

## The Effect of Government's Organizational Change on Chinese Civil Servants' Psychological Contract Breach

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### Abstract

In order to cope with the challenges brought about by increasing global competition and rapid technological development, organizational change has become the norm. Organizational change has a profound effect on employment relationships, which have been focused by a number of researchers in the extant literature. However, the perceived obligations that exist in the employment relationship have received less attention, particular in a Chinese government context. Thus, the current study investigates 510 civil servants respectively to examine the dimension of Chinese government's organizational change and psychological contract breach, and examine the impact of the government's organizational change on civil servants' psychological contract breaches in the Chinese context of a unique social phenomena surrounding. The discussion resulted in the different impact of organizational change on the civil servants' PCB being presented, which applies specifically to the cultural context of Chinese government.

**Key words:** Organizational change; Psychological Contracts Breach (PCB); Chinese civil servants

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### 1. THE EFFECT OF GOVERNMENT'S ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE ON CHINESE CIVIL SERVANTS' PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH

Rousseau (1989) defines the concept of a psychological contract as an employee's perception of the terms and conditions of a mutual exchange agreement between themselves and their organization. Different from formal and written contracts, the psychological contract represents an implicit perception in which one party in the employment relationship may not share the same interpretation of the contents of the reciprocal exchange agreement as the other party (McLean & Schmedemann, 1994; Robinson, 1996; Rousseau, 1998). Also, differing from legal contracts, which focus on the formalized aspects of work, the psychological contract places more emphasis on the subjective and normative elements and therefore is more dynamic and uncertain (Arnold, 1996). As many researchers (e.g. Schein, 1980; Rousseau, 1995) have argued, the psychological contract is based on the employees' subjective and inherent beliefs concerning the 'terms and conditions' of the employment relationship. If employees perceive that the organization fails to fulfil its obligations to them, their psychological contract would be breached; that is, Psychological Contract Breach (PCB) would occur (Rousseau, 1995).

In recent years, rapid technological development, higher levels of globalization and the increasingly competitive environment are fundamentally changing the world of work (Chiang, 2010; Branch, 2011; Allen, Gojer, Gavriloova-Aguilar, & Philpot, 2012). In order to survive, all organizations need to take actions to cope with the economic and social fluctuations (Burke, 2002). Accordingly, a series of organizational changes such as downsizing, reorganization, and massive layoffs have become common occurrences (Cheng & Petrovic-

Lazarevic, 2005). These changes, not only alter the impersonal nature of organizations such as the change of organizational structure and operational process, but also have a profound impact on the personal-related nature of organizations, specifically, the employment relationship (Schalk, 2004). As McLean Parks and Kidder (1994) indicated, during organizational changes, an employee's thoughts and beliefs may be affected, which would make the employment relationship uncertain. According to Rousseau (1995), organizational change can increase the likelihood of perceived PCB. During the period of organizational change, it is difficult for organizations to avoid making changes to the psychological contract.

According to Cullinane and Dundon (2006), with the employment relationship becoming increasingly idiosyncratic and more diverse, the psychological contract has been taken as a crucial concept in understanding the employment relationship, and has been well applied in empirical studies related to employment relationship and organizational research (Shore & Tetrick, 1994; Marks, 2001; Tsui & Wang, 2002; Guest, 2004).

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## 2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND HYPOTHESES

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### 2.1 Public Sector Context and Chinese Cultural Background

In recent years, public sectors have been experiencing greater pressures in delivering high quality service and customer-oriented administration (Willems, Janvier, & Henderickx, 2004). With the introduction of more and more private sector administrative practices (Burgess & Ratto, 2003), the employment relationship in public sectors has been influenced to a great extent. With the general public's expectations of public sector employees increasing and changing, the employment relationship between public sector employees and their organization is beginning to shift. This has resulted in a series of changes being undertaken by the public sector.

According to Rousseau (1995), organizational change involves radical changes to organizational strategy, structure and HRM policies and procedures. Due to the nature of its bureaucratic system, the public sector is more likely to deal with policy making and organizational management in abiding by the organizational rules, regulations and procedures than the private sector is (Willems et al., 2004). In this situation, the public sector usually has less autonomy and flexibility in the policy making and organizational management when compared to the private sector (Claver, 1999). Therefore, in coping with the increasing challenges public sector organizations have to experience more radical, more fundamental and more continuous organizational change than private sector organizations do (Millward & Brewerton, 1999; Herriot, & Reilly, 1998).

In addition, according to Willem, Vos and Buelens (2010), because of the differences in management and people's values in the social and economic context, public sector employees might experience a different psychological contract with their organizations compared with private sector employees. Accordingly, when the psychological contract of public sector employees is breached, they may also respond differently in comparison with the behaviour demonstrated by private sector employees (Willem et al., 2010).

As far as the Chinese government is concerned, the implementation of government reform in 2006 meant that a number of privileges that previously belonged to the civil servants were withdrawn (Huang & Liu, 1988; Lo, 2007). Correspondingly the civil servants' sense of respect for their profession was not as strong as it had been. With the introduction of competition into the civil servants' performance system, reward system and promotion system, their job insecurity steadily increased. Also, with the transformation of the organizational structure and workflow, the civil servants' uncertainty became stronger than ever. With the traditional employment relationship between the civil servants and the government is becoming less than previously (Huang, 2003), it would inevitably have an impact on the civil servants' psychological contract and may lead to a breach of their contract (Wang & Wu, 2008).

With studies on the psychological contract being based predominately on Western theories and models (Hui, Lee, & Rousseau, 2004), it can be argued that cultural diversity may affect the validity of conceptual frameworks when they are applied across cultures. With the influence of unique cultural backgrounds and a specific institutional framework, Chinese employees might also experience a different psychological contract from that of Western settings (King & Bu, 2005). However, research has received extremely limited attention in the Chinese context, particularly within the Chinese public sector. Therefore, there is a question over the validity of current theories and models of the psychological contract and their relevance to a Chinese public sector context. This provides an important area for investigation.

### 2.2 Organizational Change

According to Schalk and Freese (2000), organizational change may lead to profound changes in the psychological contract. First, organizational change may lead to a discrepancy between organizational goals and employees' individual goals. When this discrepancy occurs, employees may perceive that the organization has failed to fulfil its obligations to them, which is likely to lead to a change in interpretation of the psychological contract, and could perhaps result in PCB (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1995).

Second, because organizational change usually requires employees to think in a different way, any change

in an organization could have a significant impact on its employees. Therefore, in the implementation process of organizational change, employees' expectations and needs are likely to be altered, which may result in ambiguity of the psychological contract between employees and their organization, and thus make the fulfilment of obligations more difficult (McLean & Kidder, 1994; Hind, Frost, & Rowley, 1996).

Third, as many researchers have argued, organizational change can not only lead to a possible loss of employee interests such as power, status and rank, but it can also lead to employees' being overloaded with work and having reduced resources to carry out their work (Doby & Caplan, 1995; Hui & Lee, 2000; Piderit, 2000; Ito & Brotheridge, 2001; Callan, 1993). Against the background of change in the work environment, ambiguity and conflict may lead employees to feel very uncertain about their future in the organization and unclear about when their job might change or end. Because of this, it is likely that the high level of ambiguity and conflict may lead to employees feeling a greater sense of uncertainty in the employment relationship (Storseth, 2004). According to Storseth (2004), the uncertainty of organizational change can result in employees' feeling a lack of job security, with this job insecurity having a negative impact on their job satisfaction (Robinson, 1996; Allen, Freeman, Russell, Reizenstein, & Rentz, 2001; Adkins, Werbel, & Farh, 2001; Greenglass, Burke, & Fiksenbaum, 2002; Krause, Stadil, & Bunke, 2003; Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005; Sharkie, 2005; Atkinson, 2007).

### 2.3 The Sub-Dimensional Inter-Correlations

According to Beer (1980) and Senior (2002), any kind of organizational change is an uninterrupted changing process with regard to the organization's strategy, process, people, and structure. As such, strategic changes refer to changes in the basic objectives or mission of the organization (Moody, 2010). Any organization will have to think about adjusting its strategy to its dynamic environment, in order to achieve the organization's goals, and ensure a strong fit between strategy and the organization's environment. Structural changes involve changing the internal structure of the organization, which may include restructuring the organizational sectors, or redistributing the functions and the responsibility for organizational sectors (Poloczek, Griner, & Nowosielski, 2008). Process-oriented changes require the organization to re-engineer processes to achieve optimum workflow and productivity (Hammer & Champy, 1993). People-oriented changes are directed towards employees' attitudes, behaviour and performance (Kittleson, 1995).

To adequately describe the contemporary employment relationships, Rousseau (1995) proposed a 2×2 model of psychological contract by adding two new dimensions: the time frame and performance requirements. As such, transactional contracts typically involve a short-

term arrangement that is perceived to exist and that has specified performance requirements; relational contracts are typically found within a long-term exchange with clearly non-specified performance requirements; balanced contracts are a combination of transactional and relational contracts, which typically involve a long-term time frame and specified performance requirements (Rousseau, 2000). As Hui et al. (2004) indicated, the transactional, relational, and balanced contracts represent important forms of the psychological contract in the employment relationship. However, with regard to the transitional contract, because it usually occurs during organizational changes that are at odds with the employment relationship, it is not considered a true form of the psychological contract, and therefore it is rescinded (Hui et al., 2004). Accordingly, Rousseau (2000) developed operationalization, which formalizes the three aspects of transactional, relational and balanced contracts into a Psychological Contract Inventory (PCI). Empirical studies that have assessed and confirmed the three types of psychological contract have been undertaken in different countries such as the United States (Rousseau, 2000), Latin America (Dabos & Rousseau, 2004); Singapore (Rousseau, 2000), and China (Hui et al., 2004).

According to the purpose of this research and the foregoing literature review, we hypothesized that:

**Hypothesis 1:** Within the Chinese government context, organizational change consists of a four-dimension structure of strategic change, structural change, process-oriented change and people-oriented change.

**Hypothesis 2:** Chinese civil servants' psychological contract breach consists of a three-dimensional structure including transactional PCB, relational PCB and balanced PCB.

**Hypothesis 3:** In terms of different dimensions, the impact of government's organizational change on Chinese civil servants' PCB is different.

## 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In line with the aim of this research, a positivist paradigm, deductive and quantitative approach is mainly adopted. Accordingly, a questionnaire survey was adopted as the main data collection method in this study.

During the questionnaire design, information seeking that related to organizational change and Chinese civil servants' PCB were firstly undertaken. Following a systematic literature review, telephone interviews were conducted with 15 civil servants who were directly involved in the organizational change process in the Chinese government. Their responses helped develop a questionnaire for measuring elements of "organizational change". In terms of the information about PCB, it was collected by following an approach using a composite measurement of PCB (Conway & Briner, 2005). The contents items in previous studies were broadly adopted

(Rousseau, 2000; McDonald & Makin, 2000; Hui et al., 2004). As such, the 12 items for measuring the fulfilment of the psychological contract are originally based on Rousseau's (2000), McDonald and Makin's (2000) and Hui et al. (2004).

With regard to the sampling strategy, because there are more than 6.5 million civil servants in different levels of Chinese government (China HR Ministry, 2007), it would not be possible to survey the whole civil service population. Therefore, a complete list of groups of the population is available, a stratification sampling method is appropriate to be used (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2003). For exploratory factor analysis on organizational change and PCB, a total of 510 hard copies of the Chinese version of the questionnaire were distributed to Chinese civil servants from five different regions: North, South, East, West and Middle. Finally, a total of 491 were returned. As such, the valid questionnaire returned was 486, with the valid return rate being satisfactory (95%). Also, for confirmatory factor analysis on organizational change and PCB, and examining the impact of organizational change on Chinese civil servants' PCB, a total of 510 hard copies of the Chinese version of the questionnaire were distributed to Chinese civil servants from above five different regions, a total of 495 were returned. As such, the valid questionnaire returned was 493, with the valid return rate being satisfactory (97%). In data analysis procedures, statistical techniques of SPSS and AMOS were used on descriptive statistics, bivariate statistics, factor analysis (Norusis, 1991) and the analysis of SEM.

## 4. RESULTS

### 4.1 KMO and Bartlett's Test on Organizational Change

**Table 2**  
Total Variance Explained on the Dimension of Organizational Change

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	4.578	38.153	38.153	4.578	38.153	38.153	2.461	20.512	20.512
2	1.654	13.782	51.935	1.654	13.782	51.935	2.273	18.940	39.452
3	1.170	9.754	61.688	1.170	9.754	61.688	1.906	15.886	55.338
4	1.084	9.033	70.721	1.084	9.033	70.721	1.846	15.383	70.721
5	.828	6.899	77.620						
6	.628	5.234	82.853						
7	.508	4.235	87.088						
8	.465	3.877	90.965						
9	.382	3.181	94.146						
10	.332	2.763	96.910						
11	.209	1.740	98.649						
12	.162	1.351	100.000						

In order to examine the structural dimension of organizational change, it is necessary to first undertake the relevant factor analysis (Goldstein, Bonnet, & Rocher, 2007). However, before undertaking a factor analysis, and in order to test whether the items in the questionnaire are appropriate for carrying out the factor analysis, the KMO and Bartlett's Test were undertaken (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988).

The results showed that the value of KMO was .759, which is greater than .60 would it make sense for a factor analysis (Hsu, Kang, & Lam, 2006) (Table 1). Likewise, the result of the Bartlett's Test was within the level of significance (.000); therefore, it was appropriate to undertake further actions on factor analysis.

**Table 1**  
KMO and Bartlett's Test on Organizational Change

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy	.759
Approx. Chi-square	$2.539 \times 10^3$
Bartlett's test of sphericity	<i>df</i> 66
Sig.	.000

Further, in order to test the construct validity of the items in measuring "organizational change", a total variance test on "organizational change" was undertaken (Wuensh, Castellow, & Moore, 1991). As can be seen in Table 2, the "total" for component 1-4 is 4.578, 1.654, 1.170 and 1.084 respectively, which can respectively explain 38.153%, 13.782%, 9.754% and 9.033% of the variance. Also, the cumulative percentage was 70.721%. In general, the four components can reflect the greatest amount of information about the components. Therefore, it is considered valid to undertake factor analysis on the components in the questionnaire relating to "organizational change" (Bowden, 2004).

## 4.2 Exploratory Factor Analysis on Organizational Change

In this study, because the researcher has no priori ideas on the numbers and nature of the factors underlying the data for organizational change (Kelton et al., 2010), it is necessary to undertake exploratory factor analysis of the items as a priority (Tang, 2010).

In terms of the difference in distribution of the items for the organizational change section of the questionnaire, the results in Table 3 showed that organizational change can be categorized as four factors: people-oriented change, process-oriented change, structural change, and strategic

change. As such, components A1-A3 were distributed to the factor of “strategic change”, whilst components A4-A6 were distributed to the factor of “structural change”. Components A7-A9 were distributed to the factor of “process-oriented change” and components A10-A12 were distributed to the factor of “people-oriented change”. Further, in order to test the reliability of the four factors, Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  test was undertaken by utilizing the SPSS statistical package. The results showed that the Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for each dimension was .87, .74, .69, .70, respectively. This means that the reliability of the four factors is generally acceptable (Pai, Lee, & Chang, 2011).

**Table 3**  
**The Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis on Organizational Change**

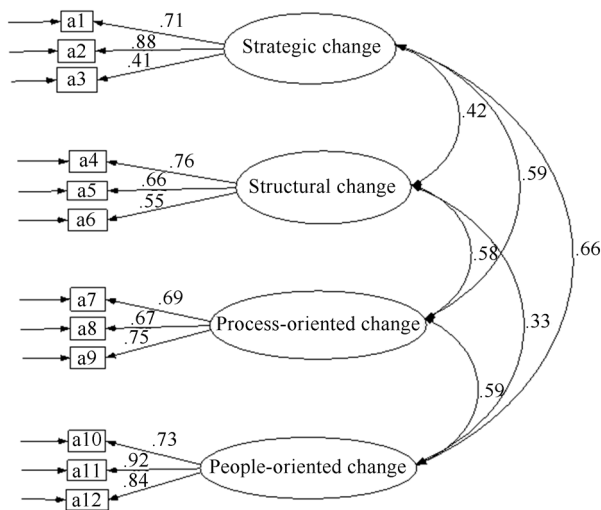
Item	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
<b>Factor 1: (<math>\alpha=.87</math>)</b>				
<b><u>People-oriented change</u></b>				
A10: Change on civil servants’ promotion	.901	.066	.130	.040
A11: Change on civil servants’ performance appraisal	.825	.302	-.019	.281
A12: Change on civil servants’ salary criteria	.677	.301	.131	.404
<b>Factor 2: (<math>\alpha=.74</math>)</b>				
<b><u>Process-oriented change</u></b>				
A9: Change on government information	.118	.860	.107	.056
A7: Change on government workflow	.226	.748	.139	-.005
A8: Change on task process	.139	.672	.274	.208
<b>Factor 3: (<math>\alpha=.69</math>)</b>				
<b><u>Structural change</u></b>				
A5: Merging government sections	-.011	.111	.830	.137
A4: Integrating government sections	.038	.269	.762	.159
A6: Deactivating government sections	.423	.107	.666	-.307
<b>Factor 4: (<math>\alpha=.70</math>)</b>				
<b><u>Strategic change</u></b>				
A3: Change on government administration	.051	-.089	.058	.852
A2: Change on government objective	.344	.377	.223	.589
A1: Change on government mission	.353	.298	-.011	.587

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

## 4.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis on Organizational Change

For testing the hypothesis on the four-dimensional structure of organizational change, this study also undertook confirmatory factor analysis on organizational change, in terms of its dimensions and corresponding items on the scale (Shevlin, Miles, & Lewis, 2000).

Figure 1 illustrates the measurement model of confirmatory factor analysis on organizational change. As such, the loadings between the observed measures (e.g. a1, a2) and the latent variables (e.g. strategic change) are obtained from “the estimates on the standardized regression weights”. All the loadings (e.g. .71, .88) are not less than .40, which means that all the loadings are acceptable to reflect the relevant factors.



**Figure 1**  
**The Measurement Model of Organizational Change**

**Table 4**  
**Correlations Between the Dimensions of Organizational Change**

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Strategic change	<-->	Structural change	.419	.011	4.967	***
Structural change	<-->	Process-oriented change	.582	.028	6.877	***
Strategic change	<-->	Process-oriented change	.593	.017	6.295	***
Process-oriented change	<-->	People-oriented change	.585	.037	8.675	***
Structural change	<-->	People-oriented change	.327	.025	5.048	***
Strategic change	<-->	People-oriented change	.657	.020	6.793	***

As shown in Table 5, the results for CMIN/DF, GFI, IFI, TLI, CFI and RMSEA are 1.866, .917, .931, .923, .930, .052 respectively. For an acceptable model, the model fitting index for CMIN/DF should be below than 2.0; the model fitting index for GFI, IFI, TLI and CFI should be in the range between 0.8 and 1.0; the model fitting index for RMSEA should be below than 0.8. With reference to the above criteria, the measurement model of organizational change is considered acceptable. This confirms that the measurement model of organizational change is acceptable and the correlations between different factors of organizational change are significant.

**Table 5**  
**Model Fitting Index for the First-Order Analysis on Organizational Change**

CMIN/DF	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1.866	.917	.931	.923	.930	.052

Therefore, the first hypothesis is accepted, i.e. In the Chinese government context, organizational change consists of a four-dimensional structure including strategic change, structural change, process-oriented change and people-oriented change.

In addition, as outlined in Table 4, the results on the path coefficients between the factors show that the correlations between those factors were significant at the level of .05. The results verify that the measurement model of organizational change is acceptable and valid. Therefore, the measurement model confirms the results from the exploratory factor analysis, which means that “organizational change” consists of four dimensions, including strategic change, structural change, process-oriented change and people-oriented change.

In addition, and in order to examine the quality of the model's overall fit, absolute fit measures, including CMIN/DF, GFI, IFI, TLI, CFI and RMSEA, were used to determine whether the overall model could predict the covariance matrix distribution (Chou et al., 1998; Byrne, 2001).

#### 4.4 KMO and Bartlett's Test on PCB

Before undertaking the factor analysis for the Chinese civil servants' PCB, a KMO and Bartlett's Test was carried out (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), in order to test whether it was appropriate to carry out a factor analysis on these items in the questionnaire.

The results showed that the value of KMO was .779, which meant that it would make sense to carry out the relevant factor analysis (Table 6). Likewise, the result of Bartlett's Test is at the level of significance (.000); therefore, it is appropriate to take the following actions with regard to factor analysis.

**Table 6**  
**KMO and Bartlett's Test on PCB**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy.		.779
	Approx. Chi-square	4.955×10 <sup>3</sup>
Bartlett's test of sphericity	df	91
	Sig.	.000

Further, in order to test the construct validity of the items in measuring PCB, a total variance test on PCB was undertaken. The value for the rotation sums of squared

loadings should be more than 50%, thereby ensuring the construct validity of the questionnaire (Zaltman & Burger, 1975; Kerlinger & Lee, 2000).

As shown in Table 7, the “total” for component 1-3 is 5.925, 2.426 and 1.643 respectively, which can respectively explain 42.319%, 17.331% and 11.739%

of the variance. Also, the cumulative percentage was 71.338%. In general, the three components can reflect the greatest information of the total components. Therefore, a valid factor analysis can be undertaken on the components in the questionnaire that related to PCB (Bowden, 2004).

**Table 7**  
**Total Variance Explained on the Dimension of PCB**

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	5.925	42.319	42.319	5.925	42.319	42.319	3.801	27.152	27.152
2	2.426	17.331	59.649	2.426	17.331	59.649	3.667	26.196	53.348
3	1.643	11.739	71.388	1.643	11.739	71.388	2.526	18.041	71.388
4	.917	6.548	77.936						
5	.555	3.965	81.900						
6	.515	3.680	85.580						
7	.462	3.300	88.880						
8	.424	3.029	91.909						
9	.292	2.087	93.996						
10	.276	1.969	95.965						
11	.205	1.461	97.426						
12	.146	1.046	98.472						
13	.125	.892	99.364						
14	.089	.636	100.000						

#### 4.5 Exploratory Factor Analysis on PCB

By undertaking the exploratory factor analysis on PCB, the results are shown in Table 8. A three factor structures, including transactional PCB, relational PCB and balanced PCB was identified. As such, components B2-B5 were distributed to the factor of “transactional PCB”; components B6-B10 were distributed to the

factor of “relational PCB”; and components B11-B15 were distributed to the factor of “balanced PCB”. Further, in order to test the reliability of the three factors, Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  test were undertaken. The results show that the Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for each dimension is .77, .91, .90, respectively. The results mean that the reliability of the three factors is acceptable (Pai et al., 2011).

**Table 8**  
**The Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis on PCB**

Item	Factor		
	1	2	3
<b>Factor 1: (<math>\alpha=.77</math>)</b>			
<b>Relational PCB</b>			
<b>B7:</b> Fulfilment on secure employment	<b>.884</b>	.228	.072
<b>B9:</b> Fulfilment on concerning civil servants’ long-term well-being	<b>.872</b>	.104	.222
<b>B8:</b> Fulfilment on steady employment	<b>.868</b>	.106	.153
<b>B10:</b> Fulfilment on concerning civil servants’ personal welfare	<b>.795</b>	.208	-.099
<b>B6:</b> Fulfilment on recognition of civil servants’ contributions to the organization	<b>.761</b>	.148	.182

To be continued

Continued

Item	Factor		
	1	2	3
<b>Factor 2: (<math>\alpha=.91</math>)</b>			
<b>Balanced PCB</b>			
<b>B14:</b> fulfilment on supporting civil servants to attain the highest possible level of performance	.068	<b>.858</b>	.160
<b>B12:</b> fulfilment on opportunities for promotion	.215	<b>.852</b>	.142
<b>B13:</b> fulfilment on developmental opportunities with the government	.289	<b>.820</b>	.050
<b>B11:</b> fulfilment on supporting the civil servants in meeting increasingly higher goals	.065	<b>.804</b>	.188
<b>B15:</b> fulfilment on skill development that increases civil servants' value to the government	.283	<b>.704</b>	.330
<b>Factor 3: (<math>\alpha=.90</math>)</b>			
<b>Transactional PCB</b>			
<b>B2:</b> fulfilment on materials and equipment needed to perform the job	-.029	.194	<b>.829</b>
<b>B4:</b> fulfilment on a job limited to specific, well-defined responsibilities	.184	.248	.781
<b>B5:</b> fulfilment on requiring civil servants to perform only a limited set of duties	.191	-.028	<b>.703</b>
<b>B3:</b> fulfilment on the resources necessary to do job	.062	.391	<b>.649</b>

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

#### 4.6 Confirmatory Factor Analysis on PCB

In order to test whether latent variables for each factor had significant loadings with relevant factors, an examination of the primary needs measurement model was required (Hamid, Mustafa, Idris, Abdullah, & Suradi, 2011). The measurement model of confirmatory factor analysis on the Chinese civil servants' PCB, as seen in Figure 2, showed the loadings results of each factor on the relevant items to be acceptable. The loadings between the observed measures (e.g. b2, b3) and the latent variables (e.g. transactional PCB) are obtained from "the estimates on the standardized regression weights", all the loadings (e.g. .83, .76) are not less than .40, which means that all the loadings are acceptable to reflect the relevant factors.

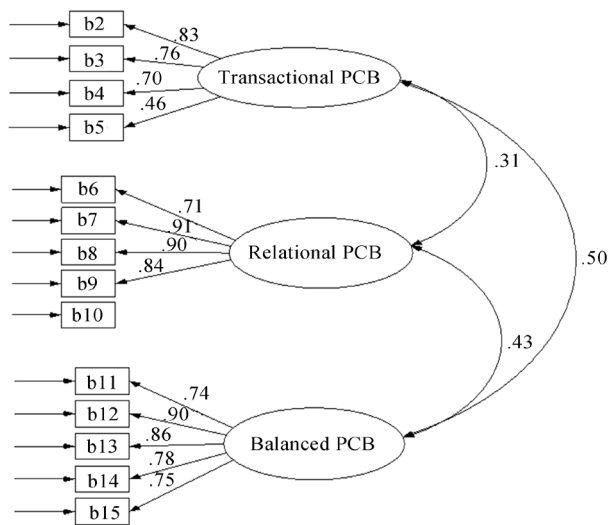


Figure 2  
The Measurement Model of PCB

As outlined in Table 9, the results on the path coefficients between the factors show that the correlations between those factors are significant ( $p < .05$ ). The results verify that the measurement model of PCB is acceptable and valid.

Table 9  
Correlations Between the Dimensions of PCB

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Transactional PCB <--> Relational PCB	.310	.018	4.761	***
Transactional PCB <--> Balanced PCB	.497	.022	6.537	***
Relational PCB <--> Balanced PCB	.427	.024	7.480	***

An inspection of the measurement model fit of the Chinese civil servants' PCB (Table 10) indicates that the level of model fit was satisfied (CMIN/DF=1.733, GFI=.894, IFI=.896, TLI=.885, CFI=.894, RMSEA=.046). With reference to the above criteria, the measurement model of PCB is considered acceptable. This confirms the correlations between different factors of PCB are significant.

Table 10  
Model Fitting Index on the Measurement Model of PCB

CMIN/DF	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1.733	.894	.896	.885	.894	.046

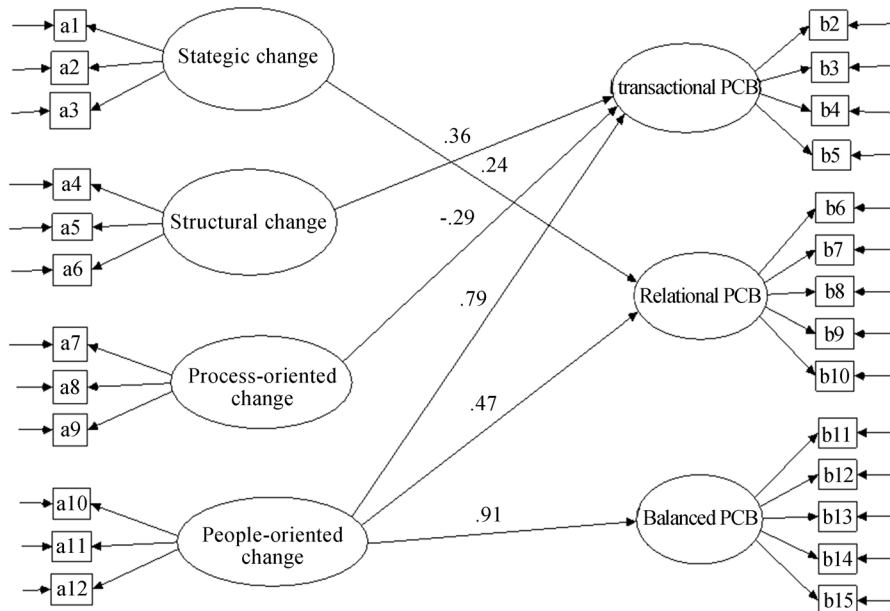
Therefore, the second hypothesis is accepted, i.e. Chinese civil servants' psychological contract breach consists of a three-dimensional structure including transactional PCB, relational PCB and balanced PCB.

Following this, it is possible to continue the analysis with an examination of the SEM between organizational change and the Chinese civil servants' PCB.



In terms of the different dimensions of organizational change, the effect of organizational change on the Chinese civil servants' PCB can also be examined (Figure 3). The results show that, in terms of the sub-dimensional level, the correlations between organizational change and the

civil servants' PCB are significant, apart from the impact of strategic change on the civil servants' transactional and balance PCB, and the impact of structural change and process-oriented change on the civil servants' relational and balanced PCB.



**Figure 3**  
**The Multi-Dimensional SEM for Organizational Change and Chinese Civil Servants' PCB**

A look at the relational model fit of organizational change and the Chinese civil servants' PCB suggests that the model fit was satisfied (CMIN/DF=1.923, GFI=.919, IFI=.933, TLI=.921, CFI=.933, RMSEA=.055), which is seen in Table 11. The results mean that, in terms of sub-dimensional level, the relational model between organizational change and the civil servants' PCB is reasonable and valid.

**Table 11**  
**Model Fitting Index on the Multi-Dimensional SEM for Organizational Change and Chinese Civil Servants' PCB**

CMIN/DF	GFI	IFI	TLI	CFI	RMSEA
1.923	.919	.933	.921	.933	.055

The standard regression coefficient between the latent variables (Table 12) shows the different dimensions of organizational change and PCB, of which six correlations were significant. As such, the highest significance includes people-oriented change, which is positively related to the civil servants' transactional PCB and balanced PCB, with a level of .791 and .911 respectively.

Therefore, the third hypothesis is accepted, the sub-groups of the impact of Chinese government's organizational change on civil servants' PCB are as follows:

- a) Strategic change is positively related to the Chinese civil servants' relational PCB, but not significantly related to the Chinese civil servants' transactional and balanced PCB.

**Table 12**  
**Regression Weights Between Organizational Change and Chinese Civil Servants' PCB (Sub-Dimensional Level)**

		Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Transactional PCB	<--- Structural change	.364	.088	6.327	***
Transactional PCB	<--- People-oriented change	.791	.120	8.023	***
Balanced PCB	<--- People-oriented change	.911	.069	14.590	***
Transactional PCB	<--- Process-oriented change	-.289	.171	-4.314	***
Relational PCB	<--- People-oriented change	.470	.034	8.713	***
Relational PCB	<--- Strategic change	.243	.175	5.420	***

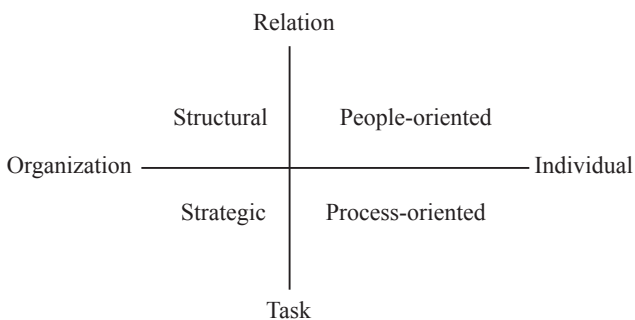
- b) Structural change is positively related to the Chinese civil servants' transactional PCB, but negatively related to the Chinese civil servants' relational and balanced PCB.
- c) Process-oriented change is negatively related to the Chinese civil servants' transactional PCB, but not significantly related to the Chinese civil servants' relational PCB and balanced PCB.
- d) People-oriented change is positively related to the Chinese civil servants' transactional PCB, relational PCB and balanced PCB.

## CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

### A. The Structural Dimension of Organizational Change

The survey findings suggest that organizational change, in the Chinese government context, consists of a four-dimensional structure, including strategic change, structural change, process-oriented change and people-oriented change. This finding supports Beer (1980) and Senior's (2002) viewpoint on organizational change: That any kind of organizational change is an on-going process to match the organization's strategy, process, people, and structure.

As Jones (2004) argued, organizational change aims to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of organizations by enhancing the employees' individual development and altering their on-the-job behaviours (Weick & Quinn, 1999). Therefore, organizational change is not only related to change at an organizational level but is also related to change at an individual level. In addition, the improvement of organizational and individual performance is not only related to organizational or individual tasks (Ussahawanitchakit & Sumritsakun, 2008) but also has an impact on the employment relationship between organizations and individuals (Bellou, 2007). Therefore, as shown in Figure 4, organizational change can be categorized as a 2x2 model, which is seen in terms of the "organization-individual level" and "relation-task level".



**Figure 4**  
A 2x2 Model of Organizational Change

### B. The Effect of Government's Organizational Change on Chinese Civil Servants' PCB

In general, empirical results show that different dimensions of organizational change had differing impacts

on the different dimensions of the Chinese civil servants' PCB. These results are partially consistent with previous theoretical and empirical research by Morrison (1994), Lo and Aryee (2003) and Bellou (2007), who found that organizational change has a significant impact on employees' PCB.

First, the empirical results show that strategic change is significantly associated with the increase in Chinese civil servants' relational PCB. Figure 7 showed that the strategic change in relation to the changes in the level of organization-task. During the strategic change of Chinese government, the profession of civil servant that was called "golden bowl" (Jin fan wan) has become less certain and more competitive (Wong & Zhao, 1999), which could lead to a decrease in the civil servants' sense of security and continued employment (De Cuyper, De Witte, Vander Elst, & Handaja, 2010). A decrease in the civil servants' sense of job security and steady employment could have a strong impact on their long-term and non-specific performance requirement; that is, their relational psychological contract (Rousseau, 1995).

Second, the empirical results show that structural change is significantly associated with the increase in the civil servants' transactional PCB. As far as the Chinese government is concerned, structural change refers to an improvement in governmental operational efficiency for public affairs (Brødsgaard, 2010). Because this kind of change mainly concerns the mergers of government sections and downsizing, it would inevitably lead to a decrease in the number of civil servants who are working in the same position (Özkanlı & Bumin, 2006). Accordingly, the civil servants who survive the structural change have to take on a greater workload, which would inevitably increase their work intensity. According to Rousseau (2000), work intensity is part of the transactional psychological contract. Thus, an increase in the civil servants' work intensity could lead to an increase in their transactional PCB.

Third, the empirical results show that process-oriented change is significantly associated with a decrease in their transactional PCB. As opposed to the effect of structural change that increases the civil servants' work intensity, with the implementation of process-oriented changes such as technological development and workflow simplification, not only the civil servants' work efficiency is increased, but also their work becomes easier than before (Nganga, Onyango, & Kerre, 2011). In doing so, it not only saves on material resources and manpower but also decreases the civil servants' work intensity. Because the saving on manpower and the decreased work intensity belongs to the transactional psychological contract (Rousseau, 2000), it is suggested that process-oriented change will decrease the Chinese civil servants' transactional PCB.

Fourth, the empirical results mean that people-oriented change is significantly associated with the increase

in Chinese civil servants' transactional, relational and balanced PCB. In the Chinese government context, it mainly refers to those regulations and policies that relate to civil servants since the civil service reform of 2006. As seen in the discussion of people-oriented change, it is obvious that it is related to civil servants' vital benefits. Therefore, it is likely to have a significant influence on different kinds of PCB. People-oriented change is not only associated with the civil servants' short-term views, but also with their long-term benefits.

## CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This study is unique in that it is the first time the correlation between organizational change and employees' PCB has been examined in terms of their sub-dimensional levels. By undertaking an empirical investigation in a Chinese government context, the current study makes a valuable contribution by enhancing the generalizability and validity of the psychological contract theory in a culturally specific environment. In addition, by proposing a 2×2 model of organizational change, this study makes a contribution to establishing a new categorization for organizational change. The model not only enriches the classification surrounding the type of organization change, but it provides a measureable scale that relates to organizational change. In particular, the proposed model categorizes the type of organizational change by classifying the content of organizational change.

## LIMITATIONS

Nevertheless, as with any research design, limitations exist within the current research. Firstly, in accordance with current thinking about the psychological contract, the study focused on the civil servants' (employees') perspective, rather than the government's (organization's) perspective. Therefore, it is important for future studies to focus more on the organization's perspective. Secondly, in consideration of the dynamic nature of psychological contract and the uncertainty of organizational change, the cross-section technique can only allow the researcher to investigate a particular phenomenon at a particular time. It is suggested that a longitudinal study should be undertaken in order to increase the long-term viability of the survey findings.

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