotiation with employer for higher salary or more holidays
 e.g., look for a secondary part-time job, set up own business in the Philippines
 e.g., deviant behaviors (e.g., stealing, etc.)

About Interactions with Employer

- 8. Can you recall the first work week of your current employment? What were the feelings that you experienced?
- 9. How would you describe Hong Kong people as a group?
- 10. How would you define the financial status of your employer compared to others in Hong Kong? Would you define his/her financial status as very poor, poor, average, rich, or very rich?
 - a. Can you describe the lifestyle of your employer [and his/her family unit]?
 - b. What do they do during their holidays?
- 11. How would you describe your relationship with your employer [and his/her family unit]?

12. Do you ever desire something your employer have or wish that you are the one, rather than your employer, to have those desirable things? If so, what are they?
 - a. What do you desire or wish to have in your life?
 - b. Does your employer have something that you desire or wish to have in your own life? If so, what are they?
 - c. Do you ever compare with your employer? If so, about what?
13. Have these comparisons influenced the way you see your own situation (financial, etc.)? If so, how?
14. Have these comparisons influenced the way you feel toward your employer? If so, how? Can you describe those feelings? Is there anything that may help you feel better? If no, why?
15. Have these comparisons influenced the way you behave toward your employer? If so, how? If no, why?
16. Have these comparisons influenced your relationship with your employer? If so, how? If so, why?
17. Have you ever tried to do something to get what your friends have, or at least to reduce the differences between yourself and your friends?
 - e.g., talk with friends and family on Facebook, etc.
 - e.g., pray, try to convince oneself things are going to fine
 - e.g., attempt negotiation with employer for higher salary or more holidays
 - e.g., look for a secondary part-time job, set up own business in the Philippines
 - e.g., deviant behaviors (e.g., stealing, fabricating receipts for reimbursement, etc.)
18. Is there anything that we didn't talk about but you think it would be important for me to understand about your relationships with and emotions experienced toward your employer and friends?

Appendix II

Interview Protocol (Employer Interviews in Study 1)

All interviews were conducted in semi-structured format. This protocol shows the main categories of questions and the follow-up questions used as probes when the respondents did not address the points with their general narrative. Some follow-up questions asked during the interviews were not listed below.

A. Interview Questions

About Employment History and Employers' Beliefs

1. Tell me about your employment history with the current and previous (if any) foreign domestic helper(s).
 - a. How many helper(s) have you ever had?
 - b. How did you recruit your helper(s)?
 - c. Did you recruit your helper(s) through “direct hire” process or “screening” process through employment agency? Can you describe the process and considerations that you had in making the hiring decision before?
 - d. What are the criteria you used for screening potential helper candidates and in making the hiring decision?
 - e. How would you define the work role of a helper? Do you see any difference between the role of a domestic helper and that of an employee in organizations?
 - f. Can you describe your beliefs concerning how the work relationship between an employer and an employee should be? (work philosophy and personal ideology)
 - i. Between yourself and your senior colleagues
 - ii. Between yourself and your helper(s)

About Characteristics of Helper(s)

2. Can you describe the profile of your helper(s)?
 - a. Former work experience
 - b. Skill sets
 - c. Weekend activities
 - d. Personalities
3. Can you describe your ideal helper profile?

About Employment Contract and Package

4. What is the employment package that you offer to your helper(s)?

- a. Salary
 - b. Medical insurance
 - c. Days of holiday
 - d. Salary increment
 - e. Long-term service bonus
 - f. Independent bedroom
5. Have you and your helper(s) ever negotiated about benefits that are NOT included in the basic employment package (e.g., salary increase, extra/extended holidays, bonus, gifts, treatment)?
- a. If so, how was the negotiation process? How did you two come to an agreement on those terms?

About the Work Duties of Helper(s)

6. What are the main job duties of your helper(s)?
7. Have your helper(s)'s job duties evolved/changed since he/she first joined the family?
8. When you first signed the employment contract, what did you hope for? (any common goals?)
9. What are your expectations regarding the (work skills, attitude, personality, and behaviors) of your helper(s)?
10. Has he/she fulfilled her duties so far?
- (i) Are there any occasions that make you feel that he/she has not fulfilled her duties or violated your expectations?
 - (ii) How do you feel when your helper(s) fulfill/did not fulfill your expectation?
 - (iii) What did you do as a response?
11. Are there any occasions that make you feel that he/she has exceeded your expectations?
12. Have your expectations on your helpers been changed in any way over time?
13. In your point of view, does your helper(s) have any expectation on you as being her employer?

About Personal Evaluation of Helper(s)

14. How do you evaluate your helper(s) as a person? Can you describe his/her personal characteristics and qualities?
15. On a scale of 10, how would you evaluate your previous helper(s)?

16. On a scale of 10, how would you evaluate your current helper(s)?
17. What are the similarities between yourself and your helper(s)?
18. What are the differences between yourself and your helper(s)?
19. How do you evaluate the ethnic group of your helper(s)?
20. What are the similarities between your ethnic group and your helper's ethnic group
21. What are the differences between your ethnic group and your helper's ethnic group?

About Contact with Helper(s)

22. Do you have any concerns before you hired the helper(s)?
23. How much do you know about Filipinos/Indonesians/Vietnamese/Thai before you hired your helper(s)?
24. Can you recall the first interaction you had with your helper(s) at the initial stage of the employment?
25. In the family, with whom does your helper interact and communicate with most frequently?
26. How frequently do you interact with your helper(s)?
27. What do you mainly talk about with your helper(s)?
28. Would you describe your communication style with your helper(s) as formal or informal? Why? (e.g., address using "sir/madam", jokes, common language, etc.)
29. How do you and your helper(s) usually communicate? (body language, face-to-face, in person, telephone, Whatsapp/WeChat, Messengers, etc.)
30. Have you ever met the family/friends of your helper(s)?
31. Since your helper(s) joined the family, have you learned more about her/her culture? If so, in what ways?

About Interactions with Helper(s)

32. Do you and your helper(s) ever have conflicts? If so, what are the conflicts about? Have those conflict been resolved? How were they resolved?
33. Has your helper ever done something that makes your feel grateful or appreciated? If so, have you rewarded him/her in any way?
34. What are the emotions that you frequently experience when you interact with your helper(s)?

About Behaviors toward Helpers

35. Has your helper(s) ever treated you or your family members in an inappropriately manner?
36. Has your helper(s) ever treated you and your family members in a positive manner?

37. Have you ever done anything to reward or help your helper(s)?
38. Have you ever found yourself in a situation that you have to use your legitimate power on your helper(s) (e.g., reward, punishment, coercion)?

Appendix III

Scenario Used for Manipulation (Study 3)

You are awaiting employment opportunities to work as a nanny. You have contacted an employment agency which connects nannies to a family to work for.

The agency has informed you that the tasks of nannies typically include household chores, cooking, and child care. The agency also told you that an interview would be arranged when any employer from a family considers you as a candidate for hire. Recently the agency has scheduled you an interview with a potential employer and asked you to attend.

On the day of the interview, you first did a brief self-introduction to the potential employer. After learning a bit more about your background, the potential employer went on to explain the job duties expected of the nanny she intended to hire.

"I am looking for a live-in nanny to take care of my child and handle regular household chores for my family. The nanny's tasks and work hours will vary daily according to my schedule and needs. When the nanny is needed no more, I will provide one-month prior notice and return to the agency for the termination procedure."

After more discussions, at the end of the interview, the potential employer decided to offer you the job. She said: "The monthly salary I stated on the employment contract is £2000. However, sometimes I will need you to work overtime. If that happens, I will compensate you based on a pay rate of £5 per hour. Would you take the job?" You agreed with the employment terms and took the offer.

You have begun working for the employer. During the first month of your employment, you followed the employer's instructions and tried to fulfill your obligations. Also, you accumulated six hours of overtime work hours which add £30 to your monthly salary.

At the end of the month, based on what the employer initially promised, she is expected to pay you a total monthly salary of £2030 (i.e., £2000 stated salary + £30 overtime pay). However, she paid you **£2500 [£2050]**, which is **£470 [£20]** more than the amount she initially promised.