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Understanding Perceived Overqualification: Expanding the Criterion Space, Establishing Drivers, and Developing a Model

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Understanding Perceived Overqualification: Expanding the Criterion Space,

Establishing Drivers, and Developing a Model

A Dissertation

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By

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Biography

The author was born in Painesville, Ohio on October 3, 1987. He graduated from Notre Dame-Cathedral Latin School and received his Bachelor of Science degree with Honors from The Ohio State University. He received his Master of Arts degree from DePaul University.

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Abstract

As applicants with more qualifications enter the workforce and managers reject individuals with more skills than a job requires, overqualification grows in importance to organizations. Perceived overqualification, or an individual's self-perception as overqualified, is an under-researched topic, however. This dissertation outlines a theoretical model for understanding both how perceived overqualification develops and how it impacts outcomes. Results show that generalized self-efficacy and objective overqualification predict perceived overqualification. Furthermore, perceived overqualification affects state positive affect, job satisfaction, absenteeism, and self-esteem through justice perceptions. Implications for future research and practice are also detailed.

Introduction

Overqualification reflects a state of underemployment in which people have surplus KSAOs (Knowledge, Skills, Abilities, and Other personal characteristics; Erdogan, Bauer, Peiró, & Truxillo, 2011). Overqualification is thus a specific form of underemployment (Fine & Nevo, 2008), a situation in which individual have a lower level of employment compared to a job standard, such as the requirements of the position.

Overqualification is an extremely important topic to examine and understand in the modern economy, where individuals are gaining more and more qualifications to try to stand out from their peers for a select number of jobs. As described by Erdogan and colleagues (Erdogan et al., 2009), recruiters and hiring managers often reject applications from individuals who may be overqualified. As the national and global economy emerged from the Great Recession of 2008-2009, jobs became increasingly scarce, and individuals may have chosen to take jobs for which they are overqualified as a means of maintaining employment (Erodgan et al., 2011). Overqualification will remain a problem in the near future as the Millennial generation enters the workforce, overqualification is becoming even more important for organizations to understand and deal with, as Millennials are likely to hold unrealistic beliefs for what they can expect from work (Gottlieb, 2011). Economists are beginning to research overqualification from the standpoint of educational mismatch, but I/O psychology has much to contribute to the research of overqualification as a cognitive state that people hold, regardless of their actual qualifications. Despite its importance, this research is in its

infancy. I/O psychologists have an understanding of a small range of outcomes affected by overqualification, but they do not have a comprehensive understanding of how overqualification works. As a result, I/O psychology cannot answer questions as straightforward as "what should I be looking for to tell if someone thinks they are overqualified?" There is an assumption among hiring managers and recruiters (Erdogan et al., 2011) that a set of qualifications exceeding that which is required by a job marks an applicant as overqualified, but there is potential that a more pernicious form of overqualification might go undetected by this line of reasoning. This dissertation details the existing research on overqualification in I/O psychology and human resource management and proposes a comprehensive theoretical model that will further the understanding of perceived overqualification, the potentially more harmful form of overqualification.

Traditionally, the job standard component of overqualification has been examined from two perspectives. The first perspective is called objective overqualification and reflects a comparison between the KSAOs a person actually has and the KSAOs required by the job (e.g., outlined in position requirements and job descriptions; Erodgan et al., 2011). Objective overqualification posits that overqualification is a state people attain that does not change until the requirements of their position change (Erdogan et al., 2011). The second perspective on overqualification is perceived (or subjective) overqualification. With this form of overqualification, employees compare their actual and perceived KSAOs to those they believe are required by the job (e.g., the KSAOs

other employees have, the KSAOs that seem to be necessary to complete tasks; Fine & Nevo, 2008). In other words, perceived overqualification reflects a *belief* that one's KSAO's are greater than those required by the job (Fine & Nevo, 2008). This form of overqualification is thus a cognition that employees develop (Fine & Nevo, 2008), and it is not necessarily related to objective overqualification. In other words, an employee could *believe* that she is overqualified for a job (perceived overqualification) even if she does not have KSAOs that exceed those required by the job (objective overqualification).

Although objective overqualification has been researched in the economics literature, perceived overqualification has been the traditional overqualification construct examined in the I/O psychology literature because it reflects how the individual sees their world and themselves (Erdogan et al., 2011). Therefore, perceived overqualification is closer in the causal chain to traditional I/O psychology outcomes (performance, organizational attitudes, etc.). As a result, the I/O psychology research has focused on perceived overqualification. From this point forward in this dissertation, the word *overqualification* refers to perceived overqualification; any references to objective overqualification will be made directly using the phrase *objective overqualification*.

Models of Perceived Overqualification

The existing theorizations of perceived overqualification focus on two models. These models are based on two classic theories in psychology: Equity theory (Adams, 1965) and relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976). These models focus on the outcomes of perceived overqualification and the processes

which are driving the outcomes it affects. Despite the movement within I/O psychology away from equity theory and towards models of organizational justice (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001), overqualification research has yet to expand beyond these two theoretical explanations.

The first is based on Adams' (1965) equity theory. According to equity theory, individuals compare the ratio of their job inputs (knowledge, qualifications, time, etc.) to job outcomes (pay, rewards, titles, etc.) to that of a comparison other (Adams, 1965). In line with equity theory, it has been suggested that overqualified individuals feel their inputs are more than those of comparison others (Erdogan et al., 2011). Therefore, they are in a state of tension. Adams (1965) suggested that individuals in this state choose from a variety of potential actions to restore equity (e.g., reduce inputs, increase outcomes, distort comparison other's inputs/outcomes). Increasing outcomes has been the proposed method overqualified individuals will choose to restore equity (Erdogan et al., 2011). When this fails (e.g., better outcomes are not provided by the organization), overqualified people will choose other actions to restore equity, such as increasing outcomes through engaging in counterproductive workplace behaviors (e.g, stealing from the organization; Luksyte, Spitzmueller, & Maynard, 2011), reducing inputs through turnover (Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006), or cognitively distorting their affect about their job (e.g., job dissatisfaction; Erdogan & Bauer, 2009).

The second model of overqualification is based on relative deprivation theory. Relative deprivation theory suggests that individuals who are denied

outcomes that they believe they have earned will be dissatisfied with their rewards (Crosby, 1976). Relative deprivation theory is based on social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954), and, when applied to work, suggests that negative outcomes like job dissatisfaction result from situations in which individuals are denied a valued reward for work (e.g., a pay increase, a bonus, an increase in responsibilities, etc.) that they feel they deserve (Crosby, 1976). Although relative deprivation was initially described to have six dimensions (Crosby, 1976), more recent research has settled on two dimensions: wanting better job situations (e.g., more authority, higher pay) and feeling entitled to better job situations (Feldman, Leana, & Bolino, 2002). Applying this theory to overqualification, theorists has suggested that overqualified individuals will see themselves as being denied important outcomes (rewards, pay increases, promotions, etc.) they want and feel they deserve (Erdogan et al., 2011).

Of these two theories on overqualification, only relative deprivation has seen direct research support. In the only existing examination, feelings of relative deprivation were found to be a mediator between underemployment and negative outcomes like low job satisfaction, low organizational commitment, and low organizational trust (Feldman et al., 2002). This was an examination of underemployment more generally, however, and used a sample of reemployed executives; therefore, the value of this test of relative deprivation theory to the study of overqualification is limited. Beyond this, neither model of overqualification has been tested or examined in the I/O psychology literature.

Outcomes of Perceived Overqualification

Historically, perceived overqualification has been linked to a series of important outcomes that go far beyond the impacts of matched qualifications. Overqualification appears to affect more macro-level issues that qualification/underqualification affect. The first of these outcomes is job performance. One of the key questions overqualification research has addressed is whether overqualified people perform better at their jobs. The answer to that question is that it depends on which type of performance (contextual performance, task/overall performance, counterproductive work behaviors) is being examined. Contextual performance refers to the helping behaviors that foster a positive workplace environment (Motowidlo & van Scotter, 1994). These can include organizational citizenship behaviors such as going beyond one's role to help a coworker with a problem (Konovsky & Organ, 1996). In terms of contextual performance, no existing studies examine whether people who perceive themselves as overqualified tend to perform different levels of organizational citizenship behaviors than people who do not. This is even more surprising when considering the impact of perceived overqualification on job satisfaction (as discussed further in the following pages of this dissertation) and the importance of job satisfaction on organizational citizenship behaviors (Eatough, Chang, Miloslavic, & Johnson, 2011).

When discussing task and overall performance, perceived overqualification has been linked with higher performance (Erdogan et al., 2011). This fits with the personnel selection viewpoint on overqualification; that is, if an

individual exceeds the KSAOs of a job, it is likely that he/she will perform better than someone who has the exact level of KSAOs required by the job. This performance boost has been found with supervisor performance ratings (Fine & Nevo, 2008) and objective performance indicators (e.g., sales commissions; Erdogan & Bauer, 2009). Interestingly, this relationship has not been sustained with self-reported performance (Bolino & Feldman, 2000). This suggests that individuals who are overqualified are loathe to rate their performance highly, potentially due to the resulting cognitive dissonance that would have to be reduced. However, the big picture message is that from the perspective of outside observers and indicators, people who perceive themselves as overqualified are high performers.

In terms of counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs), there is a less positive story to tell organizations. CWBs include actions like stealing and cheating that harm the organization (Motowidlo, 2003). In line with the equity theory perspective on overqualification, CWBs were suggested as a potential avenue for overqualified people to gain from their organizations (Luksyte et al., 2011). Specifically, by engaging in CWBs, employees could increase their outcomes and/or decrease their inputs to restore equity with those of a comparison other. Thus, as suggested by Luksyte and colleagues (Luksyte et al., 2011), CWBs serve a compensatory purpose, allowing the employee to compensate for rewards they feel are deserved but are not provided. Perceived overqualification is related to increased CWBs (Luksyte et al., 2011), such that people who see themselves as overqualified engage in more CWBs. Therefore, when considering

performance as a whole, overqualified employees tend to perform better from the standpoint of others but see themselves as needing more rewards; therefore, they engage in more CWBs.

Research on overqualification has not been limited to looking at its impact on performance. Other potential outcomes of overqualification have been investigated as well. One of the biggest areas overqualification research has focused on is whether perceived overqualification is linked with job attitudes. As the most researched job attitude (Dalal, 2013), job satisfaction has been investigated to see how it connects with perceived overqualification. Job satisfaction, or cognitions and affect about one's job (Dalal, 2013), is linked to important organizational outcomes, including turnover (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). According the model developed by Hulin and colleagues (Hulin, Roznowski, & Hachiya, 1985), job satisfaction results from work-role inputs, such as KSAO's, and outcomes, such as pay and work benefits. Unsurprisingly, overqualification has been linked theoretically with job satisfaction because of these inputs and outcomes. In line with equity theory, overqualified employees view themselves as bringing more to the organization and not being compensated fairly (Erdogan et al., 2011; Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006); therefore, they are less likely to be satisfied with their jobs. Research bears this out: People who view themselves as overqualified tend to have lower overall job satisfaction (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Maynard et al., 2006; Maynard & Parfynova, 2013). This finding is consistent over time (Johnson & Johnson, 2000a), such that job satisfaction does not increase as overqualified individuals spend more time in an

organization. Considered as whole, this line of research suggests a strong link between perceived overqualification and job dissatisfaction.

Organizational commitment is another job attitude that has been examined by overqualification researchers. Research (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1990) has suggested that there are three aspects of organizational commitment: Affective, continuance, and normative. These are based on affect (positive feelings towards the organization), employee value proposition (the positive aspects that working for the organization gives employees), and norms governing staying with the organization, respectively (Allen & Meyer, 1990). From a theoretical standpoint, feelings of relative deprivation or inequity driven by overqualification have been suggested to erode commitment because individuals are not receiving rewards they feel they deserve (Erdogan et al., 2011; Feldman et al., 2002). Research has borne this out. Maynard and colleagues (Maynard et al., 2006; Maynard & Parfynova, 2013) have found that affective organizational commitment is lower among employees who perceive themselves as overqualified than among those who feel they are not overqualified. General feelings of underemployment have a direct and indirect negative effect (through relative deprivation) on general organizational commitment as well (Feldman et al., 2002). Thus, perceived overqualification appears to also be strongly negatively linked with organizational commitment.

Altogether, the research on job attitudes suggests that overqualification has a detrimental effect. People who view themselves as overqualified tend to feel that they are less satisfied with their jobs, and they are less likely to form a

positive attachment with the organization. This shows that overqualification has a direct negative effect on job attitudes, despite its potentially beneficial effect for job performance.

Going a step further, overqualification can in turn affect behaviors that result from these job attitudes. For example, turnover has been a major line of research in the overqualification literature. Turnover is extremely expensive for organizations due to opportunity costs and costs of hiring and training new employees (Hom, Mitchell, Lee, & Griffeth, 2012). Since all employees will eventually leave an organization, voluntary turnover (turnover of employees by their own choice rather than through layoffs, downsizing, or other forms of job loss; see Hom & Griffeth, 1995) has been a key focal area. Models of voluntary turnover have generally examined turnover intentions (cognitions about leaving an organization) as a precursor to turnover behavior (March & Simon, 1958; Mobley, 1977). Examination of the turnover literature as a whole has found that they are one of the most powerful predictors of turnover behavior (Griffeth, Hom, & Gaertner, 2000). In line with models of turnover which posit job attitudes as a cause of turnover intentions (Hom et al., 2012; Mobley, 1977), job satisfaction and organizational commitment have also been found to negatively influence turnover intentions and behavior (Hom & Griffeth, 1995), such that low satisfaction and commitment are linked with increased turnover intentions and behavior.

This finding is key to understanding overqualification's potential effect on turnover. Because overqualification affects job attitudes (Johnson & Johnson,

2000a; 2000b; Maynard et al., 2006; Maynard & Parfynova, 2013; Erdogan & Bauer, 2009), it has also been suggested to increase turnover. Maynard and colleagues (Maynard et al., 2006; Maynard & Parfynova, 2013) have found that perceived overqualification is related to both higher turnover intentions and behavior. This suggests that perceived overqualification is one of the preference antecedents in Hom and colleagues' (Hom et al., 2012) model of turnover; perceived overqualification is another force acting on the preference of individuals to stay or leave an organization. In line with the relative deprivation theory of overqualification (see Erdogan et al., 2011), rewards provided by the work environment have been suggested to moderate the relationship between perceived overqualification and turnover. More simply put, because (according to relative deprivation theory) overqualified employees believe they deserve special rewards, providing them these rewards should lessen their turnover intentions and behavior. Erdogan and Bauer (2009) focused on empowerment, or the ability to make decisions about work and receive communication that work is valued by the organization, as one of these rewards, and found support for empowerment as a moderator, with employees who viewed themselves as overqualified and who had high empowerment reporting lower turnover intentions than overqualified employees with low empowerment. Altogether, the research in the area of turnover suggests that employees who feel they are overqualified are likely to have shorter tenure with a given organization, unless they are given some type of additional reward.

Lastly, a collection of studies have individually looked at alternative outcomes of perceived overqualification. In the first of a series of studies examining a sample of unionized postal workers, Johnson and Johnson (1996) found that perceived overqualification was linked with lower psychological well-being (e.g., higher depression and higher stress). Perceived overqualification has also been linked with lower self-reported physical health (Johnson & Johnson, 1997; 1999) and lower positive state affect (Johnson & Johnson, 2000b). These studies, although they examine outcomes beyond those traditionally considered in this literature, do not examine these constructs together (e.g., in a nomological network); instead, they are analyzed independently. This obscures the potential for overqualification to drive these outcomes through indirect effects or through direct effects on other outcomes. For example, it is possible and unknown if there is any relationship between the decreased positive affect and job dissatisfaction that are both outcomes of perceived overqualification.

Considered as a whole, the existing literature on perceived overqualification's effects suggests that these constructs (job performance and job attitudes) represent the most important outcomes overqualification impacts.

Rationale

This dissertation has two primary goals. First, a model of perceived overqualification will be developed; this model will propose key drivers of the development of perceived overqualification and mediators that relate to the expanded criterion variables. Second, the existing criterion space for perceived

overqualification will be expanded by examining stress, withdrawal, and affect as additional outcomes.

Developing a Model of Perceived Overqualification

Notably lacking from the overqualification literature is a comprehensive model that provides a theoretical foundation for the effects overqualification has on the various outcomes previously described. Although equity theory and relative deprivation theory have been advanced as models for understanding overqualification, neither has received much (if any) research support. Therefore, a well-supported model of overqualification could advance research in this area.

The proposed model is depicted in Figure 1. The proposed model expands research on overqualification in several ways. First, it includes the expanded criterion domain described earlier. As well, it includes predictors of the development of perceived overqualification. Most importantly, it includes a new theoretical understanding for why overqualification causes the variety of effects that have been consistently shown in research.

Predictors of Overqualification

Research has not yet examined how individuals form a self-concept as overqualified. The only theorization surrounding the development of overqualification perceptions is based on time frame: Apparent vs. emergent overqualification. As described by Erdogan and colleagues (Erdogan et al., 2011), apparent overqualification is known to the individual when he/she takes a job while emergent overqualification develops sometime after starting a job. Apparent and emergent overqualification have not been directly examined in

research, however, and Erdogan and colleagues suggest that further research on the development of overqualification perceptions is important (Erdogan et al., 2011, pg. 226).

At one level, how individuals begin to see themselves as overqualified is straightforward; it comes directly from surplus KSAO's (such as additional degrees or qualifications) that are not required by a job. Determining which criterion (job descriptions, KSAO's used on the job, etc.) employees use as a basis for the judgment of "surplus" is a key issue that overqualification research has yet to solve (Erdogan et al., 2011). There are also additional ways of assessing why an individual might perceive him or herself as overqualified, and these perspectives provide more insight into the previously discussed negative outcomes. Four predictors are proposed: Entitlement, narcissism, generalized self-efficacy, and objective overqualification. By examining these predictors, individuals who perceive themselves as overqualified can be examined more fully.

Entitlement refers to a stable belief that one deserves better outcomes than other people (O'Brien, Anastasio, & Bushman, 2011). Entitlement has been differentiated from similar constructs. For example, it reflects more of a focus on the outcomes and approval of other people than narcissism (Rose & Anastasio, 2014). Entitlement is also distinct from the Big 5 personality traits, though it is moderately negatively correlated with Agreeableness (Pryor, Miller, & Gaughan, 2008). As noted by Fisk (2010), entitlement is a natural phenomenon; *excessive* entitlement is the true negative side of entitlement. Excessive entitlement reflects

a desire of wanting more than others and a belief that one is more deserving than others of receiving positive outcomes (Fisk, 2010). Furthermore, entitlement has negative effects on behaviors and cognitions. For example, individuals with high levels of entitlement are more likely (than those with lower levels) to take candy from children (Campbell, Bonacci, Shelton, Exline, & Bushman, 2004) and are less likely to take others' perspectives (Campbell et al., 2004). Highly entitled individuals also perceive that dull tasks take longer than they actually do (O'Brien et al., 2011).

Entitlement has been increasingly examined as an important outcome for organizations to consider. From a theoretical perspective, it has been suggested that high levels of entitlement may be related to increased counterproductive work behaviors (CWBs; Fisk, 2010). Entitlement, when combined with abusive supervision, is linked with increased emotional exhaustion and coworker abuse (Wheeler, Halbesleben, & Whitman, 2013). Entitlement has also been suggested to be implicated in causing turnover and organizational deviance (Tomlinson, 2013). Altogether, this suggests that entitlement is negatively linked with important organizational outcomes.

Entitlement is proposed to link positively with perceived overqualification (see Figure 1), such that high levels of entitlement will correspond to high levels of perceived overqualification.

The second proposed predictor is narcissism. Narcissism is a stable personality-like trait reflecting an individual's belief that he or she is the center of attention and focus (Judge, LePine, & Rich, 2006). This definition of narcissism

Figure 1. Theoretical Model for Perceived Overqualification
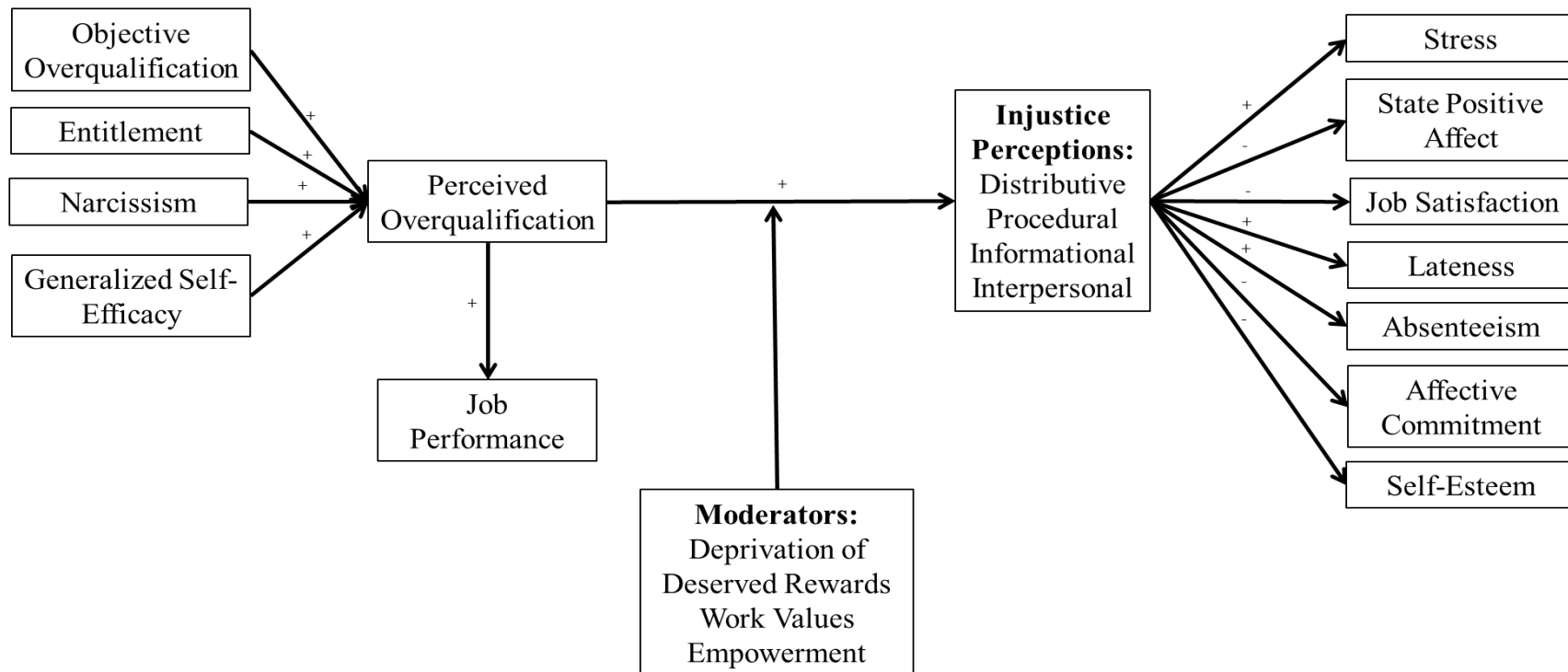
Figure 1. Theoretical model of perceived overqualification, including predictors of the development of the cognition, theoretical

mechanism for its impact, and previously investigated outcomes.

differentiates it from Narcissistic Personality Disorder (a personality disorder

under the fifth edition of the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual; American

Psychiatric Association, 2013) and psychoanalytic narcissism (a personality trait

driven by ego protection; Judge et al., 2006). Narcissism has been somewhat

under-researched in I/O psychology. The first study in one of the two major I/O

journals (*Personnel Psychology* and *Journal of Applied Psychology*) to examine

narcissism was published in 2006 (Judge et al., 2006). Narcissism has been found

to be related to other outcomes of overqualification, including deviance (Judge et

al., 2006) and job dissatisfaction (Soyer, Rovenpor, Kopelman, Mullins, &

Watson, 2001). Individual studies (Peterson, Galvin, & Lange, 2012) have shown

that narcissism is detrimental to performance; however, this finding has not been

sustained in meta-analyses (O'Boyle, Forsyth, Banks, & McDaniel, 2012). More

recently, narcissism has received attention as a piece (along with psychopathy and

Machiavellianism) of the organizationally dysfunctional personality model called

the "Dark Triad" (O'Boyle et al., 2012). Meta-analysis of the Dark Triad

literature (O'Boyle et al., 2012) has revealed that as individuals become more

narcissistic, they engage in more CWB's.

From a theoretical perspective, narcissism and perceived overqualification

are related. Raskin, Novacek, and Hogan (1991) suggest that narcissism is linked

with defensive self-enhancement, especially grandiosity (or exaggerating one's

abilities and accomplishments). Later researchers (Brown, Budzek, & Tamborski,

2009; Morf & Rhodewalt, 1993) suggest that the self-esteem regulation that

comes as part of the self-enhancement process includes protecting the self from

failure or shame. Narcissism has also been theorized to be linked with an overestimation of one's own abilities at work (Wille, de Fruyt, & de Clerqc, 2013). Together, this information points towards perceived overqualification as a result of the self-enhancement and self-esteem regulation processes. As described earlier, perceived overqualification reflects an individual's belief that he or she has KSAO's that are not being used by the job he/she is in (Erdogan et al., 2011). This is the same argument of grandiosity as a method of self-esteem regulation described by narcissism researchers (Raskin et al., 1991). Perceived overqualification is thus a specific work strategy individuals use to prevent self-esteem loss at work. No matter what setbacks a narcissistic individual might face, the perceptually overqualified self-concept is retained as part of the self-esteem regulation process. In other words, narcissism causes individuals to inflate their self-concept and think of themselves as overqualified, regardless of their true level of KSAO's compared to the requirements of their job.

The third proposed driver of the development of perceived overqualification is generalized self-efficacy. Generalized self-efficacy refers to individuals' belief in their ability to complete tasks in general (Wood & Bandura, 1989). This is a global belief, across all situations and times. Individuals with high generalized self-efficacy feel that they complete the tasks they work on (Wood & Bandura, 1989). High self-efficacy has been suggested to relate to self-esteem, as individuals' sense of mastery helps them to feel more positively about themselves (Wood & Bandura, 1989).

Generalized self-efficacy has a downside, however. Vancouver and colleagues (Vancouver, Thompson, & Williams, 2001) suggest that when an individual's self-efficacy is too high, they are unable to engage in discrepancy production and reduction processes, leading to lower performance compared to an individual with moderate self-efficacy. Perceived overqualification is affected by self-efficacy beliefs as well. Similarly to the inability to produce and reduce discrepancies, individuals who perceive themselves as overqualified are unable to accurately assess their performance (Bolino & Feldman, 2000). This inability to correctly identify performance gaps is related to generalized self-efficacy; because these individuals have high generalized self-efficacy, they are unable to engage in discrepancy production and reduction. Thus, perceived overqualification is driven by generalized self-efficacy.

Lastly, objective overqualification is proposed as a predictor of perceived overqualification. Although these two forms of overqualification are considered to be distinct (Erdogan et al., 2011), their relationship is not fully understood. From a theoretical perspective, they are likely to be related as an individual's actual standing in terms of overqualification is likely to be related to their belief about whether or not they are overqualified.

These predictors are individual difference variables that are not tied to a single job context. As a result, the proposed model suggests that individuals high on these four predictors could perceive themselves as overqualified on any job they have. This idea further expands the existing overqualification research by

potentially explaining variability in perceptions of overqualification that has not been previously explained.

Why Does Overqualification Cause These Effects?

Ultimately, one of the key questions the overqualification literature fails to address is why perceiving oneself as overqualified leads to negative outcomes. The existing theories reviewed earlier (relative deprivation theory and equity theory) have not received research examination. Figure 1 proposes an expanded model for understanding these outcomes, based on relative deprivation theory, organizational justice theory and cognitive dissonance theory.

As described earlier, relative deprivation theory suggests that individuals feel negatively when they do not receive an outcome which they believe they have earned (Crosby, 1976). The relative deprivation perspective on overqualification suggests that perceived overqualification causes individuals to feel like they deserve positive outcomes (monetary rewards like raises and bonuses, other rewards like promotions, management responsibilities, or titles) from their organization; when these are not given, they become upset, causing the outcomes of overqualification (Erdogan et al., 2011). The proposed model expands on this idea. Although it views relative deprivation as a component of perceived overqualification's negative effects, those effects are driven more directly by organizational justice perceptions.

Organizational justice theory suggests that individuals perceive four forms of justice (Colquitt et al., 2001). The four forms of justice reflect different perceptions around the fairness of factors around an individual. The first form is

distributive justice, which reflects the fairness of outcomes that individuals receive (Colquitt et al., 2001). This form of justice is directly linked to equity theory (Adams, 1965), which also suggests that individuals are sensitive to different rewards provided by the environment. Distributively fair rewards are provided when all individuals receive the same reward. The second form of justice is called procedural justice and takes into account the decision processes used to arrive at the rewards given (Colquitt et al, 2001). This form of justice is also closely related to Adams' (1965) conceptualization of equity, because equity represents outcome fairness based on differing inputs of a comparison other. In other words, equity is concerned with the way rewards are provided by organizations. These dimensions operate independently, such that a given outcome might be looked at as distributively fair ("I got the same raise as everyone else") and procedurally unfair ("My manager did not take my extra work into account."; Colquitt et al., 2001).

The remaining two dimensions of justice are built on the interactions individuals have with organizational agents, such as managers and human resources employees (Colquitt et al., 2001). Interpersonal justice reflects the fairness around relationships and interpersonal contact individuals have with organizational agents (Colquitt et al., 2001). For example, an employee might perceive her environment as interpersonally fair if she has the same amount and quality of interactions with her manager as other employees. Informational justice represents a perception of fairness around information that is received by organizational agents (Colquitt et al., 2001). Information can be given in ways

that are perceived as fair (e-mail or internal social networking sites) due to all employees having access to the information, or in ways that are unfair (limited word-of-mouth communication) due to the limited accessibility of the information (Colquitt et al., 2001).

These justice perceptions are linked to many of the same negative outcomes to which perceived overqualification has been linked. Distributive, procedural, informational, and interpersonal justice have all been linked with job satisfaction (Colquitt et al., 2001), such that individuals who perceive higher levels of justice are more satisfied with their jobs. Furthermore, distributive, procedural, and informational justice show moderate to weak relationships with decreased withdrawal (Colquitt et al., 2001). Higher perceived interactional justice, a combined form of informational and interpersonal justice, is related to decreased negative affect (Hoobler & Hu, 2013). Injustice perceptions, at a global level, have also been linked with increased individual identity (vs. group/organizational identity; Johnson, Chang, & Rosen, 2010), suggesting that affective commitment might also suffer. Distributive and interactional injustice also predict stress levels (Robbins, Ford, & Tetrick, 2012), such that higher perceived injustice is linked with higher levels of stress. Procedural injustice predicts negative emotional state, a concept related to state negative affect (Robbins et al., 2012).

In essence, Figure 1 presents a cognitive dissonance approach to understanding the effects of overqualification. In line with Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theories, individuals who are overqualified have dissonance

between a cognition ("I deserve valuable outcomes.") that is driven by overqualification and what they receive from their environment (few valuable outcomes). This dissonance arises within these individuals, such that their cognition does not align with their perception of their rewards. In order to reduce this internal dissonance, individuals will identify their external situation as unjust. Specifically, they will see their organization as unjust because it does not grant them the outcomes that their cognition (perceived overqualification) demands. In so doing, these individuals will be able to alleviate the tension of cognitive dissonance. Once this dissonance reduction process has occurred, overqualified individuals will no longer see their work environment as just (e.g., not only are the outcomes unfair, but the process, information about the process, and interactions are unfair as well). These perceptions around unfairness then drive the negative outcomes that are shown in Figure 1 and discussed further below.

Ultimately, it is this cognitive dissonance reduction process that is key to understanding how overqualification affects a wide range of outcomes. This is supported by relationships between the predictors of overqualification and justice perceptions. Although no existing research examines these relationships, theoretical cases can be made. In terms of entitlement, a sense of entitlement may be linked with injustice perceptions, especially distributive injustice, when valued outcomes are not given (Fisk, 2010). Similarly, narcissistic individuals may feel that they deserve special treatment by the organization (Wille et al., 2013), and when that treatment is not given, they may perceive injustice because their narcissistic self-concept is not being reinforced. Generalized self-efficacy may

also affect individuals' outcome expectation and thus their justice perceptions because it inflates their sense of ability and accomplishment (Wood & Bandura, 1989).

Furthermore, individual predictors of the development of overqualification perceptions can be linked directly through to outcomes via this model. For example, individuals with high self-esteem that varies over time are more likely to get angry and hostile in a situation in which their self-concept is threatened (Kernis, Cornell, Sun, Berry, & Harlow, 1993). The deprivation of deserved rewards provides this situation for overqualified individuals, because their self-perception as overqualified requires that they receive rewards commensurate with their perceived qualifications. Not receiving those rewards causes anger, as Kernis and colleagues found, and causes outcomes like stress and withdrawal behaviors.

Expanding the Criterion Space

One limitation of the existing overqualification literature is that it ignores important outcomes that more fully describe the experience of overqualification. In line with the more humanistic approach to I/O psychology advanced by Lefkowitz (2005), three additional outcomes are proposed: state affectivity, stress, and withdrawal behaviors.

Affect, generally, refers to a cognitive appraisal of a situation, or the experience of feeling (Kaplan, Bradley, Luchman, & Haynes, 2009). Affect has been examined from two perspectives: State and trait. State affect is based on appraisal of a given situation at a set point in time (such as affect immediately

after being in a fight with a significant other), rather than the global appraisal used in forming trait affect (affect about one's romantic life in general; Kaplan et al., 2009). Research (Burke, Brief, & George, 1993; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) suggests that both state and trait affect vary along two dimensions. Positive affectivity refers to the feeling of positive states like happiness or joy. Negative affectivity refers to the feeling of negative states like anger or fear. Individuals' affect can vary along these dimensions, such that a given individual may have both high positive affect and high negative affect.

In general, the denial of outcomes overqualified individuals believe they deserve is likely to cause a decrease in state positive affect. As described by Kaplan and colleagues (Kaplan et al., 2009), low positive affect is reflective of low energy states (e.g., tiredness, lethargy, and sluggishness; Kaplan et al., 2009, pg. 163). Individuals who perceive themselves as overqualified may feel that they are unable to change their environment to get more of the rewards they deserve, leading to the low energy state associated with learned helplessness (Rosellini & Seligman, 1975). Also, as described earlier, perceived overqualification has been linked with increased depressive symptoms (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). Recent theorizations of depression (Werner-Seidler, Banks, Dunn, & Moulds, 2013) suggest that low positive affect is associated with depression, specifically with feelings of lack of pleasure (anhedonia), suggesting a further link between perceived overqualification and low positive affect. Together, these studies suggest that perceived overqualification may decrease individuals' state positive affectivity.

Strain is another important outcome that can be used to better understand the experience of overqualification. Strain refers to the psychological and physiological effects of stressors (Jex, Beehr, & Roberts, 1992). Strain is separate from related concepts like stress (which refers to the cause of strain; Jex et al., 1992) and burnout (which refers to a specific form of strain characterized by emotional exhaustion, feelings of inefficacy, and organizational cynicism; Maslach, Scahuefeli, & Leiter, 2001). Strain is an individualized response to stress, in the sense that a situation that causes one person strain may not cause it in another person (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Perceived overqualification is a stressor that will cause strain for individuals. Health psychology researchers (e.g., Catalano, Rook, & Dooley, 1986) have found that failure to advance in one's career (specifically, not getting rewards one feels are deserved) is stressful to individuals. This is analogous to the relative deprivation argument put forward by overqualification researchers. Furthermore, the underemployment literature has examined strain as an outcome previously. For example, meta-analysis of the job loss and unemployment literature (another form of underemployment) has found that self-reported stress levels may be an explanation for differences in life satisfaction between employed and unemployed individuals (McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005). Johnson and Johnson (1996) found high levels of strain (conceptualized as stress) in a sample of overqualified postal workers. This suggests that underemployment, and perceived overqualification as a specific form of it, leads to strain.

Lastly, withdrawal behaviors will provide additional context to the experience of overqualification. Withdrawal behaviors refer to behaviors used to disengage from the work environment (Berry, Lelchook, & Clark, 2012). Withdrawal behaviors are typically motivated by the presence of rewards and activities that are more appealing than work (Mobley, 1982). Traditionally, turnover has been seen as the ultimate form of withdrawal (Hanisch & Hulin, 1991), as it causes the individual to permanently disengage with a work environment. Two other important forms of withdrawal are lateness (showing up for work late) and absenteeism (taking a sick day or not showing up to work). Recent research (Berry et al., 2012) suggests that turnover, lateness and absenteeism are separate constructs and not part of a larger withdrawal construct. However, Berry and colleagues (Berry et al., 2012) also suggest that lateness is linked with absenteeism, which is in turn linked with turnover.

Overqualification research can be expanded by examining relationships with these precursors to turnover as well. Lateness and absenteeism have been relatively ignored by overqualification researchers, with no research studies examining its effects on lateness or withdrawal. Theoretically, overqualification can be linked with increased lateness and absenteeism. In line with the progression of withdrawal model (Rosse, 1988), overqualified individuals likely engage in lateness and absenteeism before moving on to turnover. Additionally, many overqualified people cannot leave their jobs entirely because they require some form of income from their work in order to survive. Also, although overqualification does not make rewards outside work more appealing, in line

with earlier theorizations of withdrawal (Mobley, 1982), overqualification does make work less appealing (e.g., less satisfying [Johnson & Johnson, 2000a], less empowering [Erdogan & Bauer, 2009]) which makes choosing between work and nonwork somewhat easier. Therefore, overqualified individuals are likely to withdraw from their work environment in less serious ways like showing up for work late or skipping a day.

Self-esteem is another under-researched outcome variable that explains the lived experience of perceived overqualification more fully. Self-esteem is a commonly researched construct in psychology reflecting individual's evaluation of themselves and their worth (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997). No existing studies have examined overqualification and self-esteem; however, psychological well-being has been found to be adversely impacted by perceived overqualification (Johnson & Johnson, 1996). Meta-analyses of the unemployment literature, another form of underemployment, have found that unemployed individuals have lower self-esteem (McKee-Ryan et al., 2005; Paul & Moser, 2009), potentially suggesting a relationship between underemployment and self-esteem. Furthermore, overqualification in general has also been described as underutilization of skills (Livingstone, 2010); a failure to use one's knowledge or skill may lead to individuals to have a more negative evaluation of themselves.

Together these three outcomes will provide a fuller picture of the experience of overqualification.

Moderators of These Relationships

The perceived overqualification literature has found two important moderators that mitigate perceived overqualification's negative effects: Empowerment (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009) and work values (competence and growth values; Maynard & Parfynova, 2013). These moderators are depicted in Figure 1 as moderating the relationship between perceived overqualification and perceptions of fairness. These moderators are placed here because they affect individuals' relative deprivation beliefs. If individuals are empowered or if competence and growth are important work values to them, they will not see themselves as being denied deserved outcomes. Empowered individuals, as described by Erdogan and Bauer (2009), receive a message that they are autonomous and can control their own outcomes; therefore, they will not believe they are being denied a reward they deserve. Similarly, individuals who believe competence and growth are important values will not see themselves as being denied because they believe that they will eventually get the rewards they desire (Maynard & Parfynova, 2013).

Perceived deprivation of deserved rewards is also proposed as a moderator. In line with relative deprivation theory (Crosby, 1976), overqualified individuals must be denied rewards they feel they deserve in order to have decreased justice perceptions and the host of negative outcomes. If overqualified individuals are rewarded as they believe they should be, the earlier described outcomes will disappear.

The addition of these moderators to the proposed model makes it comprehensive. The model proposes methods of the development of perceived overqualification beliefs and a revised theoretical mechanism for their impact on important outcomes while also including the latest in advancements in overqualification research.

Summary

Altogether, the proposed model of overqualification has key advantages over the existing models in the literature, and by examining under-researched criteria and including a theoretical explanation, the model allows I/O research and practice to develop a more comprehensive perspective on individuals who believe that they are overqualified. The hypotheses that follow from this model will be tested in this dissertation.

<div align="center">Statement of Hypotheses</div>

Hypotheses 1-5: Perceived overqualification will be related to increased withdrawal behaviors (H1), decreased job satisfaction (H2), decreased state positive affect (H3), increased stress (H4), and decreased self-esteem (H5).

Hypotheses 6-10: These relationships will be mediated by organizational justice perceptions.

Hypotheses 11-13: Increased entitlement (H11), narcissism (H12), and generalized self-efficacy (H13) will be related with increased perceived overqualification.

Method

In order to test the hypotheses with a sample of individuals who were currently working, an electronic format was used (Amazon Mechanical Turk; mTurk), with participants responding to surveys online.

Participants

Amazon mTurk, an online hub designed to link individuals with small tasks they can complete electronically (Barger, Behrend, Sharek, & Sinar, 2011), was used to collect data from 468 total participants, compared to a targeted sample size of 450. This sample size was selected because, in line with the *N:q* rule proposed by Jackson (2003), a minimum of 360 participants were needed to produce a model with reliable results (particularly standard errors; Kline, 2011). A total of 18 parameters (11 path coefficients and 7 disturbances) were estimated, and in line with Jackson's (2003) *N:q* ratio of 20:1, this led to a total of 360 participants for this part of the study. A total of 18 participants were excluded from the study for completing study measures too quickly (e.g., completing all study measures in under 5 minutes) and selecting a single response choice throughout the surveys. In these situations, participants did not receive payment for the study (see Materials). Five further participants were removed from further analysis for not completing all of the surveys; these participants received payment because they finished more than half of the measures. Demographic information for the 445 participants used in further analyses is displayed in Table 1, and employment information for the group is displayed in Table 2.

Table 1

Participant Demographics

Category	Number of Participants	Percent of Participants
Ethnicity		
White	268	60.77%
Latino/a	14	3.17%
Black	28	6.35%
Asian	112	25.40%
Pacific Islander	0	0%
Other	4	0.91%
Multiracial	15	3.40%
Sex		
Male	220	49.44%
Female	221	49.66%
Did not respond	4	0.90%
Age		
18-30	184	41.35%
31-40	156	35.06%
41-50	71	15.96%
51-60	22	4.94%
61-70	6	1.35%
71+	3	0.67%
Did not respond	3	0.67%
Education Level		
High School Diploma	25	5.62%
Some college	101	22.70%
Bachelor's Degree	197	44.27%
Master's Degree	104	23.37%
MD/JD/PhD/Other doctorate	15	3.37%
Did not respond	3	0.67%
Country		
USA	338	75.96%
Canada	1	0.22%
UK	1	0.22%
India	97	21.80%
Other	1	0.22%
Did not respond	7	1.57%

Table 2

Participant Employment Information

Category	Number of Participants	Percent of Participants
Years Working Full Time		
Less than 1	14	3.15%
1-5	121	27.19%
6-10	116	26.07%
11-15	60	13.48%
16-20	43	9.66%
21-25	36	8.09%
26-30	14	3.15%
31-35	11	2.47%
36-40	15	3.37%
41+	12	2.70%
Did not respond	3	0.67%
Currently Managing Others		
Yes	208	46.74%
No	234	52.58%
Did not respond	3	0.67%
Industry		
Construction	10	2.25%
Retail	58	13.03%
Accounting/Finance	53	11.91%
Government	28	6.29%
Manufacturing	34	7.64%
Technology	79	17.75%
Healthcare	48	10.79%
Food/Hospitality	17	3.82%
Insurance	12	2.70%
Other	103	23.15%
Did not respond	3	0.67%

Measures

A total of 11 measures were given to participants. All self-report measures were used.

Perceived overqualification. The Scale of Perceived Overqualification (SPOQ; Maynard et al., 2006) was used to measure perceived overqualification. The SPOQ contains nine items (sample item- "Someone with less education than myself could perform well on my job.") that participants responded to using a seven point Likert-type scale. Cronbach's alpha for this scale was .94. Appendix A contains the full version of the SPOQ.

Absenteeism & Lateness. To measure absenteeism and lateness, two single-item self-report measures were used. These items are contained in Appendix B. Self-report measures of absenteeism have been shown to be valid, reliable, and accurate in comparison to archival data from organizations (Johns & Miraglia, 2015).

Satisfaction. Job satisfaction was measured using five items from a scale developed by Brayfield and Rothe (1951). These five items are listed in Appendix C. A sample item is, "I feel fairly satisfied with my present job." The psychometric properties of this scale were investigated by Judge and colleagues (Judge, Bono, & Locke, 2000), who found high convergent validity with another common job satisfaction measure and high internal consistency. Furthermore, recent research on job satisfaction has used this measure (e.g., Todorova, Bear, & Weingart [2014]). Participants responded to the five items in the scale using a seven point Likert-type response scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7

(strongly agree). Internal consistency was found to be moderately high for this scale, with a Cronbach's alpha of .85.

State positive affect. The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988) was used to measure state positive affect. This scale contains 20 words that participants rated on a five-point frequency scale (ranging from "very slightly or not at all" to "extremely"). The full scale is provided in Appendix D. Additionally, the instructions of the PANAS were tailored to measure state affect rather than trait affect. Specifically, participants responded about how they feel over the last day (see Merz & Roesch, 2011 for example). Half of the words participants responded to related to positive affect (such as "interested" and "active"); the scores participants give to these words were averaged to create a scale score. The Cronbach's alpha for the positive affect items in the scale was .92, suggesting a high level of internal consistency.

Strain. In line with earlier research (Beal, Trougakos, Weiss, & Dalal, 2013), a single item was used to measure strain. This item is listed in Appendix E. This item asks individuals to consider their "stress," due to the suggestion by Jex and colleagues (Jex et al., 1992) that participants think of the word "stress" in the way that psychology researchers have operationalized strain (e.g., the psychological process of stress; Beal et al., 2013). In order to more fully understand strain over a period of time, this item was adapted to ask participants to respond over the last week. Participants responded to this item using a five-point scale, with higher scores indicating more strain.

Entitlement. To measure entitlement, the nine-item Psychological

Entitlement Scale (PES) developed by Campbell and colleagues (Campbell et al.,

2004) was used. This scale measures psychological entitlement using a seven-

point scale ranging from "Strong disagreement" to "Strong agreement" with each

item. A sample item is, "I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others," and

the full scale is listed in Appendix F. The PES was selected over other options

(Narcissistic Personality Inventory [Raskin & Terry, 1988]; Derber's [1978] four-

item scale) because it conceptualizes entitlement as an individual difference

variable with a single dimension (e.g., separate from narcissism [Campbell et al.,

2004]). Internal consistency for this scale was high, with a Cronbach's alpha of

.91.

Narcissism. The Single-Item Narcissism Scale (SINS; Konrath, Meier, &

Bushman, 2014) was used to measure narcissism. This scale has shown strong

psychometric properties, including high convergent validity (Konrath et al.,

2014). This scale was selected over other narcissism scales in order to reduce the

time participants spend completing the study measures while also balancing

psychometric considerations. Participants rated the item ("To what extent do you

agree with this statement: 'I am a narcissist.' [Note: The word 'narcissist' means

egotistical, self-focused, and vain."; see Appendix G) on a scale from 1 (not very

true of me) to 7 (very true of me).

Generalized self-efficacy. Generalized self-efficacy was measured using

an eight-item scale designed by Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001). The full scale is

listed in Appendix H. A sample item from this scale is, "I will be able to achieve

most of the goals that I have set for myself." Participants responded to these items on a five-point Likert type scale (ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree). High internal consistency was noted for this scale (Cronbach's alpha = .90).

Self-esteem. To measure self-esteem, the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (RSE) was used (Rosenberg, 1965). The RSE is the most commonly used self-esteem measure in the social sciences and, as such, has been demonstrated to have high internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and construct validity (Robins, Hendin, & Trzesniewski, 2001). This scale contains ten items (see Appendix I) that participants rated on a four-point Likert-type response scale (ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree). A sample item is, "On the whole, I am satisfied with myself." In order to determine the consistency of participants' responses, Cronbach's coefficient alpha was computed; high consistency was found (Cronbach's alpha = .90).

Organizational justice. The four components of organizational justice perceptions were measured using the scale designed by Colquitt (2001). This scale contains between four and seven items for each of the four dimensions of organizational justice. The full scale is available in Appendix J. A sample item (measuring procedural justice) is, "To what extent have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?" Items were rated on a five-point scale ranging from 1 ("to a small extent") to 5 ("to a large extent").

In line with suggestions to increase specificity by the scale developer, several changes to the scale directions were made (Colquitt, 2001). Specifically,

the procedural and distributive justice items directed participants to think about their rewards at work (rather than their "outcome"), and the interpersonal and informational justice items asked participants to think about their organization (rather than "the authority figure who enacted the procedure"). These changes are listed in Appendix J, with the original scale text in brackets.

Coefficient alpha was computed for each of the four dimensions. For distributive justice, Cronbach's alpha was .93. For procedural justice, Cronbach's alpha was .88. For interpersonal justice, Cronbach's alpha was .88. For informational justice, Cronbach's alpha was .91.

Objective overqualification. Objective overqualification was measured with two items. Specifically, these items measured objective overqualification from the standpoint of excess skills and excess qualifications, compared to the standard required by individuals' jobs. These items are included within the demographics measure in Appendix K.

Demographics. A series of eight questions were answered by participants to collect demographic information. These questions measured participants' age, field of employment, and other relevant demographic information. The items are listed in Appendix K.

Procedure

Potential participants saw the information about the study posted on mTurk in a human interaction task (HIT), with a title of "Survey about Your Work." When individuals clicked on the study title to accept the HIT, they were given further information; specifically, they were given the following text: "If you choose to

participate in this study, you will be asked a series of questions about your work and your feelings about your work. You will also be asked a series of demographic questions. This study will take approximately 30 minutes to complete." The description page on mTurk also detailed the amount participants would be paid for their work. Participants, if they opted to complete the study, were then given a link to Qualtrics. Once they clicked on this link, they were given the information sheet for this study (see Appendix L for this sheet), which included further details about the study and payment. Participants who opted to continue the study were then directed to the study measures. In order to reduce potential order effects, these surveys were presented in a random order, with the exception of the demographic survey, which was always the last measure participants filled out. Lastly, participants saw a page debriefing them about the study and offering a description of the amount they were to be paid.

Materials

Participants were paid $1.00 for completing the measures in the study. This figure was determined by examining the expected length of time the study took to complete (20-30 minutes) and the recommendations of I/O researchers (Barger et al., 2011). A total of roughly $655.20 was needed to complete the study, including both the $1.00 paid to participants and an additional surcharge of $0.40 per participant collected by Amazon. This funding was obtained from the researcher's personal funds.

Results

Two distinct analyses were used to examine the data. First, a set of

preliminary analyses were completed. Prior to testing any hypotheses, common

method variance was assessed. Given that all of the measures used in this study

were self-report measures, there was potential for common method variance to

affect the results of the study. As described by Podsakoff and colleagues

(Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003), common method variance

refers to the amount of variability in measures that can be attributed to the

measurement technique itself. Podsakoff and colleagues (Podsakoff et al., 2003)

suggest three potential methods of avoiding common method bias: using different

measurement techniques, separating measurements temporally, and separating

measurements psychologically. Due to the design of the current study and data

collection methods, alternative methods of measurement were not possible, and

the variables could not be measured at different times. Furthermore, there was

not an *a priori* identifiable factor that might drive common method variance. As

such, this study fell into Situation 7 (Podsakoff et al., 2003; pg. 898), and these

measures (particularly the measurement of perceived overqualification and the

measures of the three predictors) were separated psychologically as a result (e.g.,

displayed on different pages in Qualtrics). A confirmatory factor analysis was

also run, in line with the suggestions of Podsakoff and colleagues (Podsakoff et

al., 2003), to examine the existence and impact of a single latent common method

bias factor. To examine this, each of the measures in the study were used as

indicators of this exogenous variable. This CFA model fit the data poorly ($\chi^2 =$

885.89, $p > .001$; CFI = .65; TLI = .60; RMSEA = .14, 90% CI [.13, .15]; SRMR

= .12), suggesting there is not a significant amount of common method variance

to be concerned with. Furthermore, there were no significant path coefficients

between any of the study measures and the exogenous common method factor.

Taken as a whole, this information suggested that common method variance was

not a concern with this data.

Means, standard deviations, and correlations between the study variables

are presented in Table 3. The pattern of correlations allowed for some

preliminary analysis of the hypotheses. There was initial evidence that the

hypotheses relating to the predictors of overqualification (especially entitlement,

generalized self-efficacy, and narcissism) may not be valid. At the same time,

there was early support for the relationship between overqualification and forms

of justice.

As a part of the preliminary analyses, perceived overqualification scores

were examined more fully against demographic variables. First, participant

race/ethnicity was dummy-coded, to allow for analysis of its effect on

overqualification via multiple regression. Five dummy-coded variables were

created to compare minority race/ethnicity groups to a reference group of White

participants. The overall F-test for this regression model was significant, $F(5,

432) = 2.32$, p < .05. Further analysis suggested this was driven by Asian

participants; the dummy-coded variable associated with Asian participants was

the only variable with a significant relationship with perceived overqualification,

b = -5.05, SE = 1.56, β = -.16, t = -3.23, p < .01. This finding suggests that Asian

Table 3

Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Study Variables

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Perceived Overqualification														
2. Job Satisfaction	-.41													
3. Positive Affect	-.25	.37												
4. Entitlement	-.01	-.07	.32											
5. Generalized Self-Efficacy	-.09	.28	.46	.15										
6. Self-Esteem	-.27	.44	.39	.01	.61									
7. Procedural Justice	-.38	.52	.44	.07	.35	.28								
8. Distributive Justice	-.33	.54	.41	.06	.30	.24	.73							
9. Interpersonal Justice	-.21	.56	.23	-.12	.34	.36	.58	.51						
10. Informational Justice	-.30	.57	.36	-.02	.30	.26	.69	.65	.68					
11. Absenteeism	.09	-.12	.01	.19	-.09	-.16	.00	.02	-.10	-.04				
12. Lateness	.02	-.18	.04	.14	-.03	-.10	-.12	-.11	-.13	-.17	.29			
13. Strain	.22	-.31	-.22	.04	-.20	-.37	-.19	-.22	-.21	-.25	.13	.11		
14. Narcissism	.05	-.16	.08	.36	-.01	-.09	-.03	.02	-.14	-.07	.17	.22	.08	
Mean	39.60	24.57	32.42	33.91	32.23	38.34	23.05	13.19	15.37	17.52	1.54	1.57	2.52	2.02
SD	13.98	6.79	9.46	11.81	4.74	7.73	6.57	4.80	3.97	5.08	.79	.87	.98	1.04

Note: All correlations above .10 are significant at the $p < .05$ level; all correlations above .13 are significant at the $p < .01$ level.

participants tended to score lower on perceived overqualification than participants other race/ethnicity groups. The size of this effect (model adjusted $R^2 = .02$) suggested that this was not a large effect that would bias further analyses; therefore, no adjustments were made to the data.

Analysis of other demographic variables did not reveal significant effects. There was no significant effect for participant sex, $t(433) = -.91$, *ns*. A one-way ANOVA for participant age group was also non-significant, $F(5, 430) = 1.02$, *ns*. A *t*-test to compare participants with managerial responsibilities to those without revealed no differences, $t(434) = -1.80$, *ns*. A significant effect was noted for the industry in which participants worked, $F(9, 426) = 5.01$, $p < .001$; however, the effect size for this analysis was small ($\eta^2 = .10$), and post-hoc tests revealed only one homogenous subset of group means, suggesting that though pairs of means may differ, there are not distinct groups within the industry means. Though this effect was significant, these considerations drove the decision not to consider industry in further analyses.

Building the Model

To test the proposed model and pathways in a comprehensive way, structural equation modeling (SEM) was used. Specifically, the proposed model was examined using path analysis. As a form of SEM, this required three steps: Specification, identification, and estimation. In terms of specification, the proposed model was a recursive model. As such, the proposed model is also identified (Kline, 2012).

An initial test of the proposed model (Model 1; Figure 2) revealed a model with poor fit statistics, $\chi^2(46) = 420.69$, $p > .001$; CFI = .82; TLI = .60; RMSEA = .14, 90% CI [.13, .15]; SRMR = .11. Modifications to the model were made on the basis of two justifications. First, modifications were considered if they produced a change in the model chi-squared, as informed by the modification index within MPLUS. Second, modifications were considered only if they were deemed to be consistent with broader psychological theory. Three modifications were made in an incremental fashion. A covariation pathway was added between generalized self-efficacy and self-esteem (Model 2). Next, a direct path was added between positive affect and generalized self-efficacy, suggesting that generalized self-efficacy was predictive on positive affect (Model 3). Lastly, a path was added to allow overqualification to have a direct effect on job satisfaction (Model 4). Before making a successive change, fit statistics (especially AIC and BIC, given that the models were non-nested) were considered. Table 3 contains fit statistics for each model. On the basis of these fit statistics, Model 4 was selected as the model which fit the data the best from both an objective and relative point of view. Specifically, the smaller chi-squared value for Model 4 in comparison to all other models, as well as the lower AIC and BIC values in comparison to Models 2 and 3 and higher CFI and TLI values in comparison to all other models, were used as justification for retaining Model 4. RMSEA and SRMR played a secondary role, as both values are within the acceptable range (Kline, 2012).

Refinements were then made within Model 4. Specifically, the path

Figure 2. Model 1 Path Coefficients and Fit Statistics
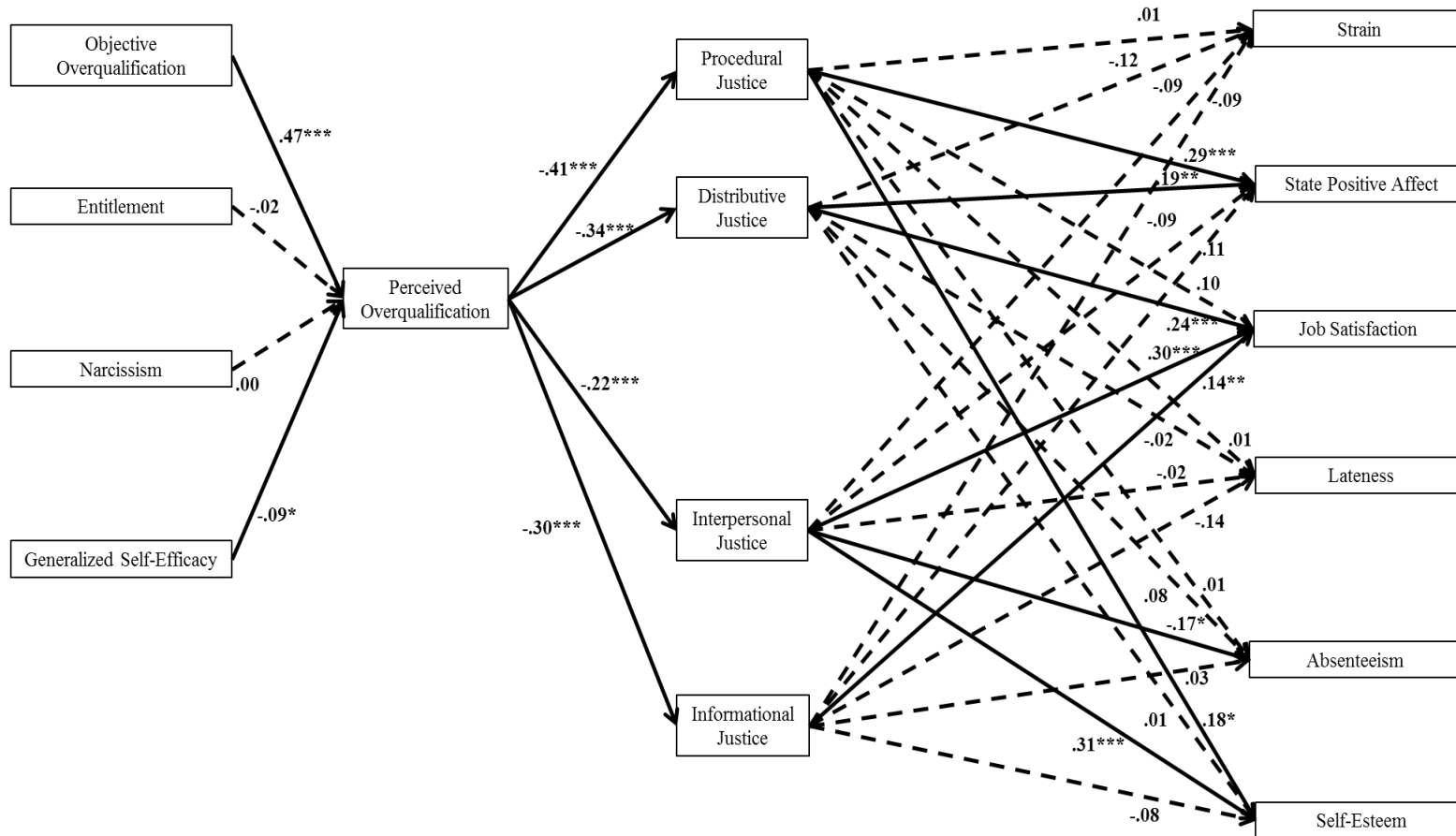
Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001; χ²(46) = 420.69, p < .001; CFI = .82, TLI = .60; RMSEA = .14, 90% CI [.13, .15]; SRMR = .11; AIC = 23459.20; BIC = 23761.50

Figure 2. Model 1 path coefficients and fit statistics.

Table 4

Model Fit Statistics

Model	χ^2	df	p	$\Delta \chi^2$	Δdf	Δp	AIC	BIC	CFI	TLI	RMSEA [90% CI]	SRMR
1	420.69	46	< .001				23459.20	23761.50	0.82	0.60	.14 [.13, .15]	0.11
2	309.68	48	< .001				26520.02	26836.99	0.87	0.74	.11 [.10, .13]	0.10
3	255.71	47	< .001				26468.05	26789.09	0.90	0.79	.10 [.09, .11]	0.10
4	238.13	46	< .001				26452.47	26777.58	0.91	0.80	.10 [.09, .11]	0.09
4.1	238.13	47	< .001	0.00	1	*ns*	26450.47	26771.51	0.91	0.81	.10 [.09, .11]	0.09

Note: AIC = Aikaike information criterion; BIC = Bayesian information criterion; CFI = confirmatory fit index; TLI = Tucker-Lewis Index; RMSEA = Root mean squared error of approximation; CI = confidence interval; SRMR = standardized root mean squared residual.

closest to 0 (narcissism to perceived overqualification) was fixed to 0. To identify the effect of this change, the chi-squared values for this model (4.1) were compared to the less parsimonious main model. The difference in chi-squared between the models was significant (see Table 3), suggesting that the fixing this path to 0 made the model fit the data worse. As a result, the less parsimonious Model 4 was retained.

Tests of Hypotheses

Model 4, $\chi^2(46) = 238.13$, $p > .001$; CFI = .91; TLI = .80; RMSEA = .10, 90% CI [.09, .11]; SRMR = .09, is depicted in Figure 3. This model is in line with the proposed model, lending some support to the hypotheses on a global level. The path coefficients for the relationship between the justice components and outcomes are listed in Table 5.

Hypothesis 1 suggested a relationship between perceived overqualification and withdrawal behaviors (e.g., lateness and absenteeism). There was no support for Hypothesis 1 on the basis on the correlations (neither withdrawal measure correlated significantly with overqualification at the $p < .05$ level) or Model 4 (e.g., there was no direct path between perceived overqualification and either withdrawal measure).

Hypothesis 2 suggested a negative relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction. On the basis of both correlational data (r = -.41, p < .01) and the path model ($\beta = -.16$, SE = .04, t = -4.22, p < .001), Hypothesis 2 was supported, suggesting there is a direct, negative relationship between job satisfaction and perceived overqualification.

Figure 3. Model 4 Path Coefficients and Fit Statistics
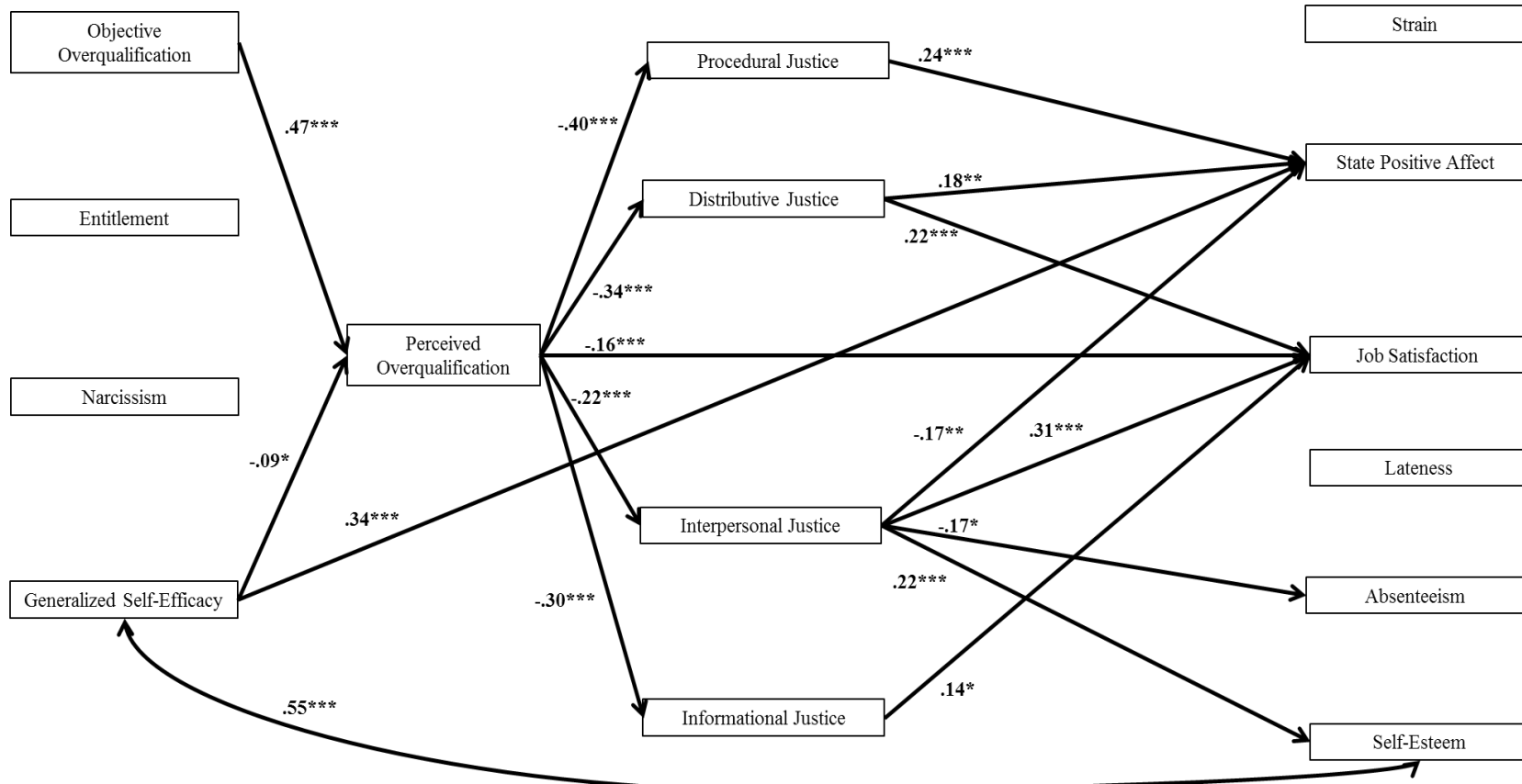
Note: *p < .05, **p < .01, ***p < .001; $\chi^2(46)$ = 238.13, p < .001; CFI = .91, TLI = .80; RMSEA = .10, 90% CI [.09, .11]; SRMR = .09; AIC = 26452.47; BIC = 26777.58

Figure 3. Model 4 (Final Acceptable Model) path coefficients and fit statistics.

Table 5

Path Coefficients between Justice Perceptions and Outcomes

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Procedural Justice									
2. Distributive Justice	.69***								
3. Interpersonal Justice	.52***	.48***							
4. Informational Justice	.66***	.61***	.67***						
5. Job Satisfaction									
6. Positive Affect					.15**				
7. Absenteeism					-.10*	.03			
8. Lateness					-.12*	.14**	.30***		
9. Strain					-.18***	-.09	.13**	.06	

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

Hypotheses 3-5, describing relationships between perceived overqualification and state positive affect, stress, and self-esteem, received support from the correlational data; however, the more rigorous test within the path model did not reveal significant paths between these. As a result, Hypotheses 3-5 were not supported.

Hypotheses 6-10 pertained to the mediating effect of organizational justice perceptions. Given that correlational data was not supportive of Hypothesis 1, Hypothesis 6 (organizational justice perceptions mediating the perceived overqualification-withdrawal relationship) was also not supported. However, there is an indirect path between perceived overqualification and absenteeism, via interpersonal justice. Due to the size of the path coefficients, the strength of the indirect path is slight ($\beta = .04$). The sum of the evidence in this area suggests that Hypothesis 6 is not supported.

Hypothesis 7 suggested that justice perceptions would mediate the relationship between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction. There are indirect paths between job satisfaction and overqualification via distributive justice ($\beta = - .06$), interpersonal justice ($\beta = -.07$), and informational justice ($\beta = - .04$), as well as the aforementioned direct path. On the whole, this evidence leads to Hypothesis 7 being supported; distributive, interpersonal, and informational justice perceptions partially mediate this relationship.

Hypothesis 8 suggested that the relationship between overqualification and state positive affect would be mediated by justice perceptions. There is support for full mediation, in that there are only indirect paths between overqualification

and state positive affect, via procedural ($\beta = -.10$), distributive ($\beta = -.06$), and interpersonal ($\beta = -.04$) justice perceptions. As a result, Hypothesis 8 is supported.

Hypothesis 9 pertained to the mediating effect of organizational justice perceptions on the relationship between overqualification and strain. Hypothesis 9 was not supported, as there was neither a direct path nor any indirect paths between perceived overqualification and strain.

Hypothesis 10 suggested that organizational justice perceptions would mediate the relationship between perceived overqualification and self-esteem. There is a significant indirect path between overqualification and self-esteem via interpersonal justice ($\beta = -.05$). The strength of this relationship is weak; however, Hypothesis 10 is supported.

Hypotheses 11-13 considered entitlement, narcissism, and generalized self-efficacy as drivers of perceived overqualification. Within Model 4, neither entitlement nor narcissism was significantly related to perceived overqualification; therefore, Hypotheses 11 and 12 were not supported. Hypothesis 13 was also not supported. Though there was a significant path coefficient between generalized self-efficacy and perceived overqualification ($\beta = -.09$, $SE = .04$, $t = -2.15$, $p < .05$), this coefficient was in the opposite direction of what was hypothesized.

On the whole, Model 4 provided mixed support for the hypotheses considered in this dissertation.

Other Findings

Model 4 included some interesting findings which did not directly relate to any hypotheses. Objective overqualification was examined as a potential predictor of perceived overqualification. Two items were used to assess objective overqualification (one targeting having extra qualifications and one targeting having extra skills/experience). A two-way ANOVA examining their impact on perceived overqualification revealed a significant interaction effect, $F(1, 430) = 12.72$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .03$, and significant main effects for qualifications, $F(1, 430) = 8.49$, $p < .01$, partial $\eta^2 = .02$, and skills, $F(1, 430) = 62.80$, $p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .13$. Although the interaction and main effect for qualifications were both significant, their small effect sizes suggest that they may not have practical relevance. As such, it appears that the skills item is related to perceived overqualification, such that those who say they have more skills than needed for their job score higher on the perceived overqualification measure.

This item was then dummy-coded (with those who responded as not having more skills than needed as the reference group) and used within the path models as a predictor of perceived overqualification. Within Model 4, it emerged as significant, $\beta = .47$, $SE = .04$, $t = 12.38$, $p < .001$.

Generalized self-efficacy had two relationships added to the proposed model as a part of the modification processes. First, a covariance path was added between generalized self-efficacy and self-esteem, $\beta = .55$, $SE = .04$, $t = 15.77$, $p < .001$. Second, a direct path from generalized to self-efficacy to state positive affect was added, $\beta = .34$, $SE = .04$, $t = 7.68$, $p < .001$.

Discussion

The goal of this study was to deepen understanding of perceived overqualification by developing a broader model of it, including predictors, a new perspective on why it affect certain outcomes, and an expanded criterion space. On the whole, there is mixed support for this goal.

Predictors of Overqualification

Three theoretical predictors of overqualification were proposed: Entitlement, narcissism, and generalized self-efficacy. Only generalized self-efficacy was found to be related to perceived overqualification. Beyond the hypotheses, objective overqualification was found to be a significant predictor of perceived overqualification. The results for entitlement as a predictor suggest that individuals' levels of entitlement do not affect their perceptions of overqualification. There are several reasons why entitlement may not play as big a role as the initial theory suggested. Entitlement may be a function of the situation in which individuals find themselves (Tomlinson, 2013), with rewards and organizational justice as antecedents to the development of entitlement rather than outcomes of it. Further, entitlement may be legitimate at times (Fisk, 2010; Tomlinson, 2013); individuals may have appropriately put in the time or work necessary to receive a reward. In these situations, rather than viewing themselves as overqualified, employees may see themselves as justly entitled to the outcomes and qualified to receive them. Excessive entitlement may be difficult to assess from an objective point of view, as it requires the understanding of individuals' objective and subjective contributions (Fisk, 2010; Naumann, Minsky, &

Sturman, 2002). Entitlement beliefs are also just one point in a model of entitlement (Tomlinson, 2013); they are translated into expectations and attitudinal, behavioral, and psychological outcomes. As a result, entitlement beliefs, as measured in the current study, may be more distal to perceived overqualification (a psychological outcome) than the model suggests.

Narcissism was also found to have a non-significant effect on perceived overqualification. This finding may be due to a gap between narcissists' understanding of themselves and their understanding of how others view them. Although they are stereotyped as lacking insight into themselves, those who score high on narcissism measures may in fact have a strong sense of how others view them. Carlson and colleagues (Carlson, Vazire, & Oltmanns, 2011) found that narcissists recognize that others view them more negatively than they view themselves. This may help narcissists to recognize that even though they feel overqualified, they do not appear to others as such. Despite an inflated perception of their own abilities, they do not feel they are overqualified as they recognize that others are not likely to evaluate their skills in the same way. Narcissism has also been suggested to contain four factors: Exploitativeness/Entitlement, Leadership/Authority, Superiority/Arrogance, and Self-Absorption/Self-Admiration (Emmons, 1984). Perceived overqualification may only be affected by the first one of these, which represents being deserving of special rewards. The current study may not have been able to capture this distinction. This dimension of narcissism is also very similar in terms of construct definition and measurement to entitlement; thus, the variance in perceived overqualification

explained by entitlement and narcissism may be the same or similar, leading to neither predictor being significant in combination.

Generalized self-efficacy was found to be significantly related to perceived overqualification; however, the direction was opposite to what was hypothesized earlier. Individuals with strong beliefs that they are capable are less likely to think of themselves as overqualified for their roles. Though surprising, this result appears to be in line with Bandura and Locke's (2003) suggestion that high self-efficacy beliefs allow people a sense of control over stress and anxiety. A strong sense of self-efficacy could have helped participants to feel they had control over how they viewed themselves, leading to them feeling they were less overqualified. This is further borne out by the strong, positive, direct links between generalized self-efficacy and positive outcomes like self-esteem and state positive affect. Together, these results suggest that the proposed theory was incorrect in assuming that high self-efficacy beliefs are necessarily detrimental to individuals.

Objective overqualification was found to have a strong relationship with perceived overqualification. This is both unsurprising and interesting. The conceptual similarity between objective and perceived overqualification has been previously noted (Erdogan, Bauer, Peiro, & Truxillo, 2011); however, it has not been directly measured before. The level of the relationship between objective and perceived overqualification in this study is of particular interest because it fits with a line of reasoning that, although similar, they are distinct concepts (e.g., Fine & Nevo, 2008; Erdogan et al., 2011). This finding suggests that objective

overqualification affects perceived overqualification, but it does not fully explain it.

Further Understanding of Why Overqualification Affects Outcomes

Prior to the current study, the link between overqualification and the outcomes it affects was considered from two perspectives: equity theory and relative deprivation theory. The current study suggests that organizational justice perceptions have a role to play in this model as well. Perceived overqualification was significantly related to all four forms of organizational justice. This provides support for the theoretical model proposed in this study. From the perspective of Festinger's (1957) cognitive dissonance theory, the results of this study support the idea that internal dissonance between perceived overqualification and rewards can be resolved by participants changing their beliefs about an external entity (e.g., their organization). This is concerning for organizations. Attributional theory research (Rothbart & Park, 1986) suggests that once negative attributions about an entity are built, they are difficult to shift. Repairing the relationship between perceived overqualified employees and their organization may take great effort due to the number of positive interactions that would be required for these negative attributions to shift (Rothbart & Park, 1986).

Looking at the model more specifically, employees who believe they are overqualified for their jobs are likely to feel that their organization and its actors are unjust. This link can help to inform further research on perceived overqualification, as it provides a clear theoretical and empirical pathway through which overqualification causes negative outcomes. Of particular interest is that

overqualification affected all forms of justice perceptions. The link between overqualification and distributive justice is consistent with consistent with both equity and relative deprivation theory, in that overqualified individuals are sensitive to their inputs (their overqualified state) and the outputs they receive. However, the relationships with procedural, interpersonal, and informational justice are more surprising. Of all four forms of justice, overqualification had the greatest effect on procedural justice, suggesting that overqualified individuals are attentive to the way rewards are determined. Relative deprivation may come into play here, with overqualified individuals perceiving their rewards as being unfairly decided upon when they do not match their beliefs of what they deserve.

The relationships between perceived overqualification and interpersonal and informational justice are more difficult to untangle. Interpersonal justice had the most effects on the outcomes examined in this study, suggesting it has a key role to play. Interpersonal justice refers to the fairness of interactions between the person and their organization through organizational agents (Colquitt, Conlon, Wesson, Porter, & Ng, 2001). This finding suggests overqualified individuals perceive these relationships with the organization's agents (e.g., their line manager, HR, etc.) as being unfair. At the same time, overqualified individuals feel the information they receive about their rewards is not fair as well (overqualification relates to lower informational justice). Taken as a whole, overqualified individuals seem to view their entire relationship with their organizations as unfair.

One concern in this area is the connection between the nature of this relationship and entitlement. Believing that their organization and its actors are unfair may be an attitudinal outcome of a high sense of entitlement (Tomlinson, 2013). In the present study, however, there is no significant direct link between justice perceptions and entitlement in the final model, and the pattern of correlations between them suggests a positive relationship. Within the current study, higher justice perceptions are linked with a higher sense of entitlement, possibly owing to legitimate entitlement. Tomlinson (2013) theorized that entitlements given to individuals in organizations may include voice in decisions made about them; as a result, individuals in the present study may be feeling a sense of these entitlements, causing a link with forms of justice. Despite the conceptual similarity between entitlement and the relationship between overqualified individuals and their organizations, there is no direct negative relationship.

Expanded Set of Criteria

There is mixed support for the role of overqualification affecting broader outcomes than presently considered in the literature. Overqualification affected job satisfaction directly and indirectly and state positive affect, absenteeism, and self-esteem indirectly. There was no significant direct or indirect effect of overqualification on either strain or lateness.

One of the goals of this dissertation was to examine outcomes that can explain the experience of overqualification for individuals holding those beliefs. As such, the relationships between overqualification and these expanded criteria

are of critical interest. Job satisfaction is the most well-understood of these relationships. The current study aligns well with a series of previous studies (Erdogan & Bauer, 2009; Johnson & Johnson, 2000a; Maynard, Joseph, & Maynard, 2006; Maynard & Parfynova, 2013) demonstrating links between perceived overqualification and job satisfaction. The addition of justice dimensions within the current study helps to clarify this relationship, though the direct connection suggests there may be further mediating variables to explain this relationship beyond justice perceptions.

State positive affect was affected by overqualification through procedural, distributive, and interpersonal justice. One interesting finding in this area is the difference in the direction of the relationships; while procedural and distributive justice relate positively to state positive affect and negatively to overqualification, interpersonal justice relates negatively to both concepts. This suggests that state positive affect increases when individuals feel higher levels of fairness about their rewards and the way at which they were arrived and decreases when they feel higher levels of fairness about their interactions. The procedural and distributive justice elements of this finding are in line with the hypotheses. Overqualification links indirectly and negatively with state positive affect. As such, people's reports of positive feelings (Kaplan, Bradley, Luchman, & Haynes, 2009) decrease when they feel overqualified. This aligns closely with the learned helplessness approach to depression in overqualified individuals (Johnson & Johnson, 1996; Werner-Seidler, Banks, Dunn, & Moulds, 2013), in that overqualification links to low energy states associated with low positive

affectivity. At the same time, there is a positive link between overqualification and state positive affect via interpersonal justice, implying that people who feel a higher level of interpersonal justice experience a lower level of positive affect. This finding could be an artifact of the forms of justice explaining similar variance in state affect. The patterns of correlations found in this study match Colquitt and colleagues' (Colquitt, Scott, Rodell, Long, Zapata, Conlon, & Wesson, 2013) finding that justice dimensions relate positively to positive affect. Within their meta-analytic structural equation model, however, the relationship between interpersonal justice and state positive affect disappeared. Similarly, in the current study, the presence of additional forms of justice affected the variability interpersonal justice explained in state positive affect.

Together, these results suggest a more complicated story around positive affect than the proposed theory suggested. Further context around the idea of overqualification can help to resolve this contradiction. Erdogan and colleagues (Erdogan et al., 2011) suggest that overqualification is a form of underemployment, in which individuals have or feel they have more skills than they need. At the same time as being unfulfilled or unsatisfied with work, overqualified individuals may self-select into jobs where they know they are overqualified because it allows them to pursue non-work concerns (Erdogan et al., 2011).

Findings in terms of withdrawal behaviors were mixed. Though overqualification had an effect on absenteeism through interpersonal justice, there were no significant links to lateness. This is somewhat at odds with the

progression of withdrawal model (Rosse, 1988), which suggests that lateness may be a precursor to absenteeism. The key to understanding this relationship may be the degree of withdrawal individuals exhibit. Lateness is a preliminary method of avoiding work (Berry, Lelchook, & Clark, 2012; Rosse, 1988) and may not help overqualified individuals move out of their work environment enough. Absenteeism withdraws individuals more fully from their work.

Self-esteem had a negative relationship with overqualification, through interpersonal justice. Again, the quality of the relationships individuals have with organizational agents in general and the fairness of those interactions specifically mediate the relationship between overqualification and an outcome of interest. Fairness, in general, has been linked to the activation of promotion focus and happy affect (Johnson, Chang, & Rosen, 2010), lending support to the importance of justice in building self-esteem from happiness. Interpersonal justice, in particular, has been linked with higher daily self-esteem (Ferris, Spence, Brown, & Heller, 2012), due to the positive feelings of group membership it fosters.

Strain had no significant relationships with dimensions of justice or overqualification. Though strain was noted as an outcome for other forms of underemployment (e.g., job loss; McKee-Ryan, Song, Wanberg, & Kinicki, 2005), it does not appear to be an outcome of overqualification. One reason for this is the difference between challenge and hindrance stressors. As described by Podsakoff, LePine, and LePine (2007), challenge stressors help individuals to build their skills while hindrance stressors are blockers that stand in their way. Overqualification may be viewed as a challenge to be overcome (e.g., "I will

show my organization how overqualified I am so I can advance."); as a result, their actual reports of stress may not be as high.

Overall, these findings help to explain a bigger picture view of what overqualification feels like for those who are going through it. Though the theory proposed in this study looked at overqualification as having a negative impact on individuals, the findings are more mixed. In line with Erdogan and colleagues' (Erdogan et al., 2011) theorizations, perceived overqualification is not all bad. Beyond its positive effects on job performance, it may have more complicated effects on individuals as well.

Looking beyond the Hypothesized Model

Going beyond the hypotheses set forth in this study, there were several interesting results in terms of understanding perceived overqualification more broadly. In particular, this study examined the effect of several demographic variables on overqualification. The lack of differences between individuals on the basis of sex, years of full time experience, industry, and age provide a deeper understanding of which individuals consider themselves to be overqualified. Despite popular press theorizations (see Gottlieb, 2011; Matthisen, 2015), Millennials (a popular press designation for individuals born roughly between 1982 and 2004; Bump, 2014) are not significantly likely to consider themselves as more overqualified. Instead, it appears that any employee, regardless of their age, could potentially view themselves as overqualified, given the right conditions (e.g., objective overqualification and high generalized self-efficacy).

One exception to this is based on race/ethnicity. The present study found a significant effect for race/ethnicity in predicting perceived overqualification, such that most racial-ethnic groups did not score differently, but Asians scored lower. Qualitative research on Asian-American leaders (Kawahara, Pal, & Chiu, 2013) sheds some light on this. Asian-Americans report the importance of traditional Asian values, such as the value of education and strong work ethic, as being a key part of the foundation of their leadership (Kawahara et al., 2013). As a result, Asians may be more likely to see themselves as appropriately qualified for the work they do. Though they may be objectively overqualified, their cultural values may help them to deal with any apparent misalignment between their skills and qualifications and those required by their job.

Limitations

There are several limitations with the current study. First, the proposed study used only self-report measures. Though this study was not prone to common method variance, it may be helpful for future research to examine multiple sources of data in order to develop a fuller picture of perceived overqualification's effects. Second, the current study used a one-item measure of narcissism. Though this measure was shown in earlier research to have high psychometric quality, it lacks the multidimensionality of other narcissism measures like the Narcissistic Personality Inventory (Emmons, 1984). As a result, the current study was not able to break narcissism down more concretely to understand component effects on perceived overqualification.

Implications for Future Research and Practice

There are key implications for this dissertation in terms of both the science and practice of I/O psychology. In terms of key scientific advancements, this dissertation advances a model for clarifying and organizing the overqualification literature. The model described in the current study can be used as a starting point for further research to understand perceived overqualification and its impacts, and further revisions to the model can be incorporated into future studies. Specifically, future researchers may want to look for opportunities to combine multiple forms of data (self-report, other-report, archival data) to understand key parts of the model, especially objective overqualification and withdrawal, more fully. There may also be an opportunity for research to address the question of the stability of perceived overqualification. For example, it is unknown how individuals who see themselves as overqualified will respond to interventions aimed at recalibrating their self-perceptions (e.g., performance appraisal data, benchmarks that compare them to other leaders in their industry/field).

In terms of practical implications, this dissertation allows I/O practitioners to understand perceived overqualification and how it develops. In terms of selecting employees, this dissertation shines a light on the importance of generalized self-efficacy and objective overqualification as predictors of perceived overqualification. Hiring managers who want to avoid bringing perceived overqualified employees into their organizations can look for ways of assessing these variables through resume reviews or pre-employment testing. At the same time, this study provides insight into the ways overqualification causes

negative outcomes. It may be possible for individual executive coaching to address perceptions of organizational justice to prevent these negative effects from occurring. As well, organizations have further clarity into the difficulty of shifting the negative attributions that perceived overqualified employees ascribe to their companies. Multiple and sustained positive interactions will be required to change these attributions and remove the injustice these employees feel toward their organizations.

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Appendix A- Scale of Perceived Overqualification (SPOQ; Maynard, Joseph, &

Maynard, 2006)

1. My job requires less education than I have.

2. The work experience that I have is not necessary to be successful on this

   job.

3. I have job skills that are not required for this job.

4. Someone with less education than myself could perform well on my job.

5. My previous training is not being fully utilized on this job.

6. I have a lot of knowledge that I do not need in order to do my job.

7. My education level is above the education level required by my job.

8. Someone with less work experience than myself could do my job just as

   well.

9. I have more abilities than I need in order to do my job.

Appendix B- Absenteeism and Lateness Scales

How often have you missed work over the last month?

     0 days   1-2 days   3-4 days   5-6 days   7+ days

How often have you been late to work over the last month?

     0 days   1-2 days   3-4 days   5-6 days   7+ days

Appendix C- Job Satisfaction Scale (adapted from Brayfield & Rothe, 1951)

Please respond to these items using the following scale:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

1. I am fairly satisfied with my present job.

2. Most days I am enthusiastic about my work.

3. Each day at work seems like it will never end.*

4. I find real enjoyment in my work.

5. I consider my job to be rather unpleasant.*

*Reverse-coded

Appendix D- The Positive and Negative Affect Schedule

This scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to what extent you have felt this way today. Use the following scale to record your answers.

1	2	3	4	5
Very slightly or not at all	A little	Moderately	Quite a bit	Extremely

_____ Interested*   _____ Irritable

_____ Distressed   _____ Alert*

_____ Excited*   _____ Ashamed

_____ Upset   _____ Inspired*

_____ Strong*   _____ Nervous

_____ Guilty   _____ Determined*

_____ Scared   _____ Attentive*

_____ Hostile   _____ Jittery

_____ Enthusiastic*   _____ Active*

_____ Proud*   _____ Afraid

*Items measuring positive affect

Appendix E- Strain Measure (Beal, Trougakos, Weiss, & Dalal, 2013)

So far this week, to what extent have you experienced stress?

Not at all				Extremely
1	2	3	4	5

Appendix F- Psychological Entitlement Scale (Campbell, Bonacci, Exline, & Bushman, 2004)

Please respond to the following items using the number that best reflects your own beliefs. Please use the following 7-point scale:

1 = strong disagreement

2 = moderate disagreement

3 = slight disagreement

4 = neither agreement or disagreement

5 = slight agreement

6 = moderate agreement

7 = strong agreement

1. I honestly feel I'm just more deserving than others.

2. Great things should come to me.

3. If I were on the Titanic, I would deserve to be on the *first* lifeboat!

4. I demand the best because I'm worth it.

5. I do not necessarily deserve special treatment.*

6. I deserve more things in my life.

7. People like me deserve an extra break now and then.

8. Things should go my way.

9. I feel entitled to more of everything.

*Reverse-coded

Appendix G- Single-Item Narcissism Scale (SINS; Konrath, Meier, & Bushman, 2014)

To what extent do you agree with this statement: "I am a narcissist." [Note: The word 'narcissist' means egotistical, self-focused, and vain.

Not very true of me		Very true of me
1	4	7

Appendix H- Generalized Self-Efficacy Scale (Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001)

1. I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself.

2. When facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them.

3. In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me.

4. I believe I can succeed at most any endeavor to which I set my mind.

5. I will be able to successfully overcome many challenges.

6. I am confident that I can perform effectively on many different tasks.

7. Compared to other people, I can do most tasks well.

8. Even when things are tough, I can perform quite well.

Appendix I- Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale (Rosenberg, 1965)

Please select the appropriate answer for each item, depending on whether you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree with it.

1. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

2. At times I think I am no good at all.

3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

6. I certainly feel useless at times.

7. I feel that I'm a person of worth.

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

9. All in all, I am inclined to think that I am a failure.

10. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

Appendix J- Justice Scale (Colquitt, 2001)

Procedural justice

The following items refer to the procedures used to arrive at your rewards at work [outcome]. To what extent:

1. Have you been able to express your views and feelings during those procedures?

2. Have you had influence over the rewards [outcome] arrived at by those procedures?

3. Have those procedures been applied consistently?

4. Have those procedures been free of bias?

5. Have those procedures been based on accurate information?

6. Have you been able to appeal the rewards [outcome] arrived at by those procedures?

7. Have those procedures upheld ethical and moral standards?

Distributive justice

The following items refer to your rewards at work [outcome]. To what extent:

1. Do your rewards [Does your outcome] reflect the effort you have put into your work?

2. Are your rewards [Is your outcome] appropriate for the work you have completed?

3. Do your rewards [Does your outcome] reflect what you have contributed to the organization?

4. Are your rewards [Is your outcome] justified, given your performance?

Interpersonal justice

The following items refer to your organization [the authority figure who enacted the procedure]. To what extent:

1. Has your organization [he/she] treated you in a polite manner?

2. Has your organization [he/she] treated you with dignity?

3. Has your organization [he/she] treated you with respect?

4. Has your organization [he/she] refrained from improper remarks or comments?

Informational justice

The following items refer to your organization [the authority figure who enacted the procedure]. To what extent:

1. Has your organization [he/she] been candid in its [his/her] communications with you?

2. Has your organization [he/she] explained the procedures thoroughly?

3. Were [his/her] explanations regarding the procedures reasonable?

4. Has your organization [he/she] communicated details in a timely manner?

5. Has your organization [he/she] seemed to tailor its [his/her] communications to individuals' specific needs?

Appendix K- Demographic Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions.

1. What is your age?

2. Which of the following racial/ethnic groups do you belong to?

    White (non-Hispanic)

    Hispanic/Latino/a

    Black/African-American

    Asian (including Indian subcontinent)

    Multi-racial

    Other

3. Which country do you reside in?

4. How many years have you been working full-time (40 hours or more per week)?

5. Do your qualifications exceed the minimum requirements for your job (e.g., you hold a Master's degree but your job requires only a bachelor's degree)?

    Yes   No

6. Compared to the skills and knowledge listed in my job description, I have more than the required skills and knowledge needed.

    True   False

7. In which of the following fields/industries do you work?

    Construction   Retail   Accounting/Finance

    Government   Manufacturing   Technology

Health Care   Food/Hospitality   Insurance

Other (please list): _____

8. Do you currently manage any employees?

9. What is your sex?

Male   Female

10. What level of educated have you completed?

High school diploma

Some college

Bachelor's degree

Master's degree

M.D./J.D./Ph.D./other doctorate degree

Appendix L- Study Information Sheet

<u>INFORMATION SHEET FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH STUDY</u>
Understanding Perceived Overqualification

Principal Investigator: Gregory F. Fernandes, Ph.D. Student

Institution: DePaul University, USA

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Jane Halpert, Ph.D., Department of Psychology

We are conducting a research study because we are trying to learn more about the effects of believing you are overqualified for your job. We are asking you to be in the research because you are a currently employed mTurk user who is able to read and understand English. If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to fill out a series of surveys. The surveys will include questions about your job and your beliefs about your work. We will also collect some personal information about you, including standard demographics (age, ethnicity, sex, educational level, country of residence) and information about your work (objective overqualification, work history, industry in which you currently work).

This study will take about 30 minutes of your time. Research data collected from you will be kept confidential.

Your participation is voluntary, which means you can choose not to participate. There will be no negative consequences if you decide not to participate or change your mind later after you begin the study. You can withdraw your participation at any time prior to submitting your survey. If you change your mind later while answering the survey, you may simply exit the survey by closing your browser window. Your decision whether or not to be in the research will not affect your mTurk worker completion score.

You will be given $1.00 for your participation in the research. This payment is based on appropriate responses to items in the study (e.g., not selecting the same answer to all items). If the data you provide does not meet this standard, it will be deleted from any further analyses, and you will not receive payment. If your data does meet this standard, you will receive payment in full. Since you are enrolling in this research study through the Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk) site, we need to let you know that information gathered through Amazon MTurk is not completely anonymous. Any work performed on Amazon MTurk can potentially be linked to information about you on your Amazon public profile page, depending on the settings you have for your Amazon profile. Any linking of data by MTurk to your ID is outside of the control of the researcher for this study. We will not be accessing any identifiable information about you that you may have put on your Amazon public profile page. We will store your MTurk worker ID separately from the other information you provide to us. Amazon Mechanical Turk has privacy policies of its own outlined for you in Amazon's privacy agreement. If you have concerns about how your information will be used by Amazon, you should consult them directly.

You must be age 18 or older to be in this study. This study is not approved for the enrollment of people under the age of 18.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about this study or you want to get additional information or provide input about this research, please contact Gregory Fernandes by e-mail at gferna10@depaul.edu or Dr. Jane Halpert at jhalpert@depaul.edu.

If you have questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact Susan Loess-Perez, DePaul University's Director of Research Compliance, in the Office of Research Services at 312-362-7593 or by email at sloesspe@depaul.edu. You may also contact DePaul's Office of Research Services if:

- Your questions, concerns, or complaints are not being answered by the research team.
- You cannot reach the research team.
- You want to talk to someone besides the research team.

You may print this information for your records.
By completing the surveys you are indicating your agreement to be in the research.