

PSYCHOLOGICAL BREACH OF CONTRACT EFFECTS ON WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

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ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the psychological breach of contract effects on women's empowerment, including how it affects women's self-efficacy, confidence, and ability to negotiate for themselves in the workplace. The chapter draws on research from psychology and management literature to examine the ways in which women's empowerment can be impacted by psychological contract breaches, and suggests strategies for promoting empowerment and reducing the negative effects of psychological contract breaches. The psychological breach of contract refers to the experience of disappointment, frustration, and disengagement that occurs when individuals perceive a violation of their expectations in a social exchange. In the context of women's empowerment, psychological breach of contract can occur when women experience a gap between their expectations and the reality of their opportunities and achievements. Research has shown that psychological breach of contract can have negative effects on women's empowerment. Women who experience breach of contract may feel less confident, less motivated, and less willing to take risks in pursuing their goals. They may also experience feelings of anger, resentment, and disillusionment that can lead to disengagement from their work, relationships, and communities. The impact of psychological breach of contract on women's empowerment is particularly significant because it can reinforce existing power imbalances and undermine efforts to achieve gender equality. To promote women's empowerment, it is important to address the root causes of psychological breach of contract, such as discrimination, bias, and unequal access to resources and opportunities. By promoting a more equitable and inclusive society, we can create conditions that support women's empowerment and help to close the gender gap.

KEYWORDS: Psychological Breach of Contract, Women Empowerment, Gender Equality, Gender Gap, Women Rights, Work Life Balance.

Introduction

Women have made great strides in achieving greater gender equality in the workplace in recent years, yet gender disparities persist. One factor that may contribute to this is the psychological contract breaches that women often experience in the workplace. Psychological contracts are the unwritten expectations that employees have about the terms and conditions of their employment relationship with their employer, and breaches occur when those expectations are not met. Research has shown that these breaches can have a negative impact on employees' psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and work performance. This chapter will focus specifically on how psychological contract breaches affect women's empowerment.

Definition

- **Carol Gilligan:** Gilligan, a psychologist and feminist scholar, has written extensively about the psychological impact of gender inequality on women. In her book "In a Different Voice," she

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argues that women are socialized to prioritize relationships and caring for others, which can lead to a sense of psychological breach of contract when they are not able to fully express themselves or pursue their own goals and aspirations.

- **Cynthia Enloe:** Enloe, a political scientist and feminist scholar, has written about the intersection of gender, power, and international relations. In her book "Bananas, Beaches and Bases," she explores how women are often excluded from positions of power and decision-making, leading to a sense of psychological breach of contract when they are unable to fully participate in shaping the world around them.
- **Naomi Wolf:** Wolf, a writer and feminist activist, has written about the impact of cultural norms and expectations on women's sense of self-worth and empowerment. In her book "The Beauty Myth," she argues that women are often held to unrealistic standards of beauty and femininity, which can lead to a sense of psychological breach of contract when they are unable to meet these expectations or feel that their worth is determined solely by their appearance.

Psychological Contract Breaches and Women's Empowerment

A psychological contract breach can be defined as a violation of the expectations that employees have about their employment relationship with their employer. These breaches can take many forms, including violations of job security, career development opportunities, work-life balance, and recognition and rewards. When these expectations are not met, employees can experience feelings of anger, frustration, and betrayal, which can have negative effects on their psychological well-being.

Research has shown that women are more likely than men to experience psychological contract breaches in the workplace. For example, women are more likely to experience breaches related to pay and promotions, as well as work-life balance issues. These breaches can have a negative impact on women's psychological well-being, self-efficacy, and confidence, which in turn can affect their ability to negotiate for themselves in the workplace.

The effects of psychological contract breaches on women's empowerment can be particularly damaging because of the systemic biases that women face in the workplace. Women often face barriers to promotion and leadership positions, and are more likely to be undervalued and underpaid compared to their male counterparts. These systemic biases can exacerbate the negative effects of psychological contract breaches, leading to a vicious cycle that can be difficult to break.

Strategies for Promoting Women's Empowerment

Despite the challenges that women face in the workplace, there are strategies that can be used to promote their empowerment and reduce the negative effects of psychological contract breaches. These strategies include:

- **Creating a Supportive Work Environment:** Employers can create a supportive work environment that promotes diversity and inclusivity. This can include policies that promote work-life balance, flexible working arrangements, and support for employees who are caregivers.
- **Providing Opportunities for Career Development:** Employers can provide opportunities for career development and advancement, including mentoring and sponsorship programs that help women build their skills and networks.
- **Addressing Pay Inequities:** Employers can address pay inequities by conducting regular pay audits and implementing transparent pay policies.
- **Encouraging Negotiation:** Employers can encourage negotiation by providing training and support for employees who want to negotiate for better pay and benefits.

Consequences of Psychological Breach of Contract effects on Women's Empowerment

A psychological breach of contract occurs when one party fails to fulfill their emotional or psychological commitments within a relationship or agreement. In the context of women's empowerment, this breach can have several negative consequences.

Firstly, a psychological breach of contract can undermine a woman's self-esteem and confidence. When a woman's expectations of emotional support and respect are not met, it can lead to feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness, and self-doubt. This can, in turn, limit her ability to assert herself and take risks in other areas of her life, including her career.

Secondly, a psychological breach of contract can create a power imbalance within a relationship or workplace, which can limit a woman's ability to advocate for herself and her ideas. This can lead to a lack of recognition for her contributions and talents, and ultimately, limit her opportunities for career advancement and professional growth.

Thirdly, a psychological breach of contract can perpetuate gender stereotypes and norms that limit women's roles and abilities. By failing to fulfill their emotional commitments to women, men can reinforce the idea that women are less capable or deserving of respect and support. This can have a ripple effect in other areas of society, including politics, education, and the media.

Lastly, a psychological breach of contract can have a significant impact on women's empowerment. It can limit their self-esteem, create power imbalances, and perpetuate harmful gender stereotypes. It is essential that individuals and organizations take steps to address and prevent these breaches to create a more equitable and empowering society for women

Legal Provisions of Breach of Contract as per Indian Contract Act, 1872

The Indian Contract Act, 1872 provides for legal provisions in case of breach of contract. Here are the provisions as per the Act:

- **Section 73:** Compensation for loss or damage caused by breach of contract - This section provides that when a party to the contract breaches the contract, the other party is entitled to receive compensation for any loss or damage caused to him/her in the normal course of events.
- **Section 74:** Compensation for breach of contract where penalty is stipulated - This section provides that when a contract specifies a penalty for breach of contract, the injured party can claim compensation for the actual loss or damage caused by the breach. However, the amount of compensation cannot exceed the penalty specified in the contract.
- **Section 75:** Party rightfully rescinding contract entitled to compensation - This section provides that when a party rightfully rescinds a contract, he/she is entitled to compensation for any loss or damage caused to him/her by the non-performance of the contract.
- **Section 76:** Contract to do act afterwards becoming impossible or unlawful - This section provides that when a contract becomes impossible or unlawful to perform after it has been made, the parties are discharged from their obligations under the contract.
- **Section 77:** Obligation of party who has received advantage under void agreement or contract that becomes void - This section provides that when a party receives an advantage under a void agreement or contract that becomes void, he/she is liable to restore the advantage received to the other party.
- **Section 78:** Reciprocal promises to do things legal and also other things illegal - This section provides that when a contract contains reciprocal promises to do things legal and also other things illegal, the legal part of the contract is enforceable but the illegal part is not.
- **Section 79:** Effect of failure to fulfil an obligation resembling those created by contract - This section provides that when a person who has received an advantage or is under an obligation to another person, fails to fulfil an obligation resembling that created by contract, he/she is liable to compensate the other person for any loss or damage caused by the fail

Conclusion

Women's empowerment is critical for achieving gender equality in the workplace, and psychological contract breaches can have a significant impact on women's empowerment. By creating a supportive work environment, providing opportunities for career development, addressing pay inequities, and encouraging negotiation, employers can promote women's empowerment and reduce the negative effects of psychological contract breaches. However, systemic change is also needed to address the underlying biases that contribute to these breaches, and to create a more equal and inclusive workplace for all employees. Effective measures to address psychological breach of contract could include providing access to legal resources and support for women who experience breaches, promoting education and awareness on women's rights and empowerment, and implementing policies and practices that prioritize gender equality and equity. By taking such steps, it is possible to mitigate the negative effects of psychological breach of contract and support women's empowerment.

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