EMOTIONAL FIT IN THE WORKPLACE: ITS PSYCHOLOGICAL AND BEHAVIOURAL OUTCOMES

by

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ABSTRACT

Prior research has looked at emotions in organizational life mostly at the individual level, providing us with little information about their role as a contextual factor in organizations. In this dissertation, I sought to fill this gap by developing the concept of emotional fit which I define as the congruence between the activation levels of an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of their workplace environment.

Drawing on a number of streams of research including the circumplex model of affect, activation theory, emotional exhaustion, psychological safety, and ego depletion theory, I developed and empirically tested a model analyzing how emotional fit affects an employee’s psychological and behavioral engagement at work. The model proposes that emotional fit is positively related to an employee’s connection with others, connection with work, and performance through the mediating effects of emotional exhaustion and psychological safety.

To test the theoretical model, I conducted a cross-level field study. The research design is cross-level in that one component (i.e. emotional climate) of the independent variable (i.e. emotional fit) was analyzed at the level of the workplace context and then was compared with the other component (i.e. affective trait), measured at the level of the individual employee. I collected data from 257 employees within 40 work units across a variety of companies operating in sectors such as trade, forestry, high-tech, finance, and courier service. The data regarding the task and role performance of employees were collected from supervisors.
Overall, the results show that an employee's degree of emotional fit is positively related to his/her psychological engagement at work with regards to connection with others and connection with work, but not task and role performance. In terms of connection with others, emotional fit was positively related to commitment and negatively related to surface acting. As for the connection with work domain, emotional fit was negatively related to psychological withdrawal behaviors and intention for turnover. Supporting the theoretical model, these relationships were mediated by emotional exhaustion and psychological safety.
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To my wife, my emotional fit, Pınar Muyan-Özçelik ...
The experience of work is “saturated with emotions” (Asforth and Humphrey, 1995: 97). Being “emotional arenas” (Fineman, 1993: 9), organizations are driven by emotional energy, which can both mobilize conflict and determine a sense of belonging and solidarity among organizational members (Collins, 1990). However, research into the emotional aspects of organizational life has started only recently (Fineman, 1996), and the majority of this research has focused on emotions at the individual level, providing us with little information about the role of emotions as a component of workplace context in organizational life (Brief and Weiss, 2002).

In this study, I have two main research goals: a) to understand emotions as a contextual phenomenon in organizations, and b) to analyze the role of emotions in organizational life by considering their role as a characteristic of organizational settings as well as a trait of individuals working in those settings. In particular, my research goal is to investigate the psychological and behavioral outcomes of emotional fit, which I define as the congruence between the affective trait of an employee and the emotional climate of his/her workplace. In this study, I particularly focus on the congruence between the activation levels of affective trait and emotional climate.

Previous studies on affective trait have identified activation as a major dimension, which refers to an individual’s subjective experience of energy or mobilization, ranging from low activation (e.g., calm, quiet, relaxed), to a neutral level, to high activation (e.g. hyperactive, alert, intense) (Russell and Feldman-Barrett, 1999; Yik and Russell, 2001; Russell 1980, 1989). Drawing on this stream of research, it could be suggested that, as a
reflection of their affective trait, some employees would be more active, alert, and intense whereas some others would be on the lower end of the activation continuum. On the other hand, a stream of research has found activation as a major dimension describing the emotional characteristics of social settings (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Russell and Pratt, 1980; Russell, Weiss, and Mendelsohn, 1989), including work groups (Bartel and Saavedra, 2000). Thus, it could be suggested that the activation level would also vary from one workplace to another: the emotional climate of some workplaces would be on the higher end of the continuum (e.g. hyperactive, intense, forceful) whereas some others would be on the lower end (e.g. calm, serene, quiet). Drawing on and combining these two streams of research, I conceptualize emotional fit as the congruence between the activation levels of an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of their workplace.

Why does emotional fit matter? Investigating emotional fit can help us understand the relationship between emotions and employee behaviors and attitudes in the workplace by taking into account the affective context of the workplace. Although previous research has investigated the impact of affect as a personality trait in organizational behavior (see Isen and Baron, 1991 and Isen, 2000 for extensive reviews), to date, very few studies have inquired the extent to which this impact might vary with respect to the affective characteristics of an individual’s social context.

Employees do not live in a vacuum, and their emotional experiences are shaped not only by what they personally possess and bring into the workplace environment but also by how they relate to the affective context of this environment (Kelly and Barsade, 2001). For instance, although active and dynamic workplaces have been advocated in business
settings (Van Maanen and Kunda, 1989; Rafaeli and Sutton, 1989), we still do not know whether such working climates would be a good match for all type of employees. For instance, an employee who is emotionally calm and quiet by nature may get exhausted from struggling to keep up with the rhythm of a highly active work environment. In these respects, understanding emotional fit and its outcomes would help both researchers and practitioners look at the figure (personal affective traits) without ignoring the ground (emotional climate of the work context), and make better sense of the employee’s psychological and behavioral reactions when “the figure is in contrast with the ground.”

This study aims to contribute to this understanding and thereby expand our knowledge in three distinct literatures: emotions at work, organizational climate, and person-organization fit. In terms of the research on emotions at work, this study looks at emotions as a contextual characteristic of work settings, which is a relatively neglected but necessary approach to better understand the emotional life in organizations (Brief, 2001). A stream of research has empirically investigated emotions as a group-level phenomenon, mostly focusing on the composition of affective personalities of group members (George, 1990; George and James, 1993; Barsade, Ward, Turner, and Sonnenfeld, 2000). However, there have been relatively few attempts to date to empirically study emotions as a characteristic of workplace context, rather than a specific work team or group, that might emerge in relation to factors other than affective personalities of group members, such as hierarchical and power structures, task characteristics, and managerial policies (Fineman, 1995; Brief and Weiss, 2002). Indeed, in a recent commentary of the study of affect in organizations, Brief (2001) has asserted that “contextual features of organizations are essential to understanding the production
and consequences of moods and emotions in organizations” (p.131) and strongly called for more studies on affect that are sensitive to organizational context. With an aim to take a step in this direction, this study will draw on the climate perspective to empirically study emotions in the work settings. Looking at the shared perceptions of employees about a given characteristic of an organization, the climate perspective would provide an effective framework to conceptualize and measure emotions as a contextual phenomenon in the workplace.

In relation to the above point, this study will also contribute to the literature on organizational climate. Although very early studies on climate have mentioned feelings as a core feature of the concept (Lewin, 1951; Schneider, 1975; Steele and Jenks, 1977; Schneider and Reichers, 1983), the affective component of organizational climate has been ignored for a long time in the literature (Ashkanasy, Wilderom and Peterson, 2000). This study attempts to fill this void by conceptualizing the emotional climate phenomenon drawing on the climate concept, and empirically investigating its role and significance in organizational outcomes.

Finally, this study will also contribute to the person-organization fit research by specifically focusing on the emotional aspect of the fit between employees and their organizations, an issue yet to be explored in the fit literature. The underlying premise for the person-organization fit research is that both individuals and organizations hold some fundamental and relatively enduring characteristics which can be directly compared with one another (Chatman, 1991), and the level of congruence between these characteristics can explain several work related outcomes including work attitudes (O’Reilly Chatman, Caldwell, 1991; Bretz and Judge, 1994), level of stress (Chesney and Rosenman, 1980),
prosocial behaviors (O’Reilly and Chatman, 1986), and work performance (Bretz and Judge, 1994). Prior research suggests that both individuals (Larsen and Diener, 1985, 1992; Watson and Tellegen, 1985) and work settings (Kelly and Barsade, 2001; Barsade et al., 2000; Bartel and Saavedra, 2000; George, 1990, 1996) possess relatively enduring emotional characteristics. Thus, the focus of person-organization fit research could be effectively extended to the affective domain. However, to date, very little research has examined this issue. This study purports to achieve this goal by focusing on the emotional fit between employees’ affective traits and the emotional climate of their work environments, and its relationship to employee attitude and behaviors.

The core research question of this study focuses on whether and how emotional fit influences an employee’s engagement at work. To pursue this research question, I will first, in Chapter Two, elaborate on the emotional fit concept, reviewing and drawing on the literatures pertaining to emotions, organizational climate, and organizational fit. Then, in Chapter Three, I will propose a theoretical model explaining the relationship between emotional fit and three domains of outcomes reflecting an employee’s level of engagement in the workplace as suggested by Kahn (1990), including connection with others, connection with work and performance. While explaining these relationships, I will focus on both the personal and relational aspects of the link between emotional fit and engagement. In Chapter Four, I will describe the research design and methodology that will be used to test the theoretical model proposed in this study. This will be followed by Chapter Five in which I present the results of the study. Finally, in Chapter Six, I will discuss these results and their theoretical and practical implications, the limitations of the study, and possible directions for future research.
CHAPTER TWO
EMOTIONAL FIT CONCEPT AND ITS COMPONENTS

The major construct of interest in this study is emotional fit, which is defined as the congruence between the affective trait of an employee and the emotional climate of his/her workplace. In this chapter, I will review and draw on three sets of literatures to unpack this definition and to set up a conceptual framework for analyzing the emotional fit phenomenon and its components. First, drawing on the literature on organizational fit, I will discuss some key issues pertaining to the conceptual framework of emotional fit. Then, I will develop the emotional climate concept, a component of emotional fit, drawing on the literatures on organizational climate and emotions. This will be followed by a review of the literature on emotions, especially focusing on studies about affective trait, the other component of the emotional fit concept. Within each section, I will also identify the potential contributions of this study to each of the three literatures that will be reviewed. Finally, at the end of the chapter, I will describe how I conceptualized emotional fit in this study.

2.1 Emotional Fit: Conceptual Framework

Prior research in the person-organization fit literature has mostly considered the congruence between employees and organizations in terms of their values (Chatman, 1989, 1991; O'Reilly, Chatman and Caldwell, 1991), cultures (Van Vianen, 2000), and goals (Vancouver, Millsap, and Peters, 1994; Vancouver and Schmitt, 1991); and the match between individual needs/abilities and organizational systems/requirements (Edwards, 1996; Cable and Judge, 1994). In addition to these, a number of studies have
looked at the match between characteristics of individual personality (e.g. Type A-B personality) and organizational climate (Type A-B climate) (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1984; Burke and Deszca, 1982; Matteson and Ivancevich, 1982); and the congruence between employee’s personal orientations and organizational climate with respect to such dimensions as participation, cooperation, growth, innovation and achievement (Ostroff, 1993).

An underlying premise for all these streams of research is that both individuals and organizations hold some fundamental and relatively enduring characteristics, which can be directly compared with one another (Chatman, 1991). The congruence/incongruence between these characteristics, in turn, offers a glimpse into the powerful interaction between people and their work environments (Kristof-Brown, Jansen and Colbert, 2001), which can explain such outcomes as employees’ work attitudes (Chatman, 1991; O’Reilly, Chatman, and Caldwell, 1991; Bretz and Judge, 1994), level of stress (Ivancevich and Matteson, 1980; Chesney and Rosenman, 1980), prosocial behaviors (O’Reilly and Chatman, 1986), and work performance (Bretz and Judge, 1994).

Prior research from psychology, organizational behavior and environmental psychology literatures suggest that both individuals (Larsen and Diener, 1985, 1992; Watson and Tellegen, 1985) and social settings (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Russell and Pratt, 1980; Russell, Weiss, and Mendelsohn, 1989), including work groups (Kelly and Barsade, 2001; Bartel and Saavedra, 2000; George, 1990, 1996) and top-management teams (Barsade et al., 2000), possess relatively enduring emotional characteristics. Combined together, these studies suggest that the fit between employees and organizations comprise a substantial emotional component, which might have an
important impact on the outcome variables mentioned. However, to date, very little research has examined this issue. This study purports to achieve this goal by suggesting the concept of emotional fit and investigating its psychological and behavioral outcomes.

A valid conceptualization and measurement of emotional fit and an effective investigation of its impact on employee attitude and behaviors requires that: a) both personality and contextual components of the fit concept are relatively enduring phenomenon (Kristof, 1996; Chatman 1989, 1991), b) which can be reliably measured (Kristof, 1996) and easily compared with one another (Klein, Dansereau, and Hall, 1994; Rousseau, 1985), and c) there is enough variance in personality, context, and fit variables (Tinsley, 2000a, 2000b). These issues will be addressed for the emotional climate and affective trait components of emotional fit, which I will discuss in the remainder of this section.

2.2 Emotional Climate

Emotional climate is defined as the employees' shared perceptions of the affective quality of a workplace. This definition draws on two distinct literatures from organizational climate and emotions in environmental psychology, and finds conceptual and empirical support from the literature on work-group emotions. I will discuss each of these separately.

Organizational climate has been generally defined as the employees' shared perceptions of the psychologically important characteristics of a work environment (Schneider and Reichers, 1983), or as the "feel" of the workplace (Field and Abelson, 1982). Although very early studies on climate have mentioned feelings as a core feature
of the concept (Lewin, 1951; Schneider, 1975; Steele and Jenks, 1977; Schneider and Reichers, 1983), the affective component of organizational climate has been ignored for a long time in the literature. In a recent review of the organizational climate research, Ashkanasy, Wilderom and Peterson (2000) have suggest that there is a need for research that identifies and quantifies collective feelings operating in the work setting and investigates how such feelings relate to and shape organizational climate. Taking a step in this direction, this study develops and empirically explores the concept of emotional climate in light of the insights gained from the organizational climate literature.

Schneider (1975) suggested that the climate concept is based upon the assumption that humans attempt to apprehend order in their environment by creating perceptions of totalities consisting of inferred and actual practices and procedures so that they can effectively adapt their behavior to the work environment. In line with this reasoning, Ashforth (1985) has underlined the followings as core elements of the climate concept: (a) climate is a perceptually-based abstraction; (b) climate perceptions tend to be both shared and relatively enduring; and (c) climate perceptions reflect what is psychologically meaningful to the individuals concerned.

The definition of emotional climate employed in this study is in line with the overall conceptualization of climate in the literature in that: a) It draws on the employees’ perceptions of the affective quality of the workplace rather than their evaluations, likes, or dislikes about it, b) It is conceptualized as a shared perception of the affective quality of work context in an organization, c) There is conceptual and empirical evidence from environmental psychology literature that the affective quality of an environment is
psychologically meaningful phenomenon for the people participating and/or observing this environment.

The "affective quality" notion in the emotional climate definition comes from a prior stream of research in the environmental psychology literature (Russell and Pratt, 1980; Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). Approaching environmental psychology from an emotional perspective, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) proposed that environments comprise emotion-eliciting qualities that can be perceived by the people in it. In a later study, Russell and Pratt (1980) found that the meaning persons attribute to their environments has a major affective as well as a cognitive component. Then they conceptualized this affective quality attributed to environments as a two-dimensional bipolar space and provided empirical support for their model. The two orthogonal dimensions they have found in their results are pleasantness (ranging from a lower pole including adjectives such as unpleasant, depressing, sad to a higher pole including pleasant, nice, and happy) and activation (ranging from calm, quiet, serene to hyperactive, intense, and forceful). Overall, this study provides a "conceptual structure that defines the meaning of terms within the domain of the English language that persons commonly use to describe the emotional quality of environments" (Russell and Pratt, 1980). It is suggested that the pleasantness and activation dimensions would be theoretically sufficient to represent the affective quality of an environment.

Subsequent studies have provided empirical support for this argument by identifying pleasantness and activation as two basic dimensions representing people's descriptions of physical settings, including suburban parks (Hull and Harvey, 1989), bars and restaurants (Wasserman, Rafaeli, Kluger, 2000). Drawing on this prior research, I
employ the two-dimensional bipolar space (including activation and pleasantness dimensions) as a framework in my study while conceptualizing and measuring emotional climate.

Although the affective quality notion in the emotional climate definition comes from the environmental psychology literature focusing on people's perceptions of their physical settings, there is conceptual and empirical evidence from the organizational behavior literature on work-group emotions that work settings also comprise an affective quality that could be collectively experienced and perceived by employees. In an extensive review of studies looking at emotions at the group level, Barsade and Gibson (1998) have argued that group emotion should be considered as a phenomenon that is distinct from the affective characteristics of individual group members, and elaborated on this argument by approaching group emotion from a both top-down and bottom-up perspective. In specific terms, from a top-down perspective, the authors have suggested that group emotion could be considered as a holistic entity subsuming diverse emotional tendencies of individual group members as a result of the social force they create through emotional contagion and normative control. On the other hand, from a bottom-up perspective, it has been suggested that a variety of compositional factors, such as the degree of variance among group members in terms of their affective traits and the influence of the most emotionally extreme members of the group, can generate "group-as-a-whole" (p.94) emotion, which in turn would have a differential impact on group members. Together, these arguments provide conceptual support that work settings involve a distinct affective quality that is collectively shared and that is distinct from the affective characteristics of individuals constituting these settings.
Prior research also provides empirical support that the affective quality of work environments can be collectively perceived by the people comprising these environments. In a recent study, Battel and Saavedra (2000) have empirically investigated mood as a collective property of work groups. Using the activation and pleasantness dimensions of mood I discussed above, these authors have demonstrated that group members could detect and display mood information through observable behavioral expressions. The results of this study have shown that group members significantly converged in their perceptions of work group mood and their reports were consistent with those of observers who assessed the moods of these work groups by using an elaborate instrument to detect work group moods. Thus, drawing on group emotions research, it can be suggested that the emotional climate phenomenon as conceptualized in this study reflects a shared perception of what is psychologically meaningful to the employees in a given work context, a basic requirement of the climate construct suggested by the organizational climate literature.

For a valid conceptualization and study of emotional fit, it is also necessary for emotional climate to be an enduring characteristic of a given work environment and to sufficiently vary among different work environments. Emotional climate should both remain relatively stable within a given work context and vary among different workplaces. Emotional climate should remain relatively stable within a work context because affective personalities of people (Staw and Barsade, 1993; George, 1990), the affective composition of the group constituting a workplace (Barsade, Ward, Turner, and Sommenfeld, 2000), organizational emotion norms (Kelly and Barsade, 2001), task/job characteristics, role specifications (Saavedra and Kwun, 2000), and configurations of
different roles in an organization are quite steady. In addition to that, emotional history of a group (Kelly and Barsade, 2001) and personal accounts of people give way to a pattern of interactions that can repeatedly produce certain emotional/affective exchanges between people. By the same token, emotional climate should vary from one workplace to another depending on such situational factors as affective personalities of people, the affective composition of the workplace group, physical environment, hierarchical structure, and task characteristics which can all influence the emergence and nature of emotional climate.

2.3 Affective Trait

The other component of the emotional fit concept is affective trait. A person’s affective trait is defined as his/her stable predisposition toward certain types of emotional responding that set the threshold for the occurrence of particular emotional states (Rosenberg, 1998). Thus, by definition, affective trait is an enduring phenomenon, which is a major criterion for a valid conceptualization of emotional fit. Prior research provides strong empirical evidence that affective trait has a strong influence on employees’ behaviors and attitudes at work (see Isen and Baron, 1991 and Isen, 2001 for extensive reviews).

To date, there have been two major perspectives in the literature to look at human affective personality, both of which were conceptualized within the framework of the circumplex model of emotion (Russell, 1980; Larsen and Diener, 1992). At the most fundamental level, the circumplex model presumes that some emotions are similar to each other yet measurable different than other emotions dispersing around a circular plot,
and that the majority of emotional experience can be captured by two orthogonal affect dimensions defining this circular plot.

The circumplex structure of emotions has been found several times with a variety of self-report and judgment data (for a review of these studies see Larsen and Diener, 1992). In addition to self-reports of mood, the circumplex has been recovered from facial expressions (e.g. Russell and Bullock, 1985) and anticipated reactions to events (Russell and Mehrabian, 1977), as well as emotional ratings of the environment (Russell and Pratt, 1980) which I have discussed in the previous section. Drawing on this basic emotion model, two streams of research have been trying to conceptualize and measure the emotional personalities of people: The Positive/Negative Affect (PA/NA) stream (Watson, Clark, and Tellegen, 1988; Meyer and Shack, 1989; Tellegen, 1985; Watson, 2000, 1988) and the intensity/hedonic tone stream (Russell, 1980; Larsen and Diener, 1992; Weiss, Nicholas, and Daus, 1999; Weiss and Croponzano, 1996; Russell, Weiss, and Mendelsohn, 1989).

The PA/NA researchers characterize affect as Positive Affect (PA) and Negative Affect (NA). The general consensus is that rather than being the two poles of a single construct, PA and NA are independent from each other. Generally, PA reflects the extent to which a person feels enthusiastic, active, and alert. High PA is a state of high energy, full concentration, and pleasurable engagement whereas low PA is characterized by sadness and lethargy. In contrast, NA is a general dimension of subjective distress and unpleasurable engagement that subsumes a variety of aversive mood states, including anger, contempt, disgust, guilt, fear, and nervousness, with low NA being a state of calmness and serenity (Watson, Clark, and Tellegen (1988). As a personality trait,
PA/NA have been conceptualized and measured as a generalized tendency toward having a particular level of positive/negative moods, which then permeate all of an individual's experiences (Lazarus, 1991).

Watson, Tellegen, Wiese, and Vaidya (1999) showed that the NA and PA dimensions measured by the PANAS scales have strong and systematic associations with the Big Two of personality, neuroticism and extraversion, respectively. These results indicate strong construct validity for the PA and NA concepts. Thus, Watson et al. suggest that PANAS scheme offers a viable framework to researchers who are interested in affect at both the state and the trait levels. In addition, recent studies in the organizational behavior literature (Barsade et al., 2000; Staw and Barsade, 1993) have also operationalized the personality trait PA and NA by adjusting items from the “Well-Being Scale” of the Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire (Tellegen, 1982).

The second stream of research that has studied emotions within the circumplex framework (Russell, 1979, 1980; Larsen and Diener, 1992) has conceptualized the affective states with respect to the dimensions of Pleasantness (or Hedonic Tone) and Activation (or Level of Arousal). The Pleasantness dimension describes affective states as falling on a scale from very positive to very negative with many points in between. The higher pole of this dimension would include such adjectives as happy, joyful, and cheerful whereas the lower pole would be characterized by such markers as sad, unhappy and depressed. The second dimension is the level of activation – the higher end of the continuum would include such adjectives as hyperactive, forceful, intense and alert whereas the lower end would include relaxed, calm, quiet, and tranquil.
For a valid conceptualization and measurement of emotional fit, emotional personality variable needs to be meaningfully comparable with emotional climate variable. Interestingly, the dimensions of the Activation/Hedonic Tone perspective discussed above are in parallel with the two dimensions of Russell and Pratt’s (1980) measure of affective quality attributed to environments that I employ to operationalize emotional climate. Thus, for the affective personality variable of my thesis, I would prefer using the Arousal/Hedonic Tone, instead of the PA/NA, conceptualization. In fact, advocates from both the PA/NA side (Watson 2000) and the Arousal/Hedonic Tone side (Larsen and Diener, 1992) emphasize that although these competing two-dimensional schemes may appear to be quite different, these differences actually are only superficial, and that both of these models are equally capable of explaining observed phenomena and are mathematically derivable from one another.

Moreover, Larsen and Diener (1992) argue that, despite its widespread usage, the PANAS scale (Watson et al. 1988) has some major drawbacks such as: a) The PA and NA measures of the PANAS scale only contain adjectives from the high activation end points of the dimensions, whereas a truly bipolar measure as implied by the by the circumplex model need to contain adjectives from both ends of the dimensions, b) The independence of the PA and NA dimensions blurs at the lower ends of PA and NA scales which makes it difficult to comprehend and conceptualize the independence of these dimensions, and c) The titles “positive” and “negative” carry strong evaluative overtones which should be avoided in scientific research. In addition to these arguments, research on neuropsychology reports that pleasantness and activation dimensions are associated with distinct neural systems, providing a biological rationale for the view that activation
and pleasantness dimensions reflect enduring affective characteristics of people (Heller, Nitschke, and Lindsay, 1997; Heilman, 1997; Heller, 1993). For these reasons, I decided to follow the activation/pleasantness framework while conceptualizing and measuring affective trait.

A final issue that needs to be addressed in this section is the distinction between the phenomena of affective trait and affective state. Affective states, including emotions and mood states, are less stable than affective trait, which might endure for years if not decades (Watson and Walker, 1996; Rosenberg, 1998). Regardless of the differences in terms of their affective traits, people could experience either specific emotional states such as anger, fear, or happiness as a reaction to a specific object or cause (Lazarus, 1991) or a variety of mood states as a relatively more diffuse reaction to general environmental stimuli (Tellegen, 1985). Thus, it should be noted that the affective state of a person at given time and context can be substantially different from his/her affective trait. For instance, an employee might be predisposed to feel emotions with a certain level of activation as a result of his/her affective trait, but might still experience affective states with higher or lower levels of activation in the workplace as a result of being in an emotional climate that does not fit his/her affective trait. How would an employee react to working in such circumstances? I will pursue possible answers to this question in the next chapter where I discuss the outcomes of emotional fit. Before starting this discussion, however, I need to clarify how I have conceptualized emotional fit.
2.4 Conceptualization of Emotional Fit

2.4.1 Focus on Activation Dimension

The preceding discussion on emotional climate and affective trait has revealed that both of these emotional fit components could be represented on a circumplex domain of affect with pleasantness and activation dimensions (Larsen and Diener, 1992; Russell and Pratt, 1980). The pleasantness dimension of affect has been considered in several previous studies, such as those on positive affect and negative affect (e.g., Isen, 2000; Staw and Barsade, 1993). However, our knowledge about the activation dimension has been much more limited. Therefore, and for purposes of parsimony, I specifically focus on the activation dimension while conceptualizing emotional fit in this study, and analyze the congruence between the activation levels of an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of their workplace. What is congruence? I will discuss this issue in the next section.

2.4.2 Conceptualizing Congruence

The conceptualization of congruence could take a variety of forms depending on the type of person-organization fit being studied and the theoretical framework under consideration. Previous studies have provided an extensive review of these conceptualizations and discussed their theoretical and methodological implications (Edwards, 1996; Kristof, 1996). In this section, I will describe two alternative perspectives that could be employed to develop an emotional fit model: monotonic model and optimal model (Edwards, 1996).

From the monotonic model perspective, we could argue that emotional fit will be higher when the activation level of an employee’s affective trait exceeds the activation
level of his/her workplace's emotional climate. This perspective considers the affective trait of an employee and the emotional climate of his/her workplace as two forces operating in opposite directions in determining outcomes. Thus, the activation level of affective trait has a positive impact on favorable psychological and behavioral outcomes and the activation level of emotional climate a negative impact. According to this model, regardless of the activation level of his/her affective trait, an employee will experience better emotional fit when he/she works in an emotional climate with lower activation level. By the same token, regardless of the activation level of an emotional climate, an employee will experience better emotional fit in the workplace if the activation level of his/her affective trait is higher.

From the optimal model perspective, we could argue that emotional fit will be higher when the activation level of an employee’s affective trait is similar to that of emotional climate. Thus, when considered separately, neither the activation level of affective trait and nor that of emotional climate will necessarily determine the psychological and behavioral outcomes, but the similarity between the two will. According to this model, employees with a lower activation affective trait will be a better emotional fit in work environments where the activation level of emotional climate is lower. In a similar vein, emotional climates with higher levels of activation will be a better fit for employees with higher activation levels compared to those whose activation level is lower.

Drawing on Edwards (1996), I have illustrated these two perspectives in Figure 2.1. The monotonic model perspective is represented in Graphic 1(a) and the optimal model perspective in Graphic 1(b).
The horizontal axis in Figure 2.1 represents the level of emotional fit, i.e. the difference between the activation levels of affective trait and emotional climate. The vertical axis represents an illustrative dependent variable positively related to emotional fit, which I named as engagement (I will discuss this concept in detail in the next chapter).

Figure 2.1: Alternative Models of Emotional Fit
(Adapted from Edwards, 1996)

Graphic 1(a): Monotonic Model:  

\[ E \]

\[ T-C \]

\[ -3 \quad +3 \]

Graphic 1(b): Optimal Model:  

\[ E \]

\[ T-C \]

\[ -3 \quad +3 \]

\[ T = \text{Trait} \]

\[ C = \text{Climate} \]

\[ E = \text{Engagement} \]

If the emotional fit model is conceptualized as monotonic (linear), it is assumed that both the amount and directionality of the difference between affective trait and emotional climate matter. In specific terms, referring to the example illustrated in Graphic 1(a), the engagement level of an employee will be predicted to be higher when the activation level of affective trait is higher than that of the emotional climate (e.g.
point 3 on the horizontal axis), and lower when the activation level of affective trait is lower than the activation level of emotional climate (e.g., point -3 on the horizontal axis).

If the emotional fit model is conceptualized as optimal (curvilinear), it is assumed that the amount of difference between affective trait and emotional climate matters but the directionality of the difference does not. In specific terms, referring to Graphic 1(b), the engagement level of an employee will be predicted to be higher when the activation level of affective trait is closer to the activation level of emotional climate (the T-C value on the horizontal axis is closer to the origin), and lower when the two deviate in either direction (e.g., the T-C values of -3 and +3 on the horizontal axis would match with the same value of engagement on the vertical axis).

Edwards (1996) has suggested that the choice among alternative models of fit should be driven by theory and supported by empirical evidence. Drawing on the theoretical grounds I will discuss in the next Chapter, I have found the optimal fit model as a more plausible framework to predict the psychological and behavioral outcomes of emotional fit. However, following Edwards (1996), I will test both models while analyzing the data to consider alternative explanations.

In the next chapter, I will propose a theoretical model to investigate the psychological and behavioral outcomes of emotional fit as I have conceptualized in this chapter. In specific terms, I will analyze how the degree of fit between the activation levels of the affective trait of an employee and the emotional climate of his/her workplace might influence the employee's engagement in the workplace.
CHAPTER THREE
THE OUTCOMES OF EMOTIONAL FIT

The theoretical model of this study is presented in Figure 3.1. In general terms, the theoretical model suggests that an employee will be more engaged in his/her work environment when there is an emotional fit between the activation levels of his/her affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her workplace. Kahn (1990) has defined engagement as the degree to which an organization member physically, cognitively, and emotionally employs and expresses the preferred dimensions of his/her self during role performances. Expressing preferred dimensions refers to presenting one’s real identity, thoughts and feelings. Conversely, disengagement has been conceptualized as removing one’s personal energies from physical, cognitive, and emotional efforts spent at work and hiding one’s identity, thoughts, and feelings during role performances.

According to Kahn (1990), an employee’s engagement or disengagement to work environment is manifested in the employee’s “connections to work and others, personal presence (physical, cognitive, and emotional), and active, full role performances” (p.700). Drawing on this typology, I identified three major domains to investigate the relationship between emotional fit and engagement/disengagement, including an employee’s: a) connection with others, b) connection with work, and c) task and role performance.

Why will engagement come about when there is emotional fit? I draw on two distinct but complementary perspectives to explain the psychological mechanism operating behind this relationship. The activation theory perspective informs us about the individual aspect of the psychological mechanism, focusing on an individual’s emotional
Figure 3.1: Theoretical Model

- Psychological States
  - Emotional Fit
  - Individual Aspect
    - Emotional Exhaustion
  - Relational Aspect
    - Psychological Safety

- Engagement/Disengagement
  - Connection with Others
    - Commitment, OCB helping
    - Surface acting
  - Connection with Work
    - Work absorption
    - Psychological Withdrawal, Intention for Turnover, Absenteeism
  - Performance (Task/Role)
resources. The psychological safety perspective, on the other hand, helps us reveal the relational aspect of the psychological mechanism mediating the relationship between emotional fit and engagement. Each of these is discussed in turn.

3.1 Individual Aspect of Emotional Fit: Activation Theory Perspective

Emotional fit will contribute to engagement at work because it helps employee keep his/her emotional resources at optimum levels, and having sufficient emotional resources is a major antecedent of engagement (Kahn, 1990). An emotional misfit in both directions makes the workplace an emotionally draining environment for the employee. In specific terms, when the activation level of an emotional climate is higher than an employee’s affective disposition, the emotional climate will have a taxing impact on the employee. On the other hand, when the emotional climate has a lower activation level compared to the employee’s affective trait, the employee faces a problem of not receiving sufficient emotional stimulation from his/her work environment. Both situations of misfit will make the employee emotionally exhausted at work. These propositions are in line with the reasoning of activation theory (Gardner and Cummings, 1988; Gardner, 1986), which I will discuss below.

Activation theory holds that every individual has a characteristic level of activation that he/she is motivated to maintain in his/her physical and social environment (Gardner and Cummings, 1988; Gardner, 1986). Activation level, the basic concept of the activation theory, has been defined as “the state of neural excitation in the reticular activation system (RAS) of the central nervous system” (Gardner and Cummings, 1988; p.83), which is monotonically related to the total stimulation impact of external (e.g.
noise, heat) and internal sources (e.g. cognitions, heart rate) on the RAS (Gardner, 1986). When a person's experienced activation level deviates from his/her characteristic activation level as a result of this stimulation impact, the person takes actions to get back to his/her characteristic level of activation. Thus, for instance, when an environment threatens an individual's characteristic level of activation because of its highly stimulating impact, the individual usually engages in activation-decreasing behaviors to modify the over-activating impact of the environment. In a similar vein, when the environmental stimulus is lower than the individual's characteristic level of activation, the individual will be motivated to initiate activation-increasing behaviors.

To assess people's characteristic levels of activation, activation theory researchers have drawn upon two individual characteristics: electrodermal lability (e.g. skin resistance changes an individual emits in a relatively stimulus-free environment) and the level of introversion/extraversion (Gardner and Cummings, 1988; Gardner, 1986). These two criteria have been suggested to assess the characteristic level of activation because prior research (Gardner, 1982; Eysenck, 1967, 1983; Katkin, 1975; cf. Gardner, 1986) has consistently shown that labiles (i.e., those who emit a higher number of skin response changes) and introverts are more sensitive to environmental stimulation compared to stabiles (i.e., those who emit a lower number of skin response changes) and extraverts. Accordingly, compared to extraverts and stabiles, introverts and labiles are assumed to reach their characteristic levels of activation at a lower degree of environmental stimulation, making them more likely to refrain from stimulation-seeking behaviors. Indeed, prior research has shown that extraverts prefer higher levels of intensity in the
stimulation they receive (Eysenck, 1967) and perform better under high stimulation conditions (Matthews, Davies, Lees, 1990; Geen, 1984) compared to introverts.

Drawing on the activation theory perspective, a stream of research has investigated the effects of organizational stimulus factors such as task and job design (Gardner, 1986; Gardner and Cummings, 1988), job scope (Xie and Johns, 1995), and job demands (Janssen, 2001) on people’s behaviors and attitudes. In an experimental study, Gardner (1986) has found that different task designs induce different levels of stimulation (i.e. activation) among the subjects, and that people exhibit higher levels of performance and satisfaction when the stimulation impact of the task does not threaten their characteristic levels of activation. For instance, extraverts, who reach their characteristic levels of activation at higher levels of environmental stimulus, were more satisfied with a task creating high stimulation, whereas introverts, who reach their characteristic levels of activation at lower levels of environmental stimulus, were more satisfied with a relatively non-stimulating task.

Applying activation theory to the area of job design, Gardner and Cummings (1988) posited that different jobs provide different activation levels, i.e. stimulation impact, among job performers, depending on a number of job characteristics such as intensity, complexity, and variation in stimulation. Based on this assumption, they hypothesized an inverted-U relationship between a job’s activation level and an individual’s performance and satisfaction. Thus, compared to the jobs creating low or high levels of activation, jobs with moderate levels of stimulus impact were expected to result in higher levels of job performance and satisfaction among the employees. The authors explained this relationship by suggesting that, although the characteristic level of
activation differs across individuals, on the average, employees will be more likely to deviate from their characteristic levels of activation while performing high or low activation jobs. This deviation from the characteristic level of activation in turn impairs employees’ central nervous functioning, behavioral efficiency, cognitive capacity, and decrease their positive affect, resulting in decreased performance and satisfaction.

Xie and Johns (1995) have analyzed the relationship between job scope and stress from an activation theory perspective in an organizational context and provided empirical support for Gardner and Cumming’s (1988) arguments. Defining job scope as “the set of job-related activities performed by a job holder” (p. 1288), Xie and Johns (1995) posited that low job scope should be related to monotony and understimulation, which in turn leads to higher levels of stress for the employees. On the other hand, the authors suggested that high job scope should also lead to higher levels of stress by creating an overstimulation for the employees as a result of excessive mental and social demands of the work environment. The stress resulting from high-scope jobs, however, was expected to be lower for those employees who perceive a better fit between the demands of their job scope and their abilities, indicating lower amounts of deviation from their characteristic levels of activation, and, thus, lower degrees of overstimulation. Analyzing a sample of 418 employees from 143 different jobs, Xi and Johns (1995) provided substantial empirical support for these predictions.

Finally, in a recent study, Janssen (2001) has studied job demands, such as working fast and hard, having much work to do in a short time, or permanently having a great deal of work to do, as sources of activation impacts in the workplace. Drawing on the reasoning of activation theory, Janssen (2001) argued that, compared to low or high
levels of job demands, intermediate job demands should result in higher levels of performance and satisfaction among managers. Moreover, the author suggested that this curvilinear impact of job demands on managers’ performance and satisfaction should be moderated by the effort/reward fairness perceptions of managers. Confirming these predictions, the results of the study showed that the managers performing jobs with moderate levels of job demands and perceiving a fairly balanced reciprocity of efforts and rewards in their organization exhibited the highest levels of performance and satisfaction.

Taken together, the studies discussed above suggest that organizational contexts comprise several stimulus factors that might create an impact on the experienced activation levels of organization members who are inherently motivated to maintain their characteristic levels of activation in their environments. Thus, employees’ behaviors and attitudes in organizations can be explained to a great extent by taking into account the deviations that might occur in the employees’ characteristic levels of activation as a result of the organizational stimulus impact. However, studies conducted from an activation theory perspective to date have substantially focused on the factors pertaining to job characteristics as sources of stimulation in the workplace, paying little attention to more contextual factors in organizations that might play an equally important role in activating or deactivating employees regardless of what kind of jobs they perform in the organization.

It is my contention that the activation dimension of emotional climate might be one of the contextual factors that can create a stimulus impact on the employees’ experienced levels of activation in organizations. The strong association between activation and
emotion has been mentioned in the literature throughout the decades (Thayer, Newman, and McClain, 1994; Thayer, 1989; Zillman, 1983; Schachter and Singer, 1962). Recently, Thayer (1996) has emphasized that a distinctive characteristic of affective phenomena, which distinguishes them from cognitive phenomena, has to do with the fact that they relate to energy, drive and metabolic energy that activate people. A stream of research investigating the dimensions of affect has repeatedly found activation – an affective state ranging from calm, tranquil and relaxed to active, excited and stimulated- as one of the two major dimensions that characterize people’s affective experiences (Russell and Feldman-Barrett, 1999; Yik and Russell, 2001; Russell 1980, 1989). Assuming that emotional climate has an influence on employees’ affective experiences at work and considering the strongly intertwined relationship between activation and emotion as discussed above, it is plausible to argue that the emotional climate of a workplace comprises a force that can influence the activation levels of employees in the workplace.

When the activation level of an emotional climate is higher than an employee’s affective disposition, the emotional climate will be emotionally taxing for the employee as a result of its overstimulating impact. From an activation theory perspective, the emotional climate will create a stimulus impact for the employee pushing his/her experienced activation level to a point higher than his/her characteristic level of activation. On the other hand, when the emotional climate has a lower activation level compared to the employee’s affective trait, the employee will face a problem of not receiving sufficient emotional stimulation from his/her work environment. From an activation theory perspective, the emotional climate creates a deactivating impact for the employee, pulling his/her experienced activation level to a point lower than his/her
characteristic level of activation. Both conditions will be emotionally exhausting for the employee.

Emotional exhaustion is defined as a psychological state characterized by a lack of energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources are used up, which usually occurs in highly demanding, people-oriented situations (Maslach, 1982; Maslach and Jackson, 1981). Emotionally exhausted people usually feel that they are emotionally overextended and drained by their contacts with other people (Leiter and Maslach, 1988). Emotional exhaustion has been initially considered as one of the three components of the burnout construct, which is defined as a “syndrome of emotional exhaustion and cynicism that occurs frequently among individuals who do ‘people work’ of some kind” (Maslach and Jackson, 1981, p.99). In addition to emotional exhaustion, the other two components of burnout have been conceptualized as depersonalization, characterized by an extremely detached response to other people, and diminished personal accomplishment, referring to a tendency to evaluate oneself negatively (Maslach and Jackson, 1981).

Recent studies, however, have challenged this conceptualization in two different ways. First, it has been suggested that emotional exhaustion should be considered a distinctive construct, antecedent the other two dimensions of burnout (Moore, 2000a; Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Leiter and Maslach, 1988). The second challenge has to do with the scope of the emotional exhaustion phenomenon. Cordes and Dougherty (1993) have asserted that emotional exhaustion should not be considered as occurring solely in helping professions, such as nursing and education, requiring service provider-recipient relationships. Rather, they argued, the scope of the construct can be effectively expanded to a variety of jobs since supervisor-subordinate and co-worker contacts include
interactions that may also contribute to emotional exhaustion. In a recent stream of research, Schutte, Toppinen, Kalimo, and Schaufeli (2000), Enzmann, Schaufeli, Janssen, and Rozeman (1998), and Leiter and Schaufeli (1996) have provided empirical support to this view by demonstrating the validity and consistency of the emotional exhaustion construct across a variety of occupational groups including managers, clerks, and blue-collar workers.

The characteristics of organizational settings have been considered a major factor in creating emotional exhaustion (Maslach, 1982). Conceptualizing emotional exhaustion as a form of ecological dysfunction, Carroll and White (1982) have suggested that emotional exhaustion should not be considered as an individual disease, but rather a phenomenon stemming from the disharmony in person-environment match-up. Drawing on these views, I suggest that emotional exhaustion might be related to the degree of fit between the activation levels of emotional climate and the affective trait of an employee. As the activation level of the emotional climate gets higher or lower than the employee’s affective disposition, the employee is more likely to deviate from his/her characteristic level of activation, and thereby experience higher levels of stress and arousal (Gardner and Cummings, 1988). An emotional climate with a relatively higher activation level may overwhelm the employee through his/her interactions in the work environment. On the other hand, prior research on sensory deprivation (Zubek, 1969; Hebb, 1966) and boredom (London, Schubert, and Wasburn, 1972; Berlyne, 1960) suggests that the employee will feel stressed and exhausted also when the activation level of emotional climate is lower than his/her affective disposition, since, in this case, the employee will not be able receive sufficient emotional stimulation from the work environment. Thus,
the higher the emotional misfit the more emotionally disturbing the workplace will be for
the employee, depleting his/her emotional resources. Conversely, from an activation
theory perspective, it can be suggested that emotional fit between an employee and
his/her workplace will prevent emotionally exhaustion at work.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a negative relationship between emotional fit and
emotional exhaustion.

How does emotional exhaustion resulting from emotional misfit affect
engagement? I will investigate this issue by separately focusing on each of the three
domains of engagement mentioned previously, connection with others, connection with
work, and task and role performance.

3.1.1 Connection with Others

As a major coping response to the exhausting impact of the workplace, the
employee might attempt to emotionally detach himself/herself from other people and to
develop a depersonalized response to them (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Leiter and
Maslach, 1988), indicating a tendency to disconnect himself/herself from the others in the
work environment. From an activation theory perspective, this disconnection can be
explained as a way of protecting one’s characteristic level of activation by reducing
contact with the undesired (i.e. overstimulating or understimulating) impact of the
workplace. The employee’s tendency to disconnect from others will be reflected in
his/her interactions with coworkers and his/her attitude towards his/her organization.
In terms of interactions with coworkers, an employee will be less likely to engage in helping behavior when he/she gets exhausted at work as result of emotional misfit. Helping behavior has been defined as voluntarily helping others with work related problems (Organ, 1997) and identified as one of the most prominent forms of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) by researchers in the literature (see Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Paine, and Bacharach, 2000 for an extensive review). As conceptualized within the OCB framework, helping behavior is not an enforceable requirement of the role or the job description but rather an informal contribution that participants can choose to offer or withhold without regard to considerations of sanctions or formal incentives (Organ, 1990). Thus, psychological factors determining an individual’s inclination to help others should play a major role in explaining OCB helping behavior. Analyzing helping behavior from an attribution theory perspective, Weiner (1980) has suggested that people are more likely to engage in helping behaviors when they empathize with those asking for help. When there is emotional misfit, emotional detachment and developing depersonalized responses to others, resulting from emotional exhaustion, will make the employee less likely to empathize with coworkers when they are in need of help (Maslach, 1982), a condition that makes them more likely to withdraw their help from these people (Reisenzein, 1986; Weiner, Graham, and Chandler, 1982; Meyer and Mulherin, 1980).

An employee’s emotional detachment and depersonalized responses developed to others could also be reflected in the way the employee expresses emotions while interacting with others at work. Specifically, when there is a misfit between an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her workplace, the employee
might engage in surface acting (Hochschild, 1983) while interacting with others. Surface acting refers to altering one’s displayed emotions to be able to express the desired behaviors at work (Hochschild, 1983). The concept has usually been studied by emotional labor researchers in relation to the experiences of service sector employees (Wharton and Erickson, 1993; Rafaeli and Sutton, 1987) and considered as an antecedent to emotional exhaustion (Wharton, 1993).

In this study, I attempt to extend the domain of the surface acting phenomenon beyond the service sector and suggest that an employee can engage in surface acting in any type of work setting when there is a misfit between his/her affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her work environment. I also posit that, in the case of emotional misfit, surface acting can be an outcome rather than an antecedent of emotional exhaustion. When an employee feels exhausted at work as a result of emotional misfit, to cope with the situation, he/she will attempt to express certain emotions congruent with emotional climate without really feeling them. Supporting this argument, prior research has suggested that emotional labor can be utilized by employees as a way of buffering themselves from stress (Conrad and Witte, 1994). In addition to that, from the activation theory framework, engaging in surface acting can be considered as a coping response of an employee to emotional exhaustion, helping him/her mitigate the impact of emotional climate threatening his/her characteristic level of activation while interacting with others.

Emotional exhaustion resulting from emotional misfit might also have an impact on the employee’s connection with his/her organization in general by decreasing his/her commitment towards the organization. Organizational commitment basically reflects the “psychological bond” that ties employees to an organization (Meyer and Allen, 1997,
1991; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986). This psychological bond may take a variety forms, such as affective (due to emotional attachments), continuance (due to economic benefits), and normative (due to obligatory feelings) commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1991). Researchers have found affective commitment to be more beneficial for organizations than the other two forms of commitment in terms of attendance and extra-role behaviors (Somers, 1995; Gellatly, 1995; Hackett, Bycio, and Hausdorf, 1994; O'Reilly and Chatman, 1986). Affective commitment refers to the employee’s emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization (Meyer and Allen, 1991) through such feelings as affection, warmth and belongingness (Jaros, Jermier, Koehler, and Sincich, 1993). Employees with a strong affective commitment continue employment with their organization because they enjoy doing so (Meyer and Allen, 1991), a psychological condition that depends on the degree to which the employees find their work experience as psychologically rewarding (Meyer and Allen, 1997).

When an employee does not fit in the emotional climate of his/her workplace and becomes emotionally exhausted, the work experience will be far from psychologically rewarding, decreasing his/her feelings of attachment towards his/her organization. Thus, emotional exhaustion will be negatively related to affective commitment. Prior research provides strong empirical support for this prediction (Leiter and Maslach, 1988; Leiter, 1988, 1991; Jackson, Turner, and Brief, 1987; Sethi, Barrier, and King, 1999). Indeed, in a recent meta-analysis of the correlates of the burnout phenomenon, Lee and Ashforth (1996) have found commitment as one of the most distinctive outcomes of emotional exhaustion ($r = -0.42$).
In this section, I have discussed how an employee might disconnect from others as a response to the exhausting impact of emotional misfit. Running out of emotional resources, the employee will emotionally detach from the work environment and develop depersonalized responses to others, making him/her less likely to engage in helping behaviors, more likely to engage in surface acting while interacting with coworkers, and feel less committed to the organization. Conversely, emotional fit will help the employee maintain his/her emotional resources, which will increase his/her capacity to connect with others in more authentic and caring ways, with a stronger emotional bond. Thus, I propose the following set of hypotheses:

Hypothesis 2(a): Emotional fit will be positively related to OCB helping behavior and commitment, mediated by emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 2(b): There will be a negative relationship between emotional fit and surface acting, mediated by emotional exhaustion.

3.1.2 Connection with Work

When an employee’s emotional resources are depleted as a result of emotional misfit, he/she would find the work environment less attractive and more uncomfortable, making him/her more likely to withdraw from the workplace. From an activation theory perspective, this withdrawal tendency can be explained as a reflection of the employee’s intention to get back to his/her characteristic level of activation, altered by the activating or deactivating impact of emotional climate.

With a need to regain emotional resources, an employee will be more likely to seek settings outside the workplace where he/she can experience better levels of emotional fit.
Thus, the employee would exhibit higher levels of absenteeism, referring to the non-attendance of an employee for scheduled work (Gibson, 1966). Prior research provides support for these arguments. Cooper and Payne (1967) have found that extravert workers, who usually seek higher activation levels in their lives (Eysenck, 1967), are more likely to withdraw from a task that is repetitive and thus less stimulating. Gupta and Beehr (1979) have considered absenteeism as a response to the noxious aspects of the work role emerging as a result of the employees' attempts to avoid such stimuli. The findings of a longitudinal study conducted by Hackett and Bycio (1996) have suggested that absenteeism may indeed help exhausted employees replenish their physical and psychological resources. All these studies suggest that absenteeism, a physical form of disconnection from work, will be more likely when the employee gets emotionally exhausted at work in which he/she cannot fit in emotional terms.

In addition to absenteeism, the employee's disconnection from work might also be reflected in his/her lack of psychological presence at work in the form of increased psychological withdrawal and a stronger intention for turnover. When the work environment becomes psychologically uncomfortable, the employees often try to psychologically withdraw from the work environment by engaging in a number of non-work related activities such as daydreaming and spending time on personal matters (Lehman and Simpson, 1992; Cropanzano, Howes, Grandey, and Toth, 1997). In the case of emotional misfit, an employee will employ these psychological withdrawal behaviors to buffer himself/herself from the emotionally disturbing impact of the work environment. As a long term response to the exhausting impact of emotional misfit, the employee will also have a stronger intention to quit his/her job, expecting to find better
work conditions that can match his/her trait level of emotional activation. Prior research strongly support the positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and intention for turnover predicted in the emotional fit model presented in this study. In specific terms, research conducted on teachers (Maslach and Jackson, 1981), nurses (Firth and Britton, 1989) and technology professionals (Moore, 2000b) have shown that emotionally exhausted employees have stronger tendencies to quit their jobs. Substantiating this link, in their meta-analysis of previous studies conducted on burnout, Lee and Ashforth (1996) have documented a strong positive relationship between emotional exhaustion and turnover intentions ($r=0.44$).

The above discussion suggests us that emotional misfit impedes an employee’s connection to work as he/she responds to the emotionally exhausting impact of the emotional climate by physically and psychologically disengaging from work. Conversely, when there is emotional fit, the employee will be expected to be both physically and psychologically more present at work. Emotional fit also promotes the employee’s connection with work in terms of his/her level of concentration on his/her role activities, which is defined as work absorption (Rothbard, 2001; Kahn, 1990). An employee will be more likely to be absorbed in his/her work activities when he/she is not distracted by the activities of others in the workplace (Rothbard, 2001). When there is emotional fit, the stimuli received from the work setting will be less distracting for the employee, increasing his/her ability to keep his/her emotional resources at optimum levels. Drawing on these emotional resources, the employee will be able to concentrate his/her role activities in more effective ways.
The arguments presented in this section lead me to the following hypotheses pertaining to the association between emotional fit and an employee's connection with work:

Hypothesis 3(a): Emotional fit will be negatively related to absenteeism, psychological withdrawal, and intention for turnover, and these relationships will be mediated by emotional exhaustion.

Hypothesis 3(b): There will be a positive relationship between emotional fit and work absorption, mediated by emotional exhaustion.

3.1.3 Task and Role Performance

The final domain in which I investigate the link between emotional fit and engagement includes an employee's performance in his/her organization, both role performance and task performance. An increasing number of researchers and practitioners in the field have questioned the adequacy of traditional employee performance measures focusing only on task outcomes and advocated the inclusion of work behaviors reflecting a variety of roles employees might take on within the organizational contexts they work (Welbourne, Johnson, and Erez, 1998; Borman and Motowildo, 1993, 1997; Motowildo and van Scotter, 1994).

The emotional exhaustion resulting from emotional misfit will be negatively related to both the task and role performance of an employee. When there is emotional misfit, the employee's task performance will decrease because the excessive amount of tension and stress experienced by the emotionally exhausted employee (Maslach and Jackson, 1981) hinders his/her cognitive and attentional capacity to perform his/her task effectively.
(Eysenck, 1983; Hockey and Hamilton, 1983). This prediction also finds support from a stream of empirical research conducted from the perspective of activation theory (Gardner, 1986; Geen, 1984). Geen (1984) has found that a person’s cognitive ability to perform a task decreases when his/her activation level goes above or beyond his/her characteristic level of activation, and explained his findings by suggesting that stimulation at suboptimal levels might decrease a person’s ability to pay attention to task-relevant cues. Similarly, Gardner (1986) has suggested that deviations from the characteristic level of activation impair information processing capacity, which in turn decreases task performance. In addition to decreased cognitive capacity, high levels of stress and emotional exhaustion have also been considered to result in lower level of self-efficacy expectations (Brief and Aldag, 1981) and reduced sense of personal adequacy (Maslach, 1982), both detriments to task performance. Drawing on these arguments, I posit that when an employee works in an environment where the activation level of emotional climate is higher or lower than his/her affective trait, he/she will feel less competent and more distracted at work, and thus exhibit lower level of task performance compared to employees who experience a better emotional fit.

The employee’s role performance will also decrease when he/she feels emotionally exhausted at work as a result of emotional misfit. High levels of role performance requires an employee to be cognitively attentive and empathically connected to others in a way that he/she can display his/her ideas, feelings, creativity, beliefs, and values while performing role behaviors (Kahn, 1990). When an employee feels emotionally exhausted, he/she wants to reduce contact with coworkers to the bare minimum required to get the job done, compartmentalize them into categories and then respond to these categories.
rather than to individuals, and would turn into a “petty bureaucrat” whose dealings with others go strictly by the book (Maslach, 1982), and thus gives less of himself/herself to the task environment. In the case of emotional fit, however, the accessibility of emotional reserves helps the employee draw on flexibility, initiative, and creativity while performing his/her role activities (Kahn, 1990).

Hypothesis 4: There will be a positive relationship between emotional fit and task and role performance, mediated by emotional exhaustion.

Thus far, I have discussed the link between emotional fit and engagement by analyzing the personal aspect of the psychological mechanism operating behind this relationship. From an activation theory framework, I have suggested that emotional fit will be associated with how an employee perceives himself/herself with respect to his/her personal resources, specifically focusing on emotional exhaustion. In the following section, I will focus on the relational aspect of the mechanism explaining the rationale for why emotional fit should be related to engagement. Drawing on the research on psychological safety, I will look into the relationship between emotional fit and engagement through the mediating affect of how the employee feels about his/her relationship with others in the organization.

3.2 Relational Aspect of Emotional Fit: Psychological Safety Perspective

Emotional fit will influence the quality of an employee’s relationship with other organization members. Emotional expressions play an important role in communication
and coordination of task activities (Quinn and Dutton, forthcoming); and sharing each other’s emotions has been considered as a core characteristic of compatible relationships (Berscheid, 1985). When there is a fit between the activation levels of an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her workplace, the employee will feel less concerned about expressing himself/herself to others in authentic ways and be more receptive to others’ emotions prevailing in the workplace. In contrast, when there is emotional misfit, the employee will be more likely to experience emotional incompatibilities in his/her relationship with others. In specific terms, when the activation level of emotional climate is higher than an employee’s affective disposition, the employee will find his/her social environment as being too intense and active to interact with. On the other hand, when the emotional climate has a lower activation level compared to the employee’s affective trait, the employee will feel that his/her more energetic attitude is not sufficiently reciprocated by others, and would find his/her social environment to be too passive and quiet. In both cases of misfit, the employee will be more concerned and less comfortable while expressing himself/herself to others within the social environment of his/her workplace, an unfavorable condition for his/her psychological safety.

Psychological safety in the workplace refers to an employee’s belief that work environment is a secure place for interpersonal risk taking (Edmondson, 1999) and self-expression (Kahn, 1990). An employee’s ongoing interpersonal interactions with coworkers shapes an employee’s sense of psychological safety in the workplace, involving his/her beliefs about how others will respond when he/she puts himself/herself
at risk within the social context of workplace, such as by asking a question, reporting a mistake, seeking feedback, or proposing an idea (Edmondson, 2002).

Psychological safety is a relatively new concept in the field and has mostly been studied at the team level by Edmondson and her colleagues, who have provided empirical support for the enhancing impact of psychological safety on learning behavior, performance, and process improvement in work teams (Edmondson, Bohmer, Pisano, 2001; Edmondson, 2002, 1999). In these studies, psychological safety has been conceptualized as a group-level phenomenon, a shared belief among team members that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking, which has been found to be an outcome of contextual factors such as effective team leader coaching and context support (Edmondson, 1999). This group-level conceptualization is based on the assumption that members of teams hold similar perceptions about psychological safety since they are subject to similar contextual influences and their beliefs develop out of shared experiences (Edmondson, 2002). There is also sufficient conceptual and empirical ground, however, to study psychological safety as an individual-level phenomenon (Kahn, 1990; Brown and Leigh, 1996). For instance, Brown and Leigh’s (1996) study indicates that employees differ in their perceptions of psychological safety within the same organization, and this variance significantly explains their differences in job involvement, effort and performance. However, we have relatively little knowledge to explain why employees in the same work environment differ in terms of their level of psychological safety.

It is my contention that emotional climate has a differential impact on the psychological safety of employees, depending on the degree to which the activation level
of this climate is congruent with the activation level of the affective trait of employees. Thus, I suggest that emotional fit might have an effect on the psychological safety of an employee. Since an employee’s sense of psychological safety is shaped by his/her ongoing interpersonal interactions with coworkers (Edmondson, 2002) and since emotional fit can play a major role in determining the quality of these interactions, it is plausible to investigate emotional fit as an antecedent of psychological safety.

An employee would experience psychological safety in the workplace when he/she feels that he/she can express one’s true self without fear of negative consequences to self-image, status or career (Kahn, 1990). Edmondson (2002) has mentioned that individuals usually engage in a tacit calculus to weigh the consequences of taking an action revealing their true selves against the possibility of being hurt, embarrassed or criticized in their interpersonal climate as a result of taking this action. An employee will be more likely to express his/her true self when he/she emotionally fits into the emotional climate of his/her workplace because he/she feels less concerned about the suitability of his/her emotional expressions within that environment and will be less likely to expect unreceptive responses from the others. In the case of emotional misfit, however, the employee will be more likely to feel that he/she is being scrutinized by others when he/she expresses his/her true self in the organization, increasing his/her self-consciousness and social anxiety (Buss, 1980) in relationships with other organization members.

In their analysis of social anxiety and self-preservation, Trower, Gilbert, and Sherling (1990) support this view by suggesting that people are able to interact with others within a safety system, rather than a self-defense system, as long as they continue
to receive the appropriate reassurance gestures from others and interpret these gestures accurately. When this reassurance is not felt, however, people engage in a more defensive form of social interaction where social anxiety will increase and psychological safety would break down. In the case of emotional misfit, the emotional gestures of others might be perceived by the employee as being either too intense or too apathetic, decreasing his/her feelings of reassurance and making him/her less comfortable to express himself/herself in a natural manner in that environment. Thus, drawing on the above arguments, I propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 5: There will be a positive relationship between emotional fit and psychological safety.

The obstructing impact of emotional misfit on an employee’s psychological safety will be reflected in his/her level of engagement in the organization. Feeling different from others heightens perceptions of being under evaluative scrutiny and prompts intense sense-making activity and hypervigilance in individuals (Kramer, 2001). Therefore, an employee who does not fit in the emotional climate of his/her workplace will feel more self-conscious about his/her interactions with others and spend more psychological effort to regulate his/her emotions (Bonanno, 2001) in the workplace. This intense focus on self and increased tendency to self-control in turn decreases the employee’s capacity to engage with his/her task environment in effective ways. This proposition is supported by a growing stream of research on ego-depletion (Baumeister, 2002), which I will discuss shortly.
In the remainder of this section, I will discuss the relational aspect of the link between emotional fit and engagement where I suggest psychological safety as the mediating variable. Like in the previous section, I will investigate the issue by separately focusing on each of the three domains of engagement as suggested in Figure 3.1, namely, connection with others, connection with work, and task and role performance.

3.2.1 Connection with Others

Reduced feelings of psychological safety resulting from emotional misfit will make an employee become more defensive in his/her relationship with other organization members, which will be reflected in the way he/she expresses his/her emotions in the workplace. While interacting with coworkers, an employee who does not fit in the emotional climate of his/her workplace will be more likely to engage in surface acting to decrease the risk of putting himself/herself under the scrutiny of others. In specific terms, to avoid being under the spotlight while expressing himself/herself to others, the employee might intend to express certain emotions congruent with the emotional climate of his/her workplace although he/she does not really feel these emotions. Similarly, the employee might avoid expressing some of his/her genuine emotions, tacitly expecting that such expressions might put him/her at risk in his/her relationships with other organization members. This prediction is supported by prior research, which has found that engaging in emotional labor can protect employees’ feelings of security and psychological well-being in the workplace (Conrad and Witte, 1994; Tolich, 1993; Wharton, 1993). Conversely, in the case of emotional fit, an employee will be more encouraged to express his/her true emotions without being considerate about the presence
of other organization members since he/she will be more likely to perceive the workplace as a safe environment for interpersonal risk taking.

Psychological safety resulting from emotional fit will also promote an employee’s feelings of involvement and perceptions of support in the work environment, strengthening his/her commitment to his/her organization. Psychological safety includes lower expectations of being rejected or criticized by others and higher expectations of getting support and help from others (Edmondson, 1999), all of which indicate a stronger belief about the supportiveness of the organizational context. Perceptions of a supportive environment in the workplace, on the other hand, have been considered as an important precursor of affective organizational commitment (Meyer and Allen, 1997). In addition to this, psychological safety makes it easier for the employee to raise issues about work related issues (Edmondson, 1999), increasing his/her feelings of involvement in the work environment, which plays an important role in the development of affective commitment (Eby, Freeman, Rush, and Lance, 1999).

An employee’s connection with others will be affected by his/her level of psychological safety also in terms of his/her tendency to engage in voluntary helping behavior (i.e. OCB helping). When an employee does not feel secure about his/her relationships with other organization members as a result of emotional misfit, he/she will be more likely to engage in emotional self-regulation processes, including such strategies as modulating his/her emotional expressions (previously mentioned in this section), approaching or avoiding certain people or situations on the basis of their likely emotional impact, and shifting attention from or changing perceptions about situations to alter their emotional impact (Gross, 1999). A stream of empirical studies conducted from an ego-
depletion perspective suggests that such self-regulatory processes might reduce an employee’s capacity and willingness to engage in activities involving volition (Baumeister, Bratslavsky, Muraven, and Tice, 1998; Muraven, Tice, and Baumeister, 1998; Muraven and Baumeister, 2000). The main theoretical argument of the ego depletion perspective is that many seemingly different functions of the self, such as regulating one’s emotions, engaging in volitional activities, taking responsibility, making choices and decisions, and executing tasks requiring cognitive effort, draw on a common inner source that is limited and renewable, akin to strength or energy (Baumeister et al., 1998). According to this perspective, exerting one’s inner resource in one function will have a depleting effect on the self, decreasing the individual’s capacity to effectively engage in other functions. It has also been suggested that, once it starts getting depleted, the executive component of the self “simply disdains itself from relatively unimportant tasks and instead conserves its energy for important tasks” (Baumeister, 2002, p. 134).

In a series of experiments, researchers have provided empirical support for the ego depletion perspective outlined above. For instance, Muraven et al. (1998) have shown that suppressing forbidden thoughts increased subjects’ tendency to give up quickly on unsolvable anagrams. This tendency was even higher among the subjects who were told that they would be required to execute another task after anagrams, indicating that these subjects were conserving a portion of their inner resource for the upcoming task. Pertaining to emotion regulation, it has been shown that subjects who were asked not to show their emotions while watching a movie performed worse in a subsequent task of solving anagrams as compared to those who were allowed to express their emotions (Baumeister et al, 1998). Similarly, in Muraven et al.’s (1998) study, subjects who were
asked to intensify or reduce their emotional reactions while watching a movie exhibited lower endurance while performing a physical task (e.g. squeezing a handgrip) as compared to the control group. The results of the latter study also suggest that the depleting impact of emotion regulation occurs in either direction, i.e. amplifying a strong emotional reaction vs. suppressing emotion.

When an employee experiences reduced feelings of psychologically safety in the workplace as result of emotional misfit, he/she will be more likely to get preoccupied with emotion regulation because not doing so might increase the possibility of emotional deviance which could be a threat for social approval (Thoits, 1990). From an ego depletion perspective, this increased psychological effort for emotion regulation will decrease the employee’s capacity and willingness to engage himself/herself in other activities requiring self-involvement, including volitional actions. The employee’s reduced tendency to undertake volitional actions, in turn, will make him/her more reluctant to voluntarily help other organization members with their work related problems. Thus, I posit a positive relationship between emotional fit and OCB helping behavior mediated by psychological safety.

In this section, I have discussed how the reduced feelings of psychological safety resulting from emotional misfit create an impact on the way an employee connects with coworkers and his/her overall organization. Feelings of being under the evaluative scrutiny of others and increased self-consciousness makes the employee more vigilant in his/her interactions with others, increasing his/her tendency to engage in surface acting. On the other hand, perceptions of not receiving enough support from the organizational environment to express himself/herself comfortably about work-related issues weakens
his/her commitment to his/her organization. Finally, the employee's increased psychological efforts to regulate his/her emotions in the work environment will have a depleting impact on his/her inner resources, making him/her less likely to engage in helping behaviors. In the case of emotional fit, however, the employee's perceptions of psychological safety in the workplace will increase his/her feeling of belongingness to the organization and his/her willingness and capacity to connect with others in more authentic and caring ways. Thus, I propose the following set of hypotheses:

Hypothesis 6(a): Emotional fit will be positively related to OCB helping behavior and commitment, mediated by psychological safety.

Hypothesis 6(b): There will be a negative relationship between emotional fit and surface acting, mediated by psychological safety.

3.2.2 Connection with Work

When an employee does not feel psychological safety in the workplace as a result of emotional misfit, he/she will seek ways to protect himself/herself from the psychologically disturbing impact of the work environment, increasing his/her tendency to physically and psychologically withdraw from the work environment. The ego-depletion perspective suggests that since the self's capacity for self-regulation is limited, people are inclined to withdraw themselves from psychologically demanding situations at times to conserve and/or restore their inner resources (Baumeister, Muraven, Tice, 2000). An employee who experiences heightened feelings of being scrutinized by others and exerts self-regulatory efforts with intentions to reduce this scrutiny will be expected to exhibit higher levels of absenteeism from work as a result of his/her need to replenish
his/her depleted self. While at work, the employee might attempt reducing self-involvement with the work environment by engaging in psychological withdrawal behaviors such as daydreaming and spending time on personal matters to reserve his/her depleted resources. The employee will also have a stronger intention for turnover, expecting to find another workplace where he/she could feel safer, less constrained and more comfortable in his/her relationship with coworkers.

The reduced feelings of psychological safety resulting from emotional misfit might also have an impact on the employee's connection with work in terms of work absorption, i.e. his/her level of concentration on work activities (Rothbard, 2001; Kahn, 1990). An empirical study conducted by Brown and Leigh (1996) provides support for this prediction. In specific terms, the researchers have found that an employee's perception of psychological safety in the work environment has a positive impact on his/her job involvement. Conversely, in the case of emotional misfit, an employee is expected to be less absorbed in his/her work activities since he/she will feel more concerned about the scrutiny of others and more preoccupied with emotional self-regulation in the workplace, both of which will have a depleting impact on the employee's inner resources, decreasing his/her capacity to concentrate on his/her work activities.

Drawing on the above discussion focusing on the mediating role of psychological safety, I propose the following hypotheses regarding the association between emotional fit and an employee's connection with work:
Hypothesis 7(a): Emotional fit will be negatively related to absenteeism, psychological withdrawal, and intention for turnover, and these relationships will be mediated by psychological safety.

Hypothesis 7(b): There will be a positive relationship between emotional fit and work absorption, mediated by psychological safety.

3.2.3 Task and Role Performance

The psychological safety resulting from emotional fit will be related to both task and role performance of an employee. When there is emotional fit, the employee's task performance will increase because the employee will feel less pressure of being scrutinized and/or criticized while expressing himself/herself and thus be able to develop more effective interactions with others about task related matters. In her study of several work teams in a manufacturing company, Edmondson (1999) found that psychological safety increased team performance by promoting such behaviors as seeking information, discussing errors, and seeking feedback from customers and others. Psychological safety could promote an employee's task performance by also increasing his/her motivation to focus on task activities. Supporting this view, Brown and Leigh (1996) have empirically demonstrated that an employee's perceptions of psychological safety were positively related to his/her job involvement and effort, which in turn had a positive impact on the employee's task performance. Conversely, the ego depletion perspective discussed in the previous section suggests that the reduced feelings of psychological safety resulting from emotional misfit might impede an employee's task performance since the employee's cognitive capacity to perform tasks would be reduced as a result of expending his/her limited inner resources for emotion regulation (Baumeister et al, 1998)
For superior role performance, an employee needs to be able to freely display his/her ideas, feelings, creativity, beliefs, and values while performing role behaviors (Kahn, 1990). This is more likely the case when there is a fit between an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her workplace, since the employee will be more likely to perceive the workplace as a safe and supportive environment for interpersonal risk taking without being concerned about the appropriateness of his/her felt and expressed emotions. In the case of emotional misfit, however, reduced feelings of psychological safety will provide little room for the employee to comfortably bring his/her true emotions and identity into work role performances (Kahn, 1990). Studies have also shown that low levels of psychological safety makes it harder for employees to share ideas with others and raise issues about work-related matters (Edmondson, Bohmer and Pisano 2001; Edmondson, 1999), both of which would constrain an employee’s capacity for role performance.

Thus, drawing on the arguments stated in this section, I propose the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 8: There will be a positive relationship between emotional fit and task and role performance, mediated by psychological safety.
4.1 Design

I conducted a cross-level field study to test the theoretical model presented in Chapter Three. The research design was cross-level because one component (i.e. emotional climate) of the independent variable (i.e. emotional fit) was analyzed at the level of the work context and then was compared with the other component (i.e. affective trait), which was measured at the level of the individual employee. The mediating variables of the study, emotional exhaustion and psychological safety, and the dependent variables, engagement/disengagement outcomes, were also analyzed at the individual level. All the individual-level variables, except task and role performance, were assessed by self-report. The performance data were collected from the supervisors of the participating work units. To measure the contextual variable, emotional climate, I aggregated the climate assessment of employees within each work unit. Aggregating employee perceptions is a well-accepted and widely used method to assess climate variables (Schneider, 2000).

4.2 Sample

Data were collected from 257 employees within 40 work units across 11 organizations and their supervisors who assessed the employees in terms of their performance and emotional fit. Work units ranged from 3 to 11 employees, within an average size of 6.43 employees. Organizations participating in the study were from a
variety sectors, including trade, forestry, high-tech, finance, and courier service. Descriptions of participating firms and work units are presented in Appendix A.

The sample was comprised of employees from a variety of occupations. Approximately 40% of the participants were “blue collar” employees, including laborers and clerks; 22% were office employees, such as purchasers and sales representatives; and about 10% had professional occupations, such as network analyst, system designer, engineer, and architect. The rest of the sample included managers (14%), assistant managers (5%), coordinators (3.1%), and supervisors (6.6%). Table 4.1 provides the complete list of occupations represented in the study.

Table 4-1: Distribution of Occupations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coordinator</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architect</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Manager</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales Representative</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technician</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchaser</td>
<td>10.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>35.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Network Analyst/System Designer</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operator/Mechanic</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The average age of the respondents was 35.73, ranging from 18 to 65 years. Average length of tenure within the organization was 4.87 and average tenure in the current work unit was 3.68 years. Sixty two percent of participants were male and 38%
female. The most frequently reported education level was college training (40.8 %), followed by high school (31.6 %), bachelors (20.8 %) and graduate degree (6.8 %). The participants were mostly of Caucasian (66.4 %) or Asian (31.2 %) ethnicity. Fifty seven percent have lived in Canada since birth. For the remainder, the average length of stay in Canada was 14.69 years.

4.3 Procedure

The companies were selected based on convenience sampling. A list of companies was obtained from a university career center. In addition, a number of potentially interested companies were identified through informal networks. Special care was given to contact companies from a variety of sectors to obtain a sample that is diverse enough to be able to increase the generalizibility of the study’s results.

Contact persons of the firms were mailed a standard package including a description of the study, an outline of the advantages of participating in the study and a copy of the survey to be used. When it was possible, I also made an appointment with the contact persons to address their possible questions more effectively and thus to increase response rate. In return for their participation, the companies were sent a report describing the emotional climate of their work units that took part in the study. To assure anonymity, the report provided to the companies included results based on aggregated data.

Because the context variable of the study was measured at the work unit level, I asked the contact person in each participating organization to help me identify organizational units that would be characteristic of their organization. Thus,
organizationally defined boundaries was used to distinguish between work units (Robinson and O'Leary-Kelly, 1998). When appropriate, I also asked contact persons to provide multiple work units for the study in order to both increase the number of work units in the sample and pursue the possibility of investigating whether the emotional climate differs from one work unit to another within the same organization.

After selection of the work units, when possible, I visited the sites to administer the surveys at a time specified by the company management. In other cases, I mailed the surveys to the contact person who distributed them. Employees were provided with self-addressed stamped envelopes so they could mail the questionnaires directly back to me. The employees were requested to provide their names at the end of the survey and were assured that this information would be used for research purposes only, to match their surveys with the data collected from their supervisors. They were also assured that the study was strictly confidential and that the results would be anonymous.

The second source of data in this study comprised the supervisors of participating work units. The supervisors were provided with a one-page survey asking them to evaluate employees with regards to their task and role performance. They were asked to fill out one for each of their employees, identifying the employee to whom it applied. The supervisors were also assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

All employees within each selected work unit and their supervisors were invited to participate on a volunteer basis. For the employee sample, response rates within the work units ranged from 64 % to 100 % with an overall response rate of 79 %. Supervisors of all the work units participated in the study. However, the employee and supervisor surveys could not be matched in 37 of the cases mostly because employees did not
provide their names, and, in a few cases, the supervisor skipped an employee while filling out the one-page survey. Thus, 86% of the supervisor surveys could be used.

4.4 Measures

The independent variable, emotional fit, was the main construct of interest in this study. Both affective trait and emotional climate components of this construct was measured by scales adapted from prior research conducted on circumplex model of affect (Larsen and Diener, 1992; Russell and Pratt 1980; Russell, 1980). The mediating, dependent, and control variables was measured by using previously established scales with known reliabilities. I will describe each of these measures in the following sections.

4.4.1 Independent Variable: Emotional Fit

Emotional fit was measured by analyzing the level of congruence between activation levels of the affective trait of an employee and the emotional climate of his/her workplace. I will describe the affective trait and emotional climate measures in next two sections. I will discuss the method for the assessment of congruence between these two components in the “Method of Analysis” section at the end of this chapter.

4.4.1.1 Affective Trait

To measure the affective trait of an employee, I used a semantic differential scale adapted from Mehrabian and Russell (1974). Respondents were asked to rate a list of emotion adjective items on a 8-point bipolar semantic differential scale (e.g. 1=calm, 8=excited) to describe how they feel in general. In the instruction, it was emphasized that
the respondents were asked to describe how they feel in their overall life instead of at the
time they fill out the survey.

The activation dimension of Affective Trait, which was the focus of this study, was
measured by using the following bipolar items: 1) calm-excited, 2) relaxed-stimulated, 3)
slow-lively, 4) quiet-enthusiastic, 5) tranquil-intense, 6) sluggish-hyperactive, 7) passive-
energetic, 8) idle-alert, and 9) inactive-active. The first adjective in each bipolar item
(e.g. relaxed, calm) represents lower level of activation whereas the second adjective (e.g.
stimulated, excited) represents higher level of activation. Some of the bipolar items were
presented in reverse order in the survey to reduce response bias. The internal reliability
score of Affective Trait was 0.82.

Through a number of pilot studies, I tested the construct validity and test-reliability
of the affective trait scale. The first pilot study was conducted in December 2001. The
sample consisted of 122 undergraduate students (70 female, 52 male) with a mean age of
19.04. I checked the construct validity of Activation dimension of the affective trait
construct by investigating their relationship with several other related personality trait
constructs, including the measures of affect intensity (Larsen and Diener, 1987),
temperament (Strelau, Angleitner, and Newberry, 1999), and sensation-seeking
(Zuckerman, 1994).

The results of these analyses are presented in Table 4.3. As it can be seen from this
table, the results of the study provided substantial empirical support for the construct
validity of the activation dimension of affective trait measure. Moreover, the activation
dimension of the Affective Trait measure was not correlated with the Marlowe-Crowne
social desirability scale (Reynolds, 1982), suggesting that participants' responses to the scale were relatively free from social desirability bias.

In the second pilot study, I investigated the test-retest reliability of the affective trait scale by conducting a longitudinal study on a sample of 43 undergraduate students (23 females, 20 males) with a mean age of 22.1. The study was conducted in 2002 at two different times with one month in between. Both studies were anonymous. However, in both surveys, the respondents were asked to indicate their date of birth, so that I could match their responses. 31 students completed both of the surveys. The results have shown that the Trait Activation scale has very high test-retest reliability, with a correlation score 0.818 (p<.000).

Table 4-2: Pilot Study: Correlations of Affective Trait with other Constructs (n= 122)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RELATED TRAITS</th>
<th>AFFECTIVE TRAIT (ACTIVATION)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affect Intensity</td>
<td>.50 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperament Scale</td>
<td>.25 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sensation Seeking</td>
<td>.21 *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Desirability</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p<.05
** p<.01

4.4.1.2 Emotional Climate

The emotional climate variable is contextual in nature and was measured on the basis of work unit. Respondents in each work unit were asked to describe the affective characteristics of their work context, and then these responses were aggregated to get a measure of emotional climate.

I selected work units as a basis for the measurement of emotional climate for both conceptual and methodological reasons. In conceptual terms, organizational climate
literature suggests that climate perceptions should reflect what is psychologically meaningful to the individuals concerned (Ashforth, 1985). In the case of emotional climate construct, work unit, rather than a whole organization, would provide respondents with a more meaningful context to describe because most interactions of employees would take place within this unit, and possibility of interaction has been considered as an important factor in the experience of emotion in social contexts (Jakobs, Manstead, and Fischer, 1996). In methodological terms, aggregating individual perceptions, rather than using individual perceptions, would reduce error by averaging out random individual errors and biases (Robinson and O’Leary-Kelly, 1998).

The scale measuring the activation level of emotional climate was adapted from Russell and Pratt (1980). Respondents were asked to rate a list of emotion adjective items on an 8-point Likert scale (1 = not typical at all, 8 = very typical) to describe how their workplace environment has been over the past twelve months. The respondents were asked to recall conditions that might give them an idea about the emotional atmosphere in their work unit such as how other people usually express their emotions, the work pace, the job requirements, and the physical setting of their office. The respondents were asked to rate the following emotion adjective items to describe emotional climate: 1) calm, 2) tranquil, 3) serene, 4) quiet, 5) relaxed, 6) intense, 7) forceful, 8) hyperactive, and 9) alert. The first 5 items represent the lower end of the activation continuum whereas remaining 4 items represent the higher end. The internal reliability score of emotional climate was 0.80.

The emotional climate measure was assessed in terms of within group agreement. In the theoretical model proposed in this study, I have focused on the congruence
between the activation levels of emotional climate and affective trait, and conceptualized emotional climate as a contextual variable, requiring the aggregation of individual responses while testing the model. The literature on organizational climate (James, Demaree, Wolfe, 1993; James, 1982; Jones and James, 1979) suggests that before aggregating individual perceptions of a climate construct, agreement among individuals within the same work unit context needs to be demonstrated. Therefore, following the procedures of James, Demaree, and Wolfe (1993), I assessed the within group agreement score ($r_{wg}$) of emotional climate perceptions for each work unit. The scores ranged between 0.63 and 0.95. The median $r_{wg}$ value was 0.88, above the .60 cut-off suggested by James (1982). I have also checked whether there was sufficient variance among the emotional climate of work units. For this purpose, I ran a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) test in which work units were the independent variable. The results indicated that the work units significantly differed in their emotional climates ($F$-value = 7.57, $p< .001$). These findings justified aggregating the measure of emotional climate to the work unit level. To compute the emotional climate variable for a work unit, I averaged the response of this work unit’s employees on the scale measuring the activation dimension of emotional climate. Then I assigned this average score to each of the employees working at this work unit.

### 4.4.2 Mediating Variables

The mediating variables of the model that were tested in this study include emotional exhaustion and psychological safety. Maslach and Jackson’s (1981) scale was used to measure emotional exhaustion. This nine-item scale included such items as: “I feel emotionally drained from my work”, “I feel used up at the end of the workday”, and
"I feel like I'm at the end of my rope". The respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed with each of these statements on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). The internal reliability of this scale was 0.87.

The other mediating variable that was included in this study was psychological safety. To assess this variable, I adapted Edmondson's (1999) team psychological safety scale (1999), which was originally developed to measure psychological safety at the team level. The scale consists of seven items measured and has been shown to have high internal reliability (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.82). Since my study focuses on psychological safety at the individual level of analysis, I changed the wording of items in the scale so that they reflect the respondents’ perceptions of their own personal psychological safety within a work unit rather than the psychological safety of their overall work group. For instance, an item that was originally stated as “If you make a mistake on this team, it is often held against you” was changed to “If I make a mistake in this workplace, it is often held against me”. The remaining six items that were employed in this study included:

1. I can bring up problems and tough issues in this workplace. (r – reverse coded))
2. People in this workplace sometimes reject me for being different.
3. It is safe to take a risk in this workplace. (r)
4. It is difficult to ask other people for help in this workplace.
5. No one in this workplace would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts. (r)
6. Working with other people in this workplace, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized. (r)

The respondents were asked to rate how much they agreed with each of the above statements on a 7-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 7= strongly agree). The internal
reliability of the 7 items was 0.62, lower than the generally acceptable level of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The reliability score increased to 0.70 when I dropped two of the items: a) It is safe to take a risk in this workplace, b) I can bring up problems and tough issues in this workplace. The meanings of “taking a risk” and “bringing up problems and tough issues” might have become ambiguous when the wording of items were adjusted from team-level to individual level, confounding the participants’ responses. Therefore, I excluded these two items while computing the scale.

4.4.3 Dependent Variables

The dependent variables of this study include three major domains, all which reflect an employee’s engagement in the workplace: connection with others, connection with work, and performance. I will now describe each of these three sets of variables.

4.4.3.1 Connection with Others

An employee’s connection with others was assessed by investigating three different variables, namely, affective commitment, OCB helping, and surface acting. To measure affective commitment, Allen and Meyer’s (1990) scale was used, which consisted of six items measured on a 7-point Likert scale. Sample items include “I really feel as if this organization’s problems are my own”, “This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me”, and “I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization” (reverse coded). This scale has been widely used in previous studies to measure affective commitment and it has been demonstrated to have high reliability and construct validity (see Allen and Meyer, 1996 for a review). The internal reliability of the scale in this study was also satisfactory (Cronbach’s alpha = 0.78).
The six-item scale developed by Smith, Organ and Near (1983) was used to measure OCB helping behavior. Sample items included: "I help others who have been absent", "I help others who have heavy workload", and "I assist supervisor with his or her work". The respondents were asked to rate how often they engage in each of these behaviors on a 7-point scale, where 1 represents "never" and 7 represents "always". The internal reliability of this scale was 0.70.

Finally, surface acting was measured by a four-item scale developed by Brotheridge and Lee (1998), including items "I resisted expressing my true feelings", "I pretended to have emotions that I don't really have", "Put on an act in order to deal with coworkers in an appropriate way", and "I covered my true feelings about a situation". The participants were asked to rate how frequently, on an average day at work, they experience the situation described in each of the three items by using a 7-point scale, where 1 represents "never" and 7 represents "always". The internal reliability of the scale was 0.71.

4.4.3.2 Connection with Work

An employee's connection with work was analyzed drawing on four different variables, including psychological withdrawal, intention for turnover, absenteeism, and work absorption. Psychological withdrawal was measured by using a scale developed by Lehman and Simpson (1992). This measure includes seven items asking employees about the frequency with which they have engaged in certain behaviors at work in the previous 12 months based on a 7-point scale, where 1 represents "never" and 7 represents "always". Sample items comprising the scale included: "Thought of being absent", "..."
“Chatting with co-workers about nonwork topics”, “Daydreaming”, and “Spending work time on personal matters”. The reliability of the scale was 0.78.

Intention for turnover was measured using a four-item scale based on two scales previously developed by Jackson, Turner, and Brief (1987) and Mitchel (1981). Moore (2000b) has recently used this combination of scales in a study examining the relationship between turnover and work exhaustion. Applying this scale in this study, respondents were asked to respond to four questions/items by using a 7-point Likert scale (1= very unlikely, 7= very likely). The reliability of the scale was 0.91. The questions/items were as follows:

1- How likely is it that you will be working at the same company this time next year? (r)
2- How likely is it that you will take steps during the next year to secure a job at a different company?
3- I will be with this company five years from now. (r)
4- I will probably look for a job at a different company in the next year.

Absenteeism was assessed by using a self-report measure adapted from Brooke and Price (1989). Several studies in the literature have measured absenteeism through self-reports and demonstrated the validity and reliability of self-report measures of absenteeism (see Brooke and Price, 1989, for a review). Recently, Johns (1994) has extensively discussed some major issues that need to be considered while using self-reported absence measures. In specific terms, he has suggested researchers using free-response format, rather than anchored scales; providing respondents with a clear definition of absenteeism and a salient time interval to think about; and wording the absenteeism question in a way that the respondents do not feel threatened. Drawing on
these suggestions, I used a twelve-item recall-assisted ratio scale adapted from Brooke and Price (1989). The respondents were asked the following question before responding to these items: “People have many reasons for missing work. Most people miss an occasional day once in a while. How many times during the past twelve months have you taken a half day or more off for any of the following reasons?” This question was followed by the items specifying a number of possible reasons for absenteeism, including “family responsibilities”, “community activities”, “personal illness”, “family illness”, “medical appointment”, “personal business”, and “just take a day off”. The respondents were asked to estimate the number of times they have been absent from work for each of these reasons. Then the responses to these items were aggregated to compute an absenteeism scale.

The final measure that was used to assess an employee’s connection with work is the work absorption scale recently developed by Rothbard (2001). The scale consisted of 5 items and had an internal reliability of 0.70. Sample items included: “When I am working, I often lose track of time”, “I often get carried away by what I am working on”, and “Nothing can distract me when I am working”. Respondents were asked to rate these items on a 7-point Likert scale from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”.

4.4.3.3 Performance

Performance data were collected from the supervisors of the employees participated in the study. The performance variables included task performance and role performance. Task performance was assessed by a five-item scale adapted from Pearce and Porter (1986). The supervisors were asked to rate each of the employees in their work unit relative to others in similar positions. Five different dimensions of task performance
were evaluated, including “Quality of performance”, “Ability to get the job done effectively”, and “Achievement of work goals”. For each of these items, supervisors were asked to rate the employees as the top 5%, top 10%, top 15%, top 25%, top 40%, top 50%, or bottom 50% of the workforce. The internal reliability score for this measure was 0.93.

To measure role performance, I used 8 items selected from a role-based performance scale created by Welbourne et al. (1998). The items included: “Coming up with new ideas”, “Working to implement new ideas”, “Working as part of a team or work group”, “Seeking information from others in the workplace”, and “Responding to the needs of others in his/her workplace”. The response format for this scale was 1-5 Likert-type scale, with 1= “needs much improvement”, 2= “needs some improvement”, 3= “satisfactory”, 4= “good”, 5= “excellent”. Analyzing ten different data sets collected from a variety of occupations and organizational contexts, Welbourne et al. (1998) has found that the role-based performance scale correlates highly with several different indicators of real performance such as “360-degree feedback” and pay related performance, suggesting that the scale has high construct validity. The internal reliability of the scale in this study was 0.92.

4.4.4 Control Variables

While testing the relationships proposed in the theoretical model of this study, I controlled my analyses for several factors, including the satisfaction, tenure, and rank of an employee. In this section, I will discuss the rationale for why I included each of these factors as a control variable in my study and describe the measures.
Satisfaction was considered as a control variable in this study because it might be related to both an employee's perception of emotional climate and his/her engagement in the workplace. Prior research on organizational climate has emphasized that the climate construct should be sufficiently distinguished from satisfaction since the former, which is based on employee's description of the work environment, might be confounded by the latter which reflects the employee's evaluation about this environment (Kozlowski and Hults, 1987; Schneider, 1985; Schneider and Reichers, 1983; Schneider, 1975). In addition to this, an employee's level of engagement in the workplace might be affected by his/her level of satisfaction, regardless of his/her degree of emotional fit. For these reasons, the analyses of this study controlled for satisfaction, which was measured by 3 items selected from a scale developed by Schriesheim and Tsui (1980) and recently used by Cohen (1997). On a 7-point scale, respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with their pay, promotion, and job. The reliability of the scale was 0.83.

The two other control variables that were included in this study included the tenure and rank of an employee. Both rank and tenure of an employee might have an impact on his/her levels of psychological safety and emotional exhaustion. An employee who has a higher rank and/or tenure in the company might feel more psychological safety and less emotional exhaustion simply for the reasons of being accustomed to and having a sense of control in the work environment, which in turn might have an impact of his/her engagement in the workplace, regardless of his/her level of emotional fit. Tenure was measured by asking employee the number of months they have been working in their work unit. Employees' rank in the company was identified by categorizing and ranking their occupations. In specific terms, the occupations listed in Table 4.1 were categorized...
into five hierarchical groups. In ascending order, the rank values and their distribution were: 1) “Blue-collar employees” (workers, clerks - 40.2 %), 2) “Office employees” (sales representatives, technicians, purchasers, clerks, operators and mechanics - 21.9 %), 3) “Administrative personnel” (assistant managers, coordinators, supervisors – 14.5 %), 4) “Professional employees” (engineers, network analysts, system designers – 8.6 %), and 5) “Higher rank employees” (managers and architects – 14.8 %).

Finally, gender was included as a control variable in the analyses. Prior research has suggested that gender could play a role in the ways employees experience and react to emotional exhaustion in organizational life (Pretty, McCarthy, and Catano, 1992; Etzion and Pines, 1986). Gender was measured by asking respondents their sex in the demographics section of the survey, with 38% female and 62% male in the sample.

4.5 Method of Analysis

In this section I will first discuss the issues regarding the assessment of congruence in fit research and explain the procedures I have used to assess the emotional fit measure used in this study. Then I will discuss the methods I have used to test the hypotheses and the theoretical model proposed in this study.

4.5.1 Assessment of Emotional Fit

It has been suggested that there should be a strong correspondence between how fit is conceptualized and mathematically formulated to ensure the link between theory building and theory testing (Venkatraman, 1989). Thus, a sound operationalization of fit plays an important role in a thorough test of the model proposed in this study.
To operationalize fit, a substantial body of research in the organizational behavior literature has combined the components of fit in a single index by using a variety of methods such as getting the algebraic, absolute, or squared difference between these component measures. However, in an extensive review of these studies, Edwards (2001, 1996, 1994) has criticized the use of difference scores in the study of fit by asserting that these scores confound the effects of their components, concealing the relative contribution to the relationship between the difference score and an outcome.

In specific terms, according to Edwards (1994), using a difference score while analyzing the relationship between a fit variable and an outcome variable will be misleading since the analysis might yield significant results even when one of the components of the fit measure is not significantly related to the outcome variable. For instance, consider the following equation:

$$E = b_0 + b_1 (T-C) + e$$  \hspace{1cm} (1)

Where $E$ = engagement (outcome variable)

$T$ = affective trait

$C$ = emotional climate

The interpretation of the difference score coefficient ($b_1$) in the above equation will be problematic if $E$ is related to only $T$, but not $C$. In such a case, a significant $b_1$ coefficient will mislead one to conclude that there is a relationship between emotional fit, $(T-C)$, and engagement $(E)$ although the significant coefficient will reflect nothing but an association between affective trait $(T)$ and engagement.

To avoid such fallacies, Edwards (1994) has suggested the use of a polynomial regression analysis technique where one could examine the contributions of individual fit
components and, for quadratic relationships, higher order terms to evaluate the validity of fit measures. For instance, to test a linear relationship between emotional fit and an outcome variable (where fit is operationalized as an algebraic difference score), we could consider the expanded form of Equation 1:

\[ E = b_0 + b_1 T - b_1 C + e \] (2)

Then we could test the constraints imposed by Equation 2 upon the coefficients in a regression equation where T and C are treated as separate indicators:

\[ E = b_0 + b_1 T + b_2 C + e \] (3)

To justify the use of an algebraic difference score as shown in Equation 1, we could examine the coefficients of terms in Equation 3 to validate whether the constraints implied by the algebraic difference score (in Equation 2) on these coefficients are tenable. In specific terms, the coefficients in Equation 3 could be analyzed to assess whether: a) both T and C exhibit a significant independent effect (both \( b_1 \) and \( b_2 \) are significant), b) the coefficients on the components are opposite in sign, and c) these coefficients are not significantly different in absolute magnitude (Edwards, 1994, p.57).

In a similar vein, to test a quadratic relationship between emotional fit and an outcome variable (where fit is operationalized as a squared difference score), we could consider the expanded form of the following equation:
E = b_0 + b_1 (T-C)^2 + e \quad (4),

which yields:

E = b_0 + b_1 T^2 - 2b_1 (T x C) + b_1 C^2 + e \quad (5)

Then we could test the constraints imposed by Equation-5 upon the coefficients in a regression equation where T and C are treated as separate indicators:

E = b_0 + b_1 T + b_2 C + b_3 T^2 + b_4 (T x C) + b_5 C^2 + e \quad (6)

Thus, to justify the use of a squared difference score as shown in Equation 4, we could examine the coefficients of terms in Equation 6 to validate whether the constraints implied by the squared difference score (in Equation 5) on these coefficients are tenable. In specific terms, the coefficients in Equation 6 could be analyzed to assess whether: a) the coefficients on T and C are not significantly different from zero, b) the coefficients on $T^2$, $C^2$, and $T \times C$ ($b_3$, $b_5$, and $b_4$) are significant, b) the coefficients on $T^2$ and $C^2$ are not significantly different; and c) the coefficient on $(T \times C)$ is not significantly different from twice the negative of the coefficients on either $T^2$ or $C^2$ (Edwards, 1994, p.65).

Edwards (1994) has suggested that the assessment procedures outlined above also makes it possible to compare alternative models of fit by examining the nature of relationship between fit components and an outcome variable. In specific terms, using a hierarchical polynomial regression analysis, it can be tested whether a fit model is linear
or curvilinear by incrementally testing sets of terms representing the models of linear and quadratic relationships and examining the unique variance explained by each model.

While discussing the emotional fit model proposed in this study, I have assumed a curvilinear relationship between emotional fit and outcome variables by suggesting that the directionality of emotional misfit would not matter. I employed the hierarchical polynomial regression procedures described above to test this assumption and determine the viability of using a squared difference score while examining the outcomes of emotional fit. I will provide an outline of these procedures in the next chapter while presenting the results. Drawing on the results obtained from this assessment, and after identifying which difference score to use to measure emotional fit, I tested the hypotheses and the overall theoretical model of this study by employing two different methods, which I will describe in the following section.

4.5.2 Testing the Theoretical Model

To test the hypotheses proposed in this study, hierarchical multiple regression procedures were employed (Baron and Kenny, 1986). A different set of hierarchical equation were processed for each of the dependent variables. The first two hypotheses predicted a relationship between emotional fit and the mediating variables of the study, emotional exhaustion and psychological safety. To test these hypotheses, in the first step I entered the control variables: satisfaction, tenure, rank and gender. Then I entered the emotional fit variable and analyzed the significance of the added variance to assess whether emotional fit was a significant predictor of emotional exhaustion (in Hypothesis-1) and psychological safety (in Hypothesis 2).
The remaining hypotheses proposed relationships between emotional fit and several engagement variables, mediated by emotional exhaustion and psychological safety. To test these hypotheses, I entered the control variables in the first step and then, in the second step, entered the emotional fit variable and analyzed whether it significantly increased amount of variance explained. Finally, I assessed the mediating role of psychological safety and emotional exhaustion in the relationship between emotional fit and each of the engagement/disengagement variables. For this purpose, as a third step, I entered these two mediating variables into the regression equations. If the relationship between emotional fit and a dependent variable were fully mediated by psychological safety and emotional exhaustion, then these mediating variables would become significant in predicting engagement/disengagement variables while emotional fit would become a non-significant predictor.

While the hierarchical regression analysis strategy outlined above gives me an opportunity to test the hypotheses of this study by taking into account the control variables, it would not be a sufficient method to test the overall theoretical model. To accomplish this task, I have used structural equation modeling using Lisrel 8.30 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1996), which simultaneously investigates relationships between variables and provides an overall assessment of the fit of a hypothesized model to the data (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001).
CHAPTER FIVE
RESULTS

In this chapter I will first present and discuss the results regarding the assessment of the emotional fit, including the zero-order correlations among the variables and the polynomial regression analyses I have conducted to assess the emotional fit model. This will be followed by the results of the hierarchical regression analyses I have used to test the hypotheses of this study. Finally, I will provide the results of structural equation modeling analysis that was employed to test the overall theoretical model.

5.1 Assessment of Emotional Fit

Table 5.1 shows the means, standard deviations, zero order correlations for all the variables analyzed in this study. As seen in this table, there was a low correlation between the activation level of emotional climate (which I will refer from now on as “climate activation”), and the activation level of affective trait (which I will refer as “trait activation”) (r = .12, p<.05), indicating that the two components of the emotional fit variable were distinct. Another notable finding was that trait activation and climate activation were significantly correlated with both of the mediating variables and most of the engagement/disengagement variables. Moreover, an examination of the pattern emerging from these correlations revealed that most of the positive outcomes, including both mediating and dependent variables, were positively related to trait activation and negatively related to climate activation. In specific terms, trait activation was positively correlated with psychological safety (r = .19, p<.01), a mediating variable in this study.
Table 5-1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Zero-Order Correlations for the Variables of the Study (n=257)

| Variables            | M   | SD  | 1     | 2     | 3     | 4     | 5     | 6     | 7     | 8     | 9     | 10    | 11    | 12    | 13    | 14    | 15    | 16    |
|----------------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. Affective Trait   | 5.41| .99 |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 2. Emotional Climate | 5.13| 1.10| .12*  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 3. Exhaustion        | 3.47| 1.19|       | -24** | .25** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 4. Psych. Safety     | 4.93| 1.11| .19** | -17** | -42** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 5. Commitment        | 4.39| 1.20| .22** | -16** | -44** | .45** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 6. OCB Helping       | 4.32| .96 | .24** | .04   |       | -14*  | .23** | .37** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 7. Surface Acting    | 3.18| 1.13|       |       | -18** | .13*  | .30** | -41** | -28** | .01   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 8. Work Absorption   | 4.21| 1.09| .06   | .08   | .09   |       | .10   | .15*  | .21** | -.03  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 9. Psych. Withdrawal | 2.58| .91 | -22** | .14*  | .37** | -33** |       | -34** | -.17**| .36** | -11   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 10. Turnover intention| 3.26| 1.63| -.30**| .18** | .48** | -.42**| -.59**| -20** | -.25**| -.17**| .38** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 11. Absenteeism      | 6.30| 6.45| -.04  | .14*  | .20** | -.09  | -.03  | -.01  | .20** | -.04  | .26** | .06   |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 12. Task Performance | 4.54| 1.47| .08   | -.04  | -.08  | .17*  | .23** | .05   | -.16**| .02   | -.16* | -.17* | -.04  |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 13. Role Performance | 4.43| .99 | .20** | .07   | -.21**| .23** | .24** | .15*  | .09   | .19** | -.15* | -.27**| -.13*  | .49** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 14. Satisfaction     | 4.09| 1.65| .38** | -.15* | -.25**| .27** | .25** | .05   | -.17**| .16** | -.33**| .05   | .06   | .27** |       |       |       |       |       |       |       |
| 15. Tenure           | 3.68| 3.26| -.01  | .03   | .06   | -.05  | .11   | -.02  | .09   | -.07  | .10   | -.15* | .01   | .01   | .05   | .04   |       |       |       |       |       |
| 16. Rank             | 2.36| 1.45| .14** | .27** | .03   | -.01  | .05   | .13*  | .03   | .15*  | .06   | -.02  | .04   | .04   | .23** | .27** | .02   |       |       |       |       |
| 17. Gender           | -   | -   | -.01  | -.04  | -.09  | .04   | .11   | .02   | .01   | .05   | -.06  | -.08  | .11   | .05   | -.09  | .01   | -.14* | -.01  |       |       |       |

Note. For gender, men were coded 0 and women were coded 1. Tenure (number of years) and absenteeism (number of days) were measured on ratio scales. Rank was measured on a 1-5 scale computed based on the categorization of job titles. Affective Trait and Emotional Climate were measured on an 8-point scale and all the remaining variables on a 7-point scale.

* p < .05
** p < .01
Trait activation was also positively related to the dependent variables reflecting engagement, including commitment ($r = .22, p<.01$), OCB helping ($r = .24, p<.01$), and role performance ($r = .20, p<.01$). Climate activation, however, was negatively correlated with psychological safety ($r = -.17, p<.01$) and commitment ($r = -.16, p<.01$).

In a similar vein, most of the negative outcomes, including both mediating and dependent variables, were negatively related to trait activation and positively related to climate activation. In specific terms, trait activation was negatively correlated with emotional exhaustion ($r = -.24, p<.01$), a mediating variable in this study, and the dependent variables reflecting disengagement, including surface acting ($r = -.18, p<.01$), psychological withdrawal ($r = -.22, p<.01$), and intention for turnover ($r = -.30, p<.01$). On the other hand, climate activation was positively correlated with emotional exhaustion ($r = .25, p<.01$), surface acting ($r = .13, p<.01$), psychological withdrawal ($r = .14, p<.01$), intention for turnover ($r = .18, p<.01$), and absenteeism ($r = .14, p<.01$). Two of the dependent variables, work absorption and task performance, however, were not significantly correlated with any of the emotional fit components.

This study hypothesized an optimal model of emotional fit. The relationships between emotional fit and the mediating and dependent variables were predicted to be curvilinear, requiring the use of a squared difference score while testing the hypotheses. Edwards (1994) has suggested that, before using a difference score, it is important to test the assumptions of the underlying model justifying the use of this score and to consider other fit models to rule out alternative explanations. Thus, before testing the hypotheses of this study, I tested the assumptions of optimal fit model to assess the viability of using a squared difference score. In addition, I tested the assumptions of monotonic model,
discussed in the previous chapters, as an alternative model to consider whether algebraic difference score will be a better representation of emotional fit in this study.

To achieve the purposes mentioned above, I followed the polynomial regression procedures suggested by Edwards (1994). In particular, I processed a different set of hierarchical regression analyses for each of the mediating and dependent variables to examine their relationship with the two components of the emotional fit measure. In each set, I first entered the component variables, trait activation and climate activation, as predictors, to test the monotonic model of emotional fit. In the second step, I entered higher order terms (square of trait activation, square of climate activation, and the cross product of trait activation and climate activation) as predictors and analyzed the significance of the added variance to test the optimal emotional fit model. Prior to conducting these analyses, I centered the trait activation and climate activation measures at the midpoint of their scale, as recommended by Edwards (1994). The results of polynomial regression analyses are provided in Table 5.2. In the next section, I will review the results of analyses testing the optimal model which I hypothesized in this study. Then, I will review the results of analyses testing the monotonic model which I discussed earlier as an alternative model of emotional fit.

5.1.1 Testing the Optimal Model

This study hypothesized an optimal emotional fit model, predicting curvilinear relationships between emotional fit and outcome variables. The results of analyses testing this model can be seen in the second step of the regression analyses (the Optimal Model section) presented in Table 5.2. If there is support for the optimal emotional fit model, adding the higher order terms in the second step should significantly increase the
Table 5-2: Polynomial Regression Results

Assessment of Emotional Fit Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fit Model</th>
<th>Mediating Variables</th>
<th>“Connection with Others”</th>
<th>“Connection with Work”</th>
<th>Performance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>OCB Helping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Monotonic Model</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>.28**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>18.99**</td>
<td>10.21**</td>
<td>11.05**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Optimal Model</td>
<td>T</td>
<td>-.42**</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C</td>
<td>.22*</td>
<td>-.27**</td>
<td>-.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C²</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T x C</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.15</td>
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<td>.09</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ΔF</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. “T” stands for the Affective Trait variable and “C” stands for the Emotional Climate variable.

* p < .05
** p < .01
explained variance and the term coefficients should meet the criteria for squared
difference score presented in the previous chapter. In specific terms, the results presented
in the “Optimal Model” section in Table 5.2 should meet the following criteria: a) the
increase in explained variance is significant, b) the coefficients on affective trait (T) and
emotional climate (C) are not significant, c) the coefficients on higher order terms (T^2,
C^2, and T x C) are significant, d) the coefficients on T^2 and C^2 are not significantly
different; and e) the coefficient on (T x C) is not significantly different from twice the
negative of the coefficients on either T^2 or C^2. However, the results show that the term
coefficients in the second step did not meet the criteria for a squared difference equation,
and moreover adding higher order terms in the second step did not significantly increase
the explained variance in any of the regression equations. Thus, the results do not support
the optimal emotional fit model hypothesized in this study.

5.1.2 Testing the Monotonic Model

An alternative emotional fit model that was suggested earlier in this study was the
monotonic model. The results of analyses testing this model are presented in the first step
of the regression analyses (the Monotonic Model section) presented in Table 5.2. If there
is support for the monotonic emotional fit model, i.e. the relationship between emotional
fit and an outcome variable is linear, the results should support the criteria for an
algebraic difference equation discussed in the previous chapter. In specific terms: a) the
coefficients of T and C entered in the first step should be both significant and opposite in
sign, and b) these coefficients should not be significantly different in absolute magnitude
(i.e. the impacts of affective trait and emotional climate on an outcome variable should
not be significantly different). I assessed each of these criteria in this section.
The results presented in Table 5.2 indicate that the first criterion of monotonic model was met for both of the mediating variables of the study, emotional exhaustion and psychological safety. Emotional exhaustion was negatively related to trait activation ($\beta = -.27$, $p<.01$) and positively related to climate activation ($\beta = .28$, $p<.01$). On the other hand, psychological safety was positively related to trait activation ($\beta = .22$, $p<.01$) and negatively related to climate activation ($\beta = -.20$, $p<.01$).

The dependent variables of this study were categorized under three domains: a) connection with others (including commitment, OCB helping, and surface acting), b) connection with work (including work absorption, psychological withdrawal, intention for turnover, and absenteeism), and c) performance (task and role performances).

Among the connection with others variables, commitment was positively related to the trait activation component ($\beta = .24$, $p<.01$) and negatively related to the climate activation component ($\beta = -.19$, $p<.01$). On the other hand, surface acting was negatively related to trait activation ($\beta = .20$, $p<.01$) and positively related to climate activation ($\beta = -.15$, $p<.05$). OCB helping, however, was significantly related to only trait activation ($\beta = .23$, $p<.01$) but not climate activation, suggesting that it is tenable to test a relationship between OCB helping and emotional fit.

In the connection with work domain, psychological withdrawal was negatively related to trait activation ($\beta = -.25$, $p<.01$) and positively related to climate activation ($\beta = .17$, $p<.01$). In a similar vein, intention for turnover was negatively related to trait activation ($\beta = -.33$, $p<.01$) and positively related to climate activation ($\beta = .21$, $p<.01$). Work absorption, however, was not significantly related to any of the emotional fit components; and absenteeism was significantly related to climate activation ($\beta = .15$, $p<.01$).
p<.05), but not trait activation. Therefore, it is not tenable to include work absorption and absenteeism in further analyses while testing the hypotheses of this study.

As for the performance variables, role performance was significantly and positively related to trait activation ($\beta = .19$, $p<.01$); however its relationship with climate activation was not significant. Finally, task performance was not significantly related to any of the emotional fit components. Thus, it would not be justifiable to test a relationship between emotional fit and task and role performance.

Overall, the results reviewed thus far have shown that the first criterion in the assessment of monotonic model was met for several variables of the study. In specific terms, the coefficients of affective trait and emotional climate were significant and opposite in sign in the regression equations predicting the following outcome variables: emotional exhaustion, psychological safety, commitment, surface acting, psychological withdrawal, and intention for turnover.

The second criterion to be assessed in the test of the monotonic model is that the regression coefficients of trait activation and climate activation are not significantly different in absolute magnitude. I tested this criterion only for the regression equations in which the first criterion was met. Following Edwards (1994), I directly tested the difference between the coefficients of trait activation and climate activation by using a test of the difference between partial regression coefficients as outlined by Cohen and Cohen (1983). Table 5.3 presents the results of this analysis. The first column shows the variable predicted in the regression equation. The second column shows the t-value for the test of difference between the beta coefficients of trait activation and climate activation. An insignificant t-value means that the null hypothesis ($|\beta_{\text{trait}}| - |\beta_{\text{climate}}| = 0$)
should be accepted, indicating that the beta coefficients of trait activation and climate activation were not significantly different. For all the models, the t-values were insignificant, providing support for the monotonic model and the use of algebraic difference score.

Table 5-3: Test of Difference between the Beta Coefficients of Trait Activation and Climate Activation

| Variable Predicted          | |t-value|* |
|-----------------------------|------------------|------|
| Emotional Exhaustion        | .06              |      |
| Psychological Safety        | .24              |      |
| Commitment                  | .62              |      |
| Surface Acting              | .57              |      |
| Psychological Withdrawal    | .88              |      |
| Intention for Turnover      | 1.42             |      |

* Critical t-value (d/= 254, p<.05) = 1.97

To sum up, the results presented in Table 5.2 did not provide support for the optimal model of emotional fit hypothesized in this study and thus the use of a squared difference score as an emotional fit measure was not justified. However, the results did provide support for the monotonic emotional fit model for several of the outcome variables, justifying the use of algebraic difference score in the test of hypotheses predicting relationships with: a) emotional exhaustion and psychological safety (the mediators of the theoretical model), b) commitment and surface acting (from the “connection with others” domain of engagement), and c) psychological withdrawal and intention for turnover (from the “connection with work” domain).
The results of regression analyses predicting the remaining dependent variables (OCB helping, work absorption, absenteeism, and task and role performance), however, did not meet the criteria for any fit model, since these variables were related to either only one or none of the components of emotional fit. Therefore, to avoid the potential short-comings of using difference scores mentioned by Edwards (1994) discussed in the previous chapter, I decided to exclude these variables while testing the hypotheses of this study.

5.1.3 The Emotional Fit Concept Revisited

In my theoretical model in Chapter Three, I predicted a curvilinear relationship between emotional fit and psychological and behavioral outcomes. I suggested that, regardless of directionality, the amount of discrepancy between trait activation and climate activation would be negatively related to an employee’s engagement at work. Therefore I proposed using a squared difference score to test the hypotheses of the study.

However, the results of polynomial regression analysis presented in the previous section revealed a linear relationship between emotional fit and its outcomes. In specific terms, the results suggest that, when the activation level of an employee’s affective trait is higher than the activation level of emotional climate, the employee reports lower emotional exhaustion, higher psychological safety and experiences higher levels of engagement, as far as the commitment, surface acting, psychological withdrawal, and intention for turnover variables are concerned. On the other hand, when the activation level of an employee’s affective trait is lower than the activation level of emotional climate, the employee reports higher emotional exhaustion, lower psychological safety, and experiences lower levels of engagement, i.e. lower commitment, and higher tendency
for surface acting, psychological withdrawal, and turnover. Thus, considering the pattern emerging from these relationships, I have decided to employ an algebraic difference score to compute emotional fit while testing the hypotheses of this study:

\[ \text{Emotional Fit} = \text{Trait Activation} - \text{Climate Activation} \]

This new conceptualization of emotional fit suggests that there would be a higher level of congruence between affective trait and emotional climate when the activation level of affective trait is higher than that of the emotional climate. In a similar vein, emotional fit of an employee would be lower if the activation level of their affective trait is lower than the activation level of the emotional climate of their workplace.

5.2 Test of Hypotheses

Using the algebraic difference score of emotional fit described in the previous section, I performed several sets of hierarchical regression analyses to test the hypotheses proposed in Chapter Three. Only those dependent variables listed in Table 5.3 were considered in the analyses, since they met the assumptions for using an algebraic difference score. The remaining dependent variables (i.e. OCB helping, work absorption, absenteeism, and task and role performance) were excluded from the analyses and, for the reasons mentioned in the previous section, hypotheses regarding these variables were considered to be not supported.

In Chapter Three, I had suggested two perspectives explaining the relationship between emotional fit and engagement. The first perspective, reflected in Hypotheses 1 to 4, focused on the emotional resources of an employee and considered the mediating role
of emotional exhaustion on the relationship between emotional fit and engagement. The second perspective, reflected in Hypotheses 5 to 8, looked at the relational aspect, and suggested psychological safety as a mediator. In the next two sections, I present the results of hypothesis testing respectively.

5.2.1 Individual Aspect of Emotional Fit

Hypothesis 1 predicted a negative relationship between emotional fit and emotional exhaustion. Table 5.4 presents the regression results. In the first step, I entered only the control variables into the equation: satisfaction, tenure, rank, and gender. Satisfaction was significantly related to emotional exhaustion ($\beta = -.30$, $p<.01$). In the second step, I added emotional fit to the equation. It was significantly and negatively related to emotional exhaustion ($\beta = -.32$, $p<.01$), explaining unique variance of 9% ($p<.01$) in emotional exhaustion. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

Table 5-4: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Relationship between Emotional Fit and Emotional Exhaustion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Emotional Exhaustion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.30**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>.15*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Fit</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>6.44**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>.10**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
<td>.08**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in F</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in $R^2$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* $p < .05$
** $p < .01$
Hypotheses 2(a) predicted that emotional fit would be positively related to OCB helping and commitment, and that these relationships would be mediated by emotional exhaustion. The OCB helping portion of the hypothesis was not supported as discussed above. The regression results regarding commitment can be seen in Table 5.5. In the first step, the control variables were entered in the equation. Satisfaction was significantly related to commitment \((\beta = .23, p< .01)\). When emotional fit was entered in the second step, it had a significant positive relationship with commitment \((\beta = .24, p<.01)\). In the third step (Step 3a), when emotional exhaustion was entered in the equation, it was negatively related to commitment \((\beta = -.37, p < .01)\), and emotional fit was no longer significant, indicating that emotional exhaustion fully mediated the relationship between emotional fit and commitment. Overall, taken together with the results regarding OCB helping, Hypothesis 2(a) was partially supported.

Table 5-5: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Relationship between Emotional Fit and “Connection with Others” and the Mediating Effects of Emotional Exhaustion and Psychological Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>“Connection with Others”</th>
<th>Surface Acting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
<td>Step 3a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Fit</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.16*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>-37**</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
<td></td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.25**</td>
<td>6.45**</td>
<td>11.91**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.07**</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.05**</td>
<td>.10**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in F</td>
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<td>40.57**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in R²</td>
<td>.05**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
<td>.13**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* \( p < .05 \)

** \( p < .01 \)
Hypothesis 2(b) predicted a negative relationship between emotional fit and surface acting, mediated by emotional exhaustion. As seen in Table 5.5, among the control variables, surface acting was significantly related to satisfaction ($\beta = -.22$, $p<.01$) and rank ($\beta = .18$, $p<.01$). In the second step, emotional fit had a significant negative relationship with surface acting ($\beta = -.18$, $p<.01$). When emotional exhaustion was entered in the third step (Step 3a), it had a significant positive relationship with surface acting ($\beta = .23$, $p<.01$) and emotional fit was no longer significant. Thus emotional exhaustion fully mediated the relationship between emotional fit and surface acting, providing support for Hypothesis 2(b).

Hypothesis 3(a) predicted that emotional fit would be negatively related to absenteeism, psychological withdrawal, and intention for turnover, and these relationships would be mediated by emotional exhaustion. As discussed in the previous section, the absenteeism portion of the hypothesis was not supported. The regression results for psychological withdrawal and intention for turnover are presented in Table 5.6. Psychological withdrawal was significantly related to two of the control variables in the first step: satisfaction ($\beta = -.20$, $p<.01$) and rank ($\beta = .15$, $p<.05$). When emotional fit was entered in the equation in the second step, it had a significant negative relationship with psychological withdrawal ($\beta = -.23$, $p<.01$). In the third step (Step 3a), emotional exhaustion was positively related to psychological withdrawal ($\beta = .30$, $p<.01$). However, it did not fully mediate the relationship between emotional fit and psychological withdrawal since the coefficient of emotional fit remained significant ($\beta = -.14$, $p<.05$). To check the possibility of partial mediation (i.e. whether entering emotional exhaustion in Step 3a significantly decreased the coefficient of emotional fit), I conducted a test
suggested by Sobel (1988). Results showed that the decrease in the beta coefficient of emotional fit was statistically significant (z-value = 3.43, p<.01). Therefore, emotional fit partially mediated the relationship between emotional fit and psychological withdrawal.

Table 5-6: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Relationship between Emotional Fit and “Connection with Work” and the Mediating Effects of Emotional Exhaustion and Psychological Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>“Connection with Work”</th>
<th>“Intention for Turnover”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psychological Withdrawal</td>
<td>Intention for Turnover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
<td>Step 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Fit</td>
<td>-.23**</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
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<td>.36**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>-.32**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>3.62**</td>
<td>5.67**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.06**</td>
<td>.11**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.04**</td>
<td>.09**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in F</td>
<td>13.15**</td>
<td>20.71**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in R²</td>
<td>.05**</td>
<td>.07**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05
** P < .01

As for the regression results for intention for turnover, Table 5.6 shows that in the first step intention for turnover was negatively related to satisfaction (β = -.34, p<.01) and tenure (β = -.15, p<.05). When entered in the second step, emotional fit was also significant (β = -.31, p<.01). In the third step (Step 3a), when emotional exhaustion was entered to test the mediation effect, its coefficient was significant coefficient (β = .36, p<.01), and it significantly decreased the effect of emotional fit (Sobel test: z = 3.93, p<.01). However, the coefficient of emotional fit remained significant (β = -.20, p<.01).
Therefore, emotional exhaustion partially mediated the relationship between emotional fit and intention for turnover. Overall, taken together with the results regarding absenteeism and psychological withdrawal, Hypothesis 3(a) was partially supported.

Hypothesis 3(b) and Hypothesis 4 predicted that emotional fit would be positively related to work absorption and task/role performance, respectively, and these relationships will be mediated by emotional exhaustion. Considering the initial assessment of the relationships between these dependent variables and the emotional fit components discussed in the previous section, it could be concluded that Hypothesis 3(b) and Hypothesis 4 were not supported.

Thus far, I have tested the hypotheses looking at the individual aspect of the emotional fit model, with emotional exhaustion as a mediator. In the next section, I present the results regarding the relational aspect of the model where psychological safety was considered as a mediator.

5.2.2 Relational Aspect of Emotional Fit

Hypothesis 5 predicted a positive relationship between emotional fit and psychological safety. The results of analysis testing this hypothesis can be seen in Table 5.7. Among the control variables, satisfaction was significantly related to psychological safety ($\beta = .23, p<.01$). When I entered emotional fit in the equation in the next step, it was significantly and positively related to psychological safety ($\beta = .21, p<.01$) and explained 5 % unique variance in psychological safety, providing support for Hypothesis 5.

In general, the remaining hypotheses tested in this section predicted that psychological safety would mediate the relationship between emotional fit and
psychological engagement. To test the mediating effect of psychological safety, I followed the same procedures I had used in the previous section while testing emotional exhaustion as a mediator. The first two steps, in which I consecutively entered control variables and emotional fit in the equations, were identical to those I followed in the previous section and presented in Table 5.5 and Table 5.6. In the third step, I entered psychological safety to test its mediating effect. The results of this step can be seen in Tables 5.5 and 5.6, in the Step 3(b) column of each set.

Table 5-7: Results of Hierarchical Regression Analysis Examining the Relationship between Emotional Fit and Psychological Safety

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Psychological Safety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Step 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenure</td>
<td>-.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rank</td>
<td>-.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Fit</td>
<td>.21**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>4.57**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>.07**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>.06**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in F</td>
<td>11.80**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Change in R²</td>
<td>.05**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05  
** p < .01

Hypotheses 6(a) predicted that emotional fit would be positively related to OCB helping and commitment and these relationships would be mediated by psychological safety. As discussed previously, the OCB helping portion of the hypothesis was not supported. In addition, as it was demonstrated in Table 5.5 while testing Hypothesis 2(a), there was a significant positive relationship between emotional fit and commitment. The results of analysis testing the mediating effect of psychological safety can be seen in the
Step 3(b) column of "Commitment" section in Table 5.5. When entered in the third step, psychological safety had a significant relationship with commitment ($\beta = .38$, $p<.01$); and it significantly decreased the coefficient of emotional fit (Sobel test: $z = 3.03$, $p<.01$). However, emotional fit remained significant in the equation ($\beta = .16$, $p<.05$), indicating that psychological safety partially mediated the relationship between emotional fit and commitment. Overall, taken together with the results regarding OCB helping, Hypothesis 6(a) was partially supported.

Hypothesis 6(b) predicted a negative relationship between emotional fit and surface acting, mediated by psychological safety. As it was demonstrated while testing Hypothesis 2(b), emotional fit had a significant negative relationship with surface acting. The results regarding the mediating effect of psychological safety can be seen in the Step 3(b) column of "Surface Acting" section in Table 5.5. When psychological safety was entered in the third step, it had a significant negative relationship with surface acting ($\beta = -.37$, $p<.01$), and the relationship between emotional fit and surface acting was no longer significant, indicating that psychological safety fully mediated this relationship. Thus, Hypothesis 6(b) was supported.

Hypothesis 7(a) predicted that emotional fit would be negatively related to absenteeism, psychological withdrawal, and intention for turnover, and these relationships would be mediated by psychological safety. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, the absenteeism portion of the hypothesis was not supported. The regression results for psychological withdrawal and intention for turnover are presented in Table 5.6. While testing Hypothesis 3(a), emotional fit was found to be significantly and negatively related to psychological withdrawal and intention for turnover. As for the mediating
effect of psychological safety, as it can be seen in the Step 3(b) column of "Psychological Withdrawal" in Table 5.6, psychological safety was significantly related to psychological withdrawal ($\beta = -.26, p<.01$). Although entering psychological safety significantly decreased the relationship between emotional fit and psychological withdrawal (Sobel test: $z = 2.51, p<.05$), the relationship did not lose statistical significance ($\beta = -.17, p<.01$), indicating that psychological safety partially mediated the relationship.

A similar result was found while testing the mediating effect of psychological safety on the relationship between emotional fit and intention for turnover. In Table 5.6, the Step 3(b) column of the "Intention for Turnover" section shows that when psychological safety was entered in the regression equation, it had a significant relationship with intention for turnover ($\beta = -.31, p<.01$), and it significantly decreased the coefficient of emotional fit (Sobel test: $z = 2.39, p<.05$). However, the coefficient of emotional fit was still significant ($\beta = -.25, p<.01$). Thus, psychological safety partially mediated the relationship between emotional fit and intention for turnover. Overall, taken together with the results regarding absenteeism and psychological withdrawal, Hypothesis 7(a) was partially supported.

Hypothesis 7(b) and Hypothesis 8 predicted that emotional fit would be positively related to work absorption and task/role performance, respectively, and these relationships would be mediated by psychological safety. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the assessment of relationships between these dependent variables and the emotional fit components indicated that Hypothesis 7(b) and Hypothesis 8 were not supported.
In this section I presented the results of hierarchical regression analyses in which I separately tested each of the hypotheses of this study. To summarize these results, I depicted a revised theoretical model in Figure 5.1 including only significant relationships. I tested this overall theoretical model by using structural equation modeling and will present the results of this analysis in the next section.
Figure 5.1: Revised Theoretical Model*

* The table presents the summary of significant results.
5.3 Test of Theoretical Model

Structural equation modeling was a viable means to test the theoretical model since it allows for examining multiple relationships among variables and takes into account measurement error by using measurement models for latent variables (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2001). In using structural equation modeling, I adapted the two-step approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In the first step, I assessed the measurement model by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis of the first order factors included in the revised theoretical model (Figure 5.6) and testing these factors for convergent validity and discriminant validity. In the second step, I estimated the structural paths to test the hypothesized relationships between the constructs and examined the overall fit of the theoretical model depicted in Figure 5.6. I will describe the results of each step in the next two sections.

5.3.1 Assessment of Measurement Model

I assessed the measurement model by conducting a confirmatory factor analysis using LISREL 8.3 (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1996) with maximum likelihood procedures and the covariance matrix. Initially I entered all 35 items from the six constructs: emotional exhaustion (9 items), psychological safety (5 items), commitment (6 items), surface acting (4 items), psychological withdrawal (7 items), and intention for turnover (4 items). (The emotional fit construct was not included in the confirmatory analysis since it was a single item difference score measure.) Fit statistics for this initial measurement model indicated a poor fit ($\chi^2 = 1379.40$, $df = 545$, $p<0.001$; $CFI = .81$; $GFI = .76$; $NNFI = .72$; $RMSEA = .077$).
Previous studies suggest that poor fit is not unusual for complex models including too many items where model respecification would be required (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). Following the recommendations of Bentler and Chou (1987) and Harris and Schaubroeck (1990), I decided to reduce the number of items in the analysis by including 4 items from each construct. For the constructs that employed 4 items (surface acting and intention for turnover) I included all the items in the analysis. For the remaining four constructs, I first analyzed modification indices and excluded items that loaded on multiple constructs. Then, for each construct, I chose 4 items with the highest loadings and did a reliability analysis of these modified measures. The reliability coefficients of the measures from which I dropped items remained high for all the constructs except psychological safety. The Cronbach’s alpha for the measures with reduced items was 0.81 for emotional exhaustion, 0.80 for commitment, and 0.75 for psychological withdrawal. Dropping an item from psychological safety decreased the scale’s reliability to 0.67, which is below the 0.70 threshold suggested by Nunnally (1978). Therefore I decided not to exclude any item from the psychological safety measure. Thus, the final measurement model included a total of 25 items from six constructs.

The results of a confirmatory factor analysis including these 25 items are presented in Table 5.8, including a list of these items, standardized factor loadings, and the fit statistics. Fit statistics for the hypothesized measurement model indicated a good fit ($\chi^2 = 427.87$, $df = 260$, $p<0.001$; $\chi^2/df = 1.65$; CFI = .93; GFI = .88; NNFI = 0.92; RMSEA = .050). All the items loaded significantly on their respective latent constructs at $p < .01$, suggesting that the measurement scales for each construct demonstrate high convergent validity.
Table 5-8: Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the Measurement Model \(^a\) \(^b\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Emotional Exhaustion</th>
<th>Psychological Safety</th>
<th>Commitment</th>
<th>Surface Acting</th>
<th>Psychological Withdrawal</th>
<th>Intention for Turnover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I feel emotionally drained from my work.</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel fatigued when I have to face another day on the job.</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel burned out from my work.</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel like I am at the end of my rope.</td>
<td>0.63</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If I make a mistake in this workplace, it is often held against me.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is difficult to ask other people for help in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People in this workplace sometimes reject me for being different.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.53</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one in this workplace would deliberately act to undermine my efforts.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with others in this workplace, my unique skills are utilized.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel like &quot;part of the family&quot; at my organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel &quot;emotionally attached&quot; to this organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put on an act in order to deal with coworkers in an appropriate way.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I resisted expressing my true feelings in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I pretended to have emotions I did not really have when I was at work.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I covered my true feelings about a situation in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I daydreamed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I chat with coworkers about non-work topics.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I spent work time on personal matters.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put less effort into my job than I should have.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I probably look for a job at a different company in the next year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will take steps during the next year to secure a job at a different firm.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be with this company five years from now on.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I will be working at this company this time next year.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.84</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) \(\chi^2 = 427.87\) (df = 260; p<.001; \(\chi^2/df = 1.65\)); CFI = .93; GFI = .88; NNFI = 0.92; RMSEA = .050.

\(^b\) The lambdas reported are from the standardized solution and are significant at p<.01.

\(^c\) Item was reverse coded.
I evaluated the measurement model also in terms of discriminant validity to determine the extent to which the measures for each construct are distinctively different from each other. I assessed the discriminant validity by conducting chi-square difference test (Bagozzi and Phillips, 1982). For each pair of constructs, I compared the chi-square value of the constrained model (in which the correlation of two constructs was fixed at 1.00) with the value of the unconstrained model. A significant difference between the $\chi^2$ measures indicates discriminant validity. Table 5.9 provides the results of 15 pairwise tests. All chi-square differences were significant at the p < .01 level, providing support for discriminant validity.

**Table 5-9: Assessment of Discriminant Validity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Constrained Model $\chi^2$</th>
<th>Unconstrained Model $\chi^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta\chi^2$*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion with:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Safety</td>
<td>330.02</td>
<td>82.39</td>
<td>247.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>392.59</td>
<td>133.46</td>
<td>259.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Acting</td>
<td>267.13</td>
<td>66.99</td>
<td>200.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Withdrawal</td>
<td>338.90</td>
<td>89.56</td>
<td>249.34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention for Turnover</td>
<td>431.47</td>
<td>187.46</td>
<td>244.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Safety with:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment</td>
<td>174.92</td>
<td>81.24</td>
<td>93.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Acting</td>
<td>198.93</td>
<td>32.58</td>
<td>166.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Withdrawal</td>
<td>284.79</td>
<td>62.85</td>
<td>221.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention for Turnover</td>
<td>370.76</td>
<td>122.66</td>
<td>248.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment with:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Acting</td>
<td>318.19</td>
<td>82.88</td>
<td>235.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Withdrawal</td>
<td>403.20</td>
<td>100.74</td>
<td>302.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention for Turnover</td>
<td>455.90</td>
<td>211.55</td>
<td>244.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Acting with:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Withdrawal</td>
<td>183.52</td>
<td>46.02</td>
<td>137.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention for Turnover</td>
<td>327.71</td>
<td>103.03</td>
<td>224.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Withdrawal with:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention for Turnover</td>
<td>360.30</td>
<td>129.01</td>
<td>231.29</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* All differences are significant (for one degree of freedom) at p < .01.
5.3.2 Assessment of Theoretical Model

I tested the fit of the theoretical model by using a covariance matrix including the 25 items mentioned in the previous section and the emotional fit variable. The emotional fit variable was entered as a single item difference score measure (the algebraic difference between trait activation and climate activation). To adjust for measurement error in this variable, I followed the procedure suggested in previous studies (Joreskog and Sorbom, 1989; Williams and Hazer, 1986). In specific terms: a) I created a latent variable and set the path from this latent variable to its indicator (the emotional fit variable) equal to the square root of reliability of the indicator, and b) I set the error variance equal to the variance of the indicator variable multiplied by 1.0 minus the reliability. To estimate the reliability of the emotional fit variable, I used the formula suggested by Cohen and Cohen (1983) to calculate the reliability of difference score measures: average reliability of the emotional fit components minus their correlation, all of which is divided by one minus the correlation. The reliability for the emotional fit variable was 0.78, yielding a path coefficient (lambda) of 0.88 and an error variance of 0.18, which were entered in the analysis.

The structural equation modeling results testing the theoretical model are presented in Figure 5.2. For simplicity, I presented only the path coefficients in the figure. Fit statistics for the model indicated a reasonably good fit ($\chi^2 = 515.82$ (df = 292; p<.001; $\chi^2$/df = 1.77); CFI = .91; GFI = .86; NNFI = 0.90; RMSEA = .055).

The testing of the higher order factor structure of psychological engagement was supported by the results. Commitment and surface acting loaded on a second order factor.
Figure 5.2: Results of Structural Equation Model

Fit statistics: $\chi^2 = 515.82$ (df = 292; p<.001; $\chi^2/df = 1.77$); CFI = .91; GFI = .86; NNFI = 0.90; RMSEA = .055. Structural path estimates are from the standardized solution and are significant at p < .01. “Connection with Others” and “Disconnection from Work” represent the second-order factors for engagement variables. To simplify the presentation, measurement model and the residuals in the structural equations have been omitted.
("connection with others") at the p < .01 level and in the expected directions. Psychological withdrawal and intention for turnover had significant loadings on another second order factor, which I initially conceptualized as "connection with work". Considering that both constructs represent low levels of engagement with work, I renamed this second-order factor as "disconnection from work".

The results also provided support for the hypotheses of the study. Emotional fit significantly predicted emotional exhaustion (β = -.43, p<.01), which in turn was negatively related to connection with others (β = -.30, p<.01) and positively related to disconnection from work (β = .51, p<.01). Emotional fit also significantly predicted psychological safety (β = .39, p<.01), which in turn was positively related to connection with others (β = .59, p<.01) and negatively related to disconnection from work (β = -.46, p<.01).

To test the mediation effects, I followed the procedures of nested model approach suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). In specific terms, compared the fit of the hypothesized model (in which full mediations were predicted) with that of an alternative unconstrained (partial mediation) model in which two direct paths from emotional fit to connection with others and disconnection from work were estimated. The change in chi-square between the two models reflects the effect of adding these two direct paths and thus is a test of their significance to the model. The chi-square for the alternative model was 512.36 (df= 292). The change in chi-square between the two models was non-significant (Δχ² = 3.46, p>.05, for two degrees of freedom), indicating that the hypothesized full mediation model was a better fit than the alternative partial mediation model.
CHAPTER SIX  
DISCUSSION

In this dissertation, I considered emotions as a component of workplace context by developing the concept of emotional fit. Focusing on both the individual and relational aspects of emotional fit, I developed and empirically tested a theoretical model explaining how the congruence between the activation levels of an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of their workplace affects an employee’s psychological and behavioral engagement at work. In this chapter, I will first review and discuss the findings of this study. Then, I will discuss the theoretical implications of these findings for the literatures on emotions, organizational climate, person-organization fit, and psychological engagement. This will be followed by a discussion of practical implications. Next, I will assess the limitations of the study. Finally, I will discuss directions for future research.

6.1 Review of Findings

A striking finding of this study has to do with the nature of emotional fit. When I initially conceptualized emotional fit, I drew on the optimal fit model (Edwards, 1996), and predicted that an employee would be more engaged to work environment when the activation level of his/her affective trait is closer to the activation level of emotional climate in his/her workplace. However, this prediction was not supported by the results. On the other hand, the results did provide support for the monotonic model, suggesting that directionality matters in emotional fit. In overall terms, engagement was higher when the activation level of an employee’s affective trait was higher than the activation level of
emotional climate and lower when the activation level of affective trait was lower than that of the emotional climate. When emotional fit was formulated based on this perspective, the results of subsequent analyses provided considerable support for the theoretical model of this study.

In the next two sections, I will discuss these findings on the nature of emotional fit in light of the two perspectives, i.e. individual aspect and relational aspect, suggested earlier in the theoretical model of this study. I will suggest alternative reasons that could explain the psychological mechanisms operating behind the monotonic emotional fit model. This will be followed by a discussion of the findings on the relationship between emotional fit and the engagement variables.

6.1.1 Individual Aspect of Emotional Fit

The individual aspect of the theoretical model suggested the congruence between the activation levels of an employee’s affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her workplace will influence the emotional resources of an employee. As expected, employees whose trait activation was lower than the activation level of emotional climate were more likely to get emotionally exhausted. This finding is in line with the findings of studies in the activation theory literature (Janssen, 2001; Xie and Johns, 1995). However, contrary to the activation theory framework, emotional exhaustion was lower when an employee’s trait activation was higher than the activation level of emotional climate.

This finding, and the overall relationship between emotional fit and emotional exhaustion, could be explained from the demands-abilities fit perspective which conceptualizes fit as the match between environmental demands and a person’s abilities (Edwards, 1996). According to this framework, psychological strain usually increases
when the demands of the work environment exceed the abilities of an employee. Psychological strain usually decreases when the abilities exceed demands, assuming excess abilities can be carried over to meet other demands or can be conserved to meet future demands. Edwards (1996) has suggested that the demands-abilities fit framework may apply to energy, general skills and aptitudes, "which can often be directed toward pending once a focal demand is met" (p. 297).

Interpreting the results of this study from the demands-abilities framework, the activation level of emotional climate could be considered as a demand of work environment "pulling" the employee, and the activation level of an employee's affective trait as an ability "pushing" (or driving) the employee to meet this demand. Thus, when the activation level of emotional climate exceeds that of an employee's affective trait (i.e., excess demands), the emotional resources of the employee gets depleted. When the activation level of affective trait exceeds that of emotional climate (i.e., excess abilities), however, the employee not only meets the demands of emotional climate but also maintains his/her emotional reserves to meet other work demands or the future demands of emotional climate in his/her workplace.

6.1.2 Relational Aspect of Emotional Fit

The relational aspect of the theoretical model suggested that emotional fit will affect an employee's sense of psychological safety in his/her relationship with others in the workplace. As predicted, employees whose trait activation was lower than the activation level of emotional climate experienced lower levels of psychological safety. However, contrary to my prediction, psychological safety was higher when an employee's trait activation was higher than the activation level of emotional climate.
This finding could be explained from both individual and cultural perspectives. At the individual level, employees whose activation level was higher than that of the emotional climate might have felt more confident and comfortable in their interactions with coworkers as result of downward comparison (Wills, 1981), by perceiving themselves as being more active and energetic than others.

Another individual level explanation might be that when the activation level of emotional climate was higher than the activation level of an employee's affective trait, the employee could have experienced heightened levels of physical arousal in his/her work interactions. This, in turn, might increase the employee's vigilance and sensibility to the negative cues received from others, especially in cases where he/she was under the spotlight, such as seeking help from coworkers or making a mistake. Thus the employee might have reduced sense of psychological safety as a result of the arousing impact of emotional climate. This explanation is in line with the two-factor theory of emotion which states that when people feel increased physical arousal they can associate this excess arousal with unrelated events and label their feelings with regards to these events (Schacter and Singer, 1962).

At the cultural level, it might be possible that the organizations included in the sample of this study had cultures that held a more tolerant or favorable attitude toward employees who stand out with their high activation affective traits. Indeed, prior research suggests that it is not uncommon for organizations in North America to engage in deliberate attempts to increase the energy level in their work environments by prescribing and controlling emotions (Ashforth and Humphrey, 1995; Van Maanen and Kunda, 1989). Therefore, organizations in the sample of this study might have implicitly or
explicitly shown more tolerance or appreciation to employees whose activation level was higher than that of the emotional climate. Receiving such managerial credit in turn might make these employees more comfortable in expressing their true self and feelings, improving their sense of psychological safety at work. Future research looking at emotional fit from a cross-cultural perspective could explore these issues. For instance, one could predict different results if the study is conducted in a high power distance culture, where respect to authority is strongly imposed and status threatening emotions are suppressed (Matsumoto, 1989). It could be suggested that, in such a culture, employees whose activation level is higher than that of the emotional climate might feel lower levels of psychological safety since their organization might adopt a reluctant attitude towards high activation emotional expressions by considering them as a threat to the established authority.

6.1.3 Emotional Fit and Engagement

When emotional fit was computed as an algebraic difference score by drawing on a monotonic fit model, it was related to several aspects of an employee’s engagement at work and these relationships were mediated by emotional exhaustion and psychological safety. In terms of connection with others, employees whose activation level was higher than that of the emotional climate expressed stronger commitment to their organization and were less concerned about expressing their true emotions to others. When the activation level of emotional climate was higher than that of the affective trait of an employee, however, the employee was less likely to feel committed to their organization, and more likely to engage in surface acting. Considering that employees with lower activation levels working in high activation emotional climates were more likely to
pretend to put on an act while interacting with others and at the same less likely to feel a sense of belonging to their organization, it could be suggested that these employees might indeed feel enforced to increase their emotional activation levels (state activation) in their organization. These findings reveal a potential tension between organizations and employees in terms of the type of emotional climate they favor. It could be suggested that organizations might be more inclined towards promoting higher activation emotional climates to increase the energy level among employees and the pace of work, as discussed in the previous section, and yet employees might seek lower activation emotional climates to maintain their inner resources.

Employees whose activation level was higher than that of the emotional climate also experienced better connection with their work: They were less likely to engage in psychological withdrawal behaviors, such as daydreaming and spending time on personal matters, and they had lower intentions for turnover. When the activation level of emotional climate was higher than that of the affective trait of an employee, however, the employee was more likely to engage in psychological withdrawal behaviors and expressed stronger intentions for turnover. Both emotional exhaustion and psychological safety mediated these relationships. These findings suggest that employees were likely to draw on their affective trait as an inner resource while connecting with work. The activation level of emotional climate, however, had a depleting impact on the employees’ inner resources. Psychological withdrawal behaviors could be interpreted as a short-term coping mechanism employees engaged in when the depleting impact of emotional climate surpassed the vitalizing impact of their affective trait, to buffer themselves from the depleting impact of emotional climate and replenish their inner resources. Intention
for turnover, on the other hand, could be considered as long term strategy developed to seek alternative work environments in which an employee could maintain his/her inner resources.

Although several of the hypotheses of this study received support from the results of an analysis drawing on the monotonic model of emotional fit, the predictions regarding a number of other engagement variables (OCB helping, work absorption, absenteeism, and task and role performance) were not supported, because these variables were related to only one or neither of the components of emotional fit. I will discuss each of these results in turn.

OCB helping was positively related to the activation level of an employee’s affective trait. This finding complements the overall trend that has emerged from the significant results of this study reviewed above and could be explained from the perspective I suggested earlier. In particular, one could argue that employees draw on their affective trait as an inner resource while interacting with coworkers, and employees with higher activation levels were more likely to engage in OCB helping behavior because they felt psychologically more resourceful. On the other hand, there was no significant relationship between OCB helping behavior and the activation level of emotional climate. This non-significant finding could be the result of a wash out effect: On one hand, employees might more frequently seek help from coworkers in emotional climates with higher activation as a result of the depleting impact of emotional climate and this might increase the chances of engaging in helping behavior for an employee working in this climate. On the other hand, an employee working in an emotional climate with higher activation might be more reluctant to help others as a result of the depleting
impact of emotional climate. These two opposing factors, in turn, might lead to a non-significant relationship between emotional climate and OCB helping.

Contextual factors might be another reason for the non-significant relationship between OCB Helping and emotional climate. Organizational and professional norms regarding providing help to coworkers might have an impact on OCB helping behavior and thereby surpass the potential impact of emotional climate. Regardless of the activation level of an emotional climate, employees in certain organizations or occupations might engage in OCB helping behavior mostly as a result of the helping norms imposed on them.

Absenteeism was positively related to the activation level of emotional climate. In line with the other findings of this study, it could be suggested that higher activation emotional climates increased employees' tendency to physically withdraw themselves from this climate as a result of its depleting impact. However, absenteeism was not significantly related to affective trait. Contextual factors might play a role in this non-significant relationship. Company policies and department norms regarding absenteeism might influence employees' tendency to be absent from work, concealing the potential impact of affective trait on absenteeism. Thus, regardless of their affective trait, employees in certain workplaces might be more likely to be absent from work as a result of lesser restrictions on absenteeism.

Work absorption was related to neither affective trait nor emotional climate. Work absorption reflects an employee's degree of concentration on his/her work activities and usually occurs when the employee is intrinsically motivated by the work he/she is doing (Rothbard, 2001). Thus, work absorption could be considered as a process mostly shaped
by how an employee relates to his/her specific work activities, rather than to work environment, operating independent of the activation levels of an employee's affective trait and the emotional climate of his/her workplace. Employees with similar affective traits or those working in the same emotional climate might experience very different levels of work absorption as a result of performing work activities with different amounts of intrinsic motivation, depending on the fit between their personal interests and the content of their job.

The results indicated that emotional fit did not have a significant impact on an employee's task performance and role performance, since these outcome variables were related to either only one or none of the components of emotional fit. Neither task nor role performance was related to emotional climate. The moderating effect of job involvement, which was not measured in this study, might be a reason for these non-significant relationships. Job involvement reflects the degree to which an employee identifies with his/her job and considers his/her performance important to self-worth (Blau and Boal, 1987). For the employees with high job involvement, despite its depleting effects the activation level of emotional climate might operate as a driving force making them get more engaged with and spend more effort on their task and role performance activities. Thus, the relationship between role performance and emotional climate could be positive for the employees with high job involvement. When the job involvement is low, however, the activation level of emotional climate might operate as a strain factor, reducing the employee's involvement with task and role activities. Thus, the relationship between role performance and emotional climate could be negative for the employees with low job involvement.
Affective trait was significantly related to role performance but not to task performance. The positive significant relationship between affective trait and role performance confirms the previously suggested view that the employees with higher trait activation might have stronger inner resources on which they could draw to meet the demands of work environment, including the role performance activities such as seeking information, responding to the needs of others, or finding improved ways to do things. On the other hand, the non-significant relationship between task performance and affective trait suggests that, although the activation level of an employee’s affective trait might enhance his/her role performance, it might not be as important in determining his/her efficiency and effectiveness in task activities as some other factors such as task-specific skills, knowledge and ability.

6.2 Theoretical Implications

The findings of this study have implications for the literatures on emotions in organizations, organizational climate, person-organization fit, and psychological engagement. I will discuss each of these in turn.

6.2.1 Emotions in Organizations

The findings of this study contribute to our understanding of emotions in organizational life in several ways. First and foremost, the results of this study indicate that the emotional factors shaping employees’ work experience go beyond their affective disposition. On both theoretical and empirical grounds, this study has demonstrated that contextual level emotional factors might be as important as individual level factors. The results on emotional climate suggest that organizational life is embedded in an affective
context that is collectively shared by employees, and those on emotional fit suggest that an employee's interaction with this affective context is related with important psychological and behavioral outcomes.

Furthermore, the relatively low correlation between affective trait and emotional climate and the strong within group agreements on the emotional climate of work units suggest that the emotions shared among employees should be considered as a distinct phenomenon with its own antecedents, dynamics, and consequences. These results challenge the early studies which conceptualized work group mood as the aggregation of the individual traits of group members (George, 1990; George and James, 1993), and provide support for the prevailing perspective that emotions shared among employees should be investigated in their own right (Barsade and Gibson, 1998; Kelly and Barsade, 2001; Bartel and Saavedra, 2000).

The findings of this study also bring new insights to our understanding about emotions at the individual level by specifically looking at the activation dimension of affective trait. Thus far, positive affect and negative affect have been the major focus of attention in the affective trait research in organizational behavior, and the PANAS scale developed by Watson et al. (1988) the most commonly used measure. However, the positive affect-negative affect framework has also been criticized on both conceptual and methodological grounds (Larsen and Diener, 1992), as I have discussed in Chapter Two. One of these criticisms was that the PANAS scale did not include sufficient items from the low activation end point of the circumplex model, blurring the distinction between the dimensions of positive affect and negative affect at low activation points. Thus, it could be argued that the studies using the PANAS scale have put an overemphasis on the
pleasantness dimension of affective trait, providing us with little information about the activation dimension.

This study took steps to fill this void in several ways: First, the affective trait measure used in this study has included items from both polar-ends of the activation dimensions. Second, it demonstrated that the activation dimension of affective trait have acceptable psychometric properties in terms of factor validity, construct validity, internal reliability, and test-retest reliability. Finally, the findings of the study highlighted the importance of the activation dimension of affective trait by showing that it significantly relates to several important organizational outcomes, including commitment, emotional exhaustion, role performance, and job satisfaction. Thus, this study sets a ground to explore the role of affective trait in organizational behavior from a relatively ignored, i.e. activation, perspective.

Another area in the emotions literature that is informed by the findings of this study is the research on emotional labor. Studies on emotional labor have shown that employees in certain occupations, such as cashiers, flight attendants, and fast food workers, are required to regulate their felt emotions in order to display organizationally desired emotions (Hochschild, 1983; Sutton and Rafaeli, 1987; Morris and Feldman, 1997; Leidner 1993). On the other hand, some researchers also suggest that the scope of emotional labor phenomenon does not necessarily have to be limited to a few sectors but could be expanded to organizations in a variety of sectors (Wharton and Erickson, 1993). This study provides some empirical support for this argument considering the significant relationship it has found between emotional fit and surface acting, a dimension of emotional labor, in a sample including organizations from a variety of sectors. Drawing
on these findings, it could be suggested that emotional labor could occur in any organizational setting if an employee's emotional fit is low.

The results of this study contribute to the emotional labor literature also by bringing new insights to our understanding about the relationship between surface acting and emotional exhaustion. Previous studies have mostly considered emotional exhaustion as an outcome of surface acting. This study, however, has set the ground for an alternative argument that this relationship could be reversed. As the results of the study have suggested, surface acting could be considered as a response to emotional exhaustion when employees do not fit in well to the emotional climate of their work setting.

6.2.2 Organizational Climate

The findings of this study also have implications for the literature on organizational climate. The affective component of organizational climate has not received sufficient attention in the literature (Ashkanasy et al., 2000), despite the fact that very early studies in the field have mentioned feelings as a core feature of the concept (Lewin, 1951; Schneider, 1975). By developing and empirically testing the concept of emotional climate, this study has shown that organizations are embedded in an affective context that is collectively shared and perceived by organizational members. The findings of the study, in particular the strong within group agreement ($r_{wg}$) scores on emotional climate, indicated that emotions could be effectively analyzed from the organizational climate perspective.

On the other hand, the results of this study indicated that emotional climate changes from one work unit to another within the same organization. Which factors influence emotional climate? How does it emerge? How does it change? Future research addressing
these questions, from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives, would expand our understanding about the emotional climate concept and our knowledge on organizational climate in general. Assuming that emotional interactions among employees will play an important role in the formation of emotional climate, studies addressing these questions could also create an interesting bridge between organizational climate literature and the literature on emotional contagion (Hatfield, Cacioppo, and Rapson, 1994).

### 6.2.3 Organizational Fit

Another literature that is informed by the findings of this study is the person-organization fit research. Both conceptually and empirically, this study has demonstrated that individuals and organizations hold certain emotional characteristics which can be compared with one another, a basic premise of the fit concept (Chatman, 1991). Moreover, the results indicate that the congruence between these emotional characteristics could play an important role in the ways employees connect with their jobs and coworkers. These findings highlight emotions as a fruitful domain that could be explored by organizational fit researchers.

This study also contributes to the research on demands-abilities fit. Prior studies in this area have found that employees experience stress when their abilities do not meet organizational demands (Kristof, 1996). Thus far, the demands-abilities fit research has considered a number of factors such as skills, knowledge, and mental and physical energy while conceptualizing demands and abilities (Edwards, 1996). The findings of this study bring new insights to this literature by expanding its focus to the affective domain. In particular, the monotonic nature of the emotional fit model found in this study implies that the activation level of emotional climate might be a contextual factor inducing strain.
and the activation level of an employee's affective trait could be considered as an individual resource on which the employee draws to cope with stress. An empirical examination of this view remains to be tested in future research since stress was not included as a variable in this study.

6.2.4 Psychological Engagement

Finally, this study has implications for the research on psychological engagement at work, particularly in relation to the framework developed by Kahn (1990). Drawing on the results of an ethnographic research, Kahn (1990) has suggested that employees might differ in the degree to which they physically, cognitively, and emotionally get involved with their work environment, and this psychological presence is usually reflected in their connection with work, connection with others and their task and role performances. In this study, I conceptualized the engagement drawing on this framework, by selecting a sample of constructs representing each of the three domains Kahn (1990) has suggested. The results of the second-order confirmatory factor analysis provided some support for this conceptualization. The variables included in this study, however, are not exhaustive, especially those representing the connection with others and connection with work domains. Considering some other constructs, future research could develop alternative models of engagement to investigate its role in organizational life.

In addition, from a quantitative research perspective, this study has shown that emotional fit has a significant impact on engagement, providing empirical support to Kahn's (1990) argument that emotions play an important role in the engagement process. Future research could explore whether other forms of organizational fit, such as culture-
values fit or the fit between personal and organizational goals, also have an impact on engagement.

6.3 Practical Implications

The findings of this study have shown that the congruence between the affective trait of employees and the emotional climate of their workplace could play a significant role in psychological and behavioral engagement at work. A practical implication of these findings has to do with recruitment practices. Recruitment managers usually consider several other important characteristics of potential employees, such as their skills, values, and career objectives, to assess their fit with the organization; and yet pay relatively less attention to their emotional characteristics. However, the results of this study suggest that affective trait might be as important as other characteristics in determining an employee’s fit in an organization. Since affective trait is a relatively stable phenomenon (Watson and Walker, 1996), hiring an employee with poor emotional fit might have long-term negative consequences for both the employee and the organization.

Would companies be better off if they hire employees with a particular affective trait profile? The overall results of this study suggest that it might be a good strategy to prefer employees with higher activation levels, considering that these employees experience higher levels of psychological engagement in terms of their connection with others, connection with work, and role performance. When we consider task performance, however, the results suggest that the answer might not be as straightforward. The non-significant relationship between affective trait and task
performance highlights the possibility that certain tasks might require or be more suitable for employees with lower levels of activation. If the future research provides support for this view, then it would be especially important for organizations to seek alternatives to increase the emotional fit of these employees, such as transferring them to units with lower activation levels of emotional climate.

Another practical implication of this study is that it might be worthwhile for company leaders to take the emotional climate of their organization into account while developing strategies to increase their employees' psychological presence at work. Which routes might be more effective to make a difference in an organization's emotional climate? Although the antecedents of emotional climate is another area yet to be explored, one could suggest that paying attention to factors such as managerial style, task scheduling, socialization practices, cultural norms, and alternative physical setting arrangements might increase the company leaders' ability to influence the activation level of emotional climate in their organization. In addition, organizations could identify the non-role behaviors of their employees that play a role in increasing the activation level of emotional climate and motivate employees to avoid such behaviors. In a similar vein, they could reward those behaviors that reduce the activation level of emotional climate.

On the other hand, it would not be realistic to expect organizations to reduce the activation levels of their emotional climates at the expense of their productivity. Indeed, high activation emotional climate might be necessary for the effective functioning of certain task environments. Considering that emotional exhaustion and psychological safety fully mediated the relationship between emotional fit and most of the engagement variables, it could be suggested that the negative impact of emotional fit on the
employees' engagement could be substantially alleviated if an organization could create a psychologically safe work environment for them and provide them with opportunities to regain their emotional resources during the course of the work day.

This study also provides insights for the individuals. The findings of the study identify the activation level of emotional climate as a potential source of strain in work life, which might have gone unnoticed thus far by the employees. Indeed, some employees might seriously deplete themselves without even noticing it, if they work in an organization where the activation level of emotional climate is very high and yet the tasks being performed are very much intrinsically and/or extrinsically rewarding. However, if the employees become aware of the depleting impact of emotional climate they work in, they could develop alternative coping strategies to cope with it and take timely measures to avoid the long term negative consequences of chronic strain.

6.4 Limitations

The results of this study should be interpreted in light of its limitations. One limitation is that the companies which participated in this study were selected by using convenience sampling, reducing the representativeness of the sample. In addition, in most of the participating organizations, only a few work units took part in the study and these units were not randomly determined but rather were chosen by the contact person. Therefore, selection bias may have occurred. These limitations in sampling method might reduce the generalizibility of the study’s results.

A second limitation of the study is its cross-sectional design. Thus, although the theoretical model suggested causal relationships, causality cannot be established from this study alone. The structural equation modeling used in this study cannot prove
causation but can rather support a set of hypothesized paths. One can argue, for instance, that the relationship between emotional fit and engagement hypothesized in this study could be reversed. In particular, an employee's level of psychological engagement at work might influence his/her emotional fit in the workplace, rather than the other way around. As an example, if most employees in a work unit experience better connection with their coworkers and their work, this might lead to better coordination of task activities and smoother flow of information, which might in turn reduce the level of activation in the emotional climate and thereby increase the emotional fit of each employee at this work unit. Psychological engagement might be less likely to influence emotional fit by creating an impact on the affective trait of an employee, since affective trait is a relatively stable phenomenon that is difficult to change (Rosenberg, 1998). Nevertheless, future research with longitudinal or experimental designs that rule out such alternative explanations is necessary to provide stronger evidence for causality for the model proposed in this study.

The possibility of common method bias is another limitation of this study. The data for most of the variables were collected from a single source, which might have inflated the relationships among these variables. I took several steps to minimize this problem, including using reverse-coded items, presenting the items of constructs in a mixed order, and separating the items for independent and dependent variables into different sections of the survey. The results of confirmatory factor analysis and the chi-square difference tests provided support for the discriminant validity of these measures, indicating that common method bias did not pose a significant threat. Moreover, to decrease the likelihood of common method bias, I measured emotional climate as a contextual
variable by aggregating data collected from multiple sources (i.e., employees sharing each work unit), and collected the performance data from the supervisor of employees.

The latter point mentioned above, however, might have created response bias. To match the data collected from employees and their supervisors, the former were asked to provide their names in the survey. Although the employees were assured of confidentiality, they might still have over-reported the more acceptable responses such as psychological safety, commitment, and satisfaction, and underreported the less socially desirable responses such as psychological withdrawal and intention for turnover.

Finally, it is possible that activation was measured as a state rather than a trait. Although I emphasized in the stem question that the respondents were asked to describe how they feel in general, the mood of employees at the time they were filling out the survey might have affected their responses. This alternative explanation might be ruled out to a certain extent considering the support provided by the results of pilot studies looking at construct validity and test-retest reliability, which I discussed in Chapter Four.

### 6.5 Future Research Directions

The results of this study open up a number of interesting questions that could be pursued in future research. One interesting future research direction would be to examine the relationship between emotional fit and the fit between the values of employees and the culture of their organizations. Emotions and emotional control play an important role in shaping of and organization’s culture and the socialization processes of employees (Van Maanen and Kunda, 1989). An interesting question that could be explored regarding this issue would be whether an employee’s degree of emotional fit has an impact on the way they employ their organization’s culture. It might be suggested that employees who
are emotionally better fit to an organization would be more receptive to the norms and values shared by the members of that organization. In addition, further research is needed to have a better understanding of the relative importance of emotional fit as compared to other types of person-organization fit. A potentially fruitful research domain in this direction would be to compare the impact of emotional fit and personal values-organizational culture fit. If the impact of emotional fit appears to be as strong as cultural fit, this would imply that organizations might need to consider the emotional characteristics of their employees, as well as their values, while recruiting and socializing employees to be able achieve better outcomes.

Is emotional fit a static or a dynamic phenomenon? Although the analyses of this study were controlled for tenure, more research is needed to develop a better understanding on this issue. Do employees adjust themselves to the work environment over time to increase their emotional fit? Alternatively, do employees seek ways to influence the emotional climate of their workplace to make it more congruent with their affective trait? The cross-sectional nature of this study does not make it possible to reveal such possible dynamic interplays between affective trait and emotional climate, and their impact on the emotional fit of an employee. Future studies drawing on a longitudinal, qualitative research designs could illuminate our understanding of the processes shaping emotional fit. One interesting avenue for such a study could be the socialization processes of new employees in strong culture organizations, where a set of certain norms and values are widely shared throughout the organization and strongly imposed on its new members (O’Reilly and Chatman, 1996).
Analyzing the role of emotional fit in jobs involving emotional labor could be another possible research direction. A basic assumption behind the emotional labor phenomenon is that employees spend excessive effort to control their emotions, which in turn leads to negative individual level outcomes (Morris and Feldman, 1997; Leidner 1993). The findings of this study, however, suggest that emotional fit could play a moderating role in this process in that the link between emotional labor activities and negative outcomes would be weaker for employees who already fit in well to the emotional climate of their workplace as compared to those who do not fit in.

Another interesting area that could be explored in future research is the long term consequences of high activation affective trait, especially in terms of health. One could argue that, although employees feel emotionally less exhausted and psychologically more engaged when the activation level of their affective trait is higher than that of the emotional climate, these employees might suffer from health problems in the long run as a result of ignoring, or not recognizing, the taxing impact of emotional climate and the early symptoms of stress, a situation which might have a gradual and cumulative negative impact on their physical health in the long run (Cooper and Payne, 1988).

This study focused on the activation dimension of emotional fit. The pleasantness dimension is an area that is yet to be explored in future research. The psychological mechanisms explaining the outcomes of the pleasantness dimension of emotional fit would be expected to be different from those for the activation dimension. For instance, it could be suggested that an employee working in an emotional climate that is more pleasant than he/she usually feels might get isolated from and become cynical about the pleasant nature of the work environment. Evaluating the “pleasantness” of others from a
critical lens, the employee might develop a cynical attitude towards his/her organization. A comprehensive theoretical model about the pleasantness dimension of emotional fit remains to be developed and tested in future research.

6.6 Conclusion

The experience of work is “saturated with emotions” (Asforth and Humphrey, 1995: 97), and yet we know very little about their role as a component of workplace context (Brief and Weiss, 2002). This study could be viewed as an effort to shed light on this relatively unexplored area. I developed the concept of emotional fit and empirically tested a theoretical model exploring its psychological and behavioral outcomes. I found emotional fit to be significantly related to an employee’s engagement at work in terms of both their connection with others and connection with work. The findings of this study highlight the importance of understanding emotions as an element of organizational context as well as an individual trait. These findings suggest that managers would benefit from paying attention to the emotional aspect of person-organization fit. They also open up a number of research paths into the emotional streams of organizational life.
REFERENCES


APPENDIX-A: PROFILE OF ORGANIZATIONS IN THE SAMPLE

Firm A: This is a middle-sized, privately owned wholesale distributor company with 85 employees. All the employees at this company were given the opportunity to participate in the study. The work units included purchasing, sales, IT services, warehouse, customer sales representative departments, and a management team.

Firm B: This is a middle-sized, privately owned production company operating in the forestry and engineered wood products sector. The company is comprised of around 120 people, and they were all given the opportunity to participate in this study. Most employees are production line workers working at a variety of production units including finger jointer, trimmer, lamination, planer, and maintenance. The company also have three administrative units in areas such as production planning, marketing, and accounting.

Firm C: This is a branch of a large international classified advertising company connecting buyers and sellers through print catalogues and internet sites, with about 150 employees. The employees working in the IT department and a management team were invited to participate in the study.

Firm D: This is the branch of a large corporation offering postal services to the public. The branch employs about 4,500 employees. Employees working at two marketing work units were given the opportunity to participate in the study.

Firm E: This is a small privately owned interior design firm with 9 employees. All employees were given the opportunity to participate in this study.

Firm F: This is a branch of a large international audit and consulting company, with about 400 employees. Managers and administrative personnel from the internal audit services department and employees working at the computer network department were asked to participate in this survey.
Firm G: This is a branch of an international pharmaceutical company with 170 employees. The branch operates in the areas of therapeutics, diagnostics, and self-medication. The employees working at a sales department were invited to participate in this study.

Firm H: This is a faculty at a large public university with 271 faculty and employees. Employees in two work units providing technical services to the faculty were invited to participate in this study.

Firm I: This is a small, privately owned firm with 28 employees. The company designs and manufactures electronic instruments sold a variety of industries including building systems management, process control, and food and beverage transportation. Employees of a product development work unit participated in the study.

Firm J: This is a moderately large size branch of a high-tech development company, with 180 employees. The company provides products and services to industrial customers in a variety of sectors including industrial controls, medical communications, transportation, and computer. Employees of a product development unit were given the chance to take part in the study.

Firm K: This is a branch of a large business-to-business courier company, with 61 employees. The employees were comprised of shift workers sorting mails at different times of the day, and clerical staff and managers in the administration department. All the employees at the branch were given an opportunity to participate.
SECTION-1

We would like you to think about how your workplace environment has been over the past twelve months. Please try to recall how other people usually express their emotions, the work pace, the requirements of your job, physical setting of your office, and any other work condition that might give you an idea about the emotional atmosphere in this work unit. Please take your time and continue this section after you have a relatively clear picture of your workplace's emotional atmosphere.

Below is a list of words that can be used to describe the emotional atmosphere of work environments. We would like you to rate HOW TYPICAL each word below would be to describe the emotional atmosphere in your unit.

Please use the following 1-8 rating scale for your answer. Please be sure that you have given an answer for each word.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOT TYPICAL</td>
<td>SOMEWHAT TYPICAL</td>
<td>VERY TYPICAL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AT ALL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>hyperactive</th>
<th>forceful</th>
<th>peaceful</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gloomy</td>
<td>slow</td>
<td>pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tranquil</td>
<td>energetic</td>
<td>unhappy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inactive</td>
<td>unpleasant</td>
<td>alert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intense</td>
<td>alive</td>
<td>nervous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sluggish</td>
<td>nice</td>
<td>contented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stimulating</td>
<td>monotonous</td>
<td>blue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quiet</td>
<td>sad</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calm</td>
<td>relaxed</td>
<td>hectic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>depressing</td>
<td>serene</td>
<td>warmhearted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enthusiastic</td>
<td>exciting</td>
<td>happy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**SECTION-2**

Now, we would like you to describe yourself based on the following items. Each pair of words below describes a feeling dimension. Please put a check mark on one of the eight scales between each pair to show how you feel **IN GENERAL**. Please note that we **do not** ask you how you feel at this moment, or just when you are at work, but ask you how you feel most of the time **IN YOUR OVERALL LIFE**. Please take your time so as to arrive at a real characteristic description of your feelings.

| Stimulated | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Relaxed   |
| Unhappy    | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Happy     |
| Calm       | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Excited   |
| Pleasant   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Unpleasant |
| Alert      | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Idle      |
| Energetic  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Passive   |
| Enthusiastic| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Quiet     |
| Lively     | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Slow      |
| Melancholic| _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Contented |
| Sluggish   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Hyperactive|
| Hopeful    | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Despairing |
| Serene     | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Nervous   |
| Glad       | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Sad       |
| Inactive   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Active    |
| Depressed  | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Joyful    |
| Intense    | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Tranquil  |
| Cheerful   | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Blue      |
| Gloomy     | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ | Delighted |
SECTION-3

In this section, we would like to ask you some questions regarding your experience at work. Using the following scale, please indicate your response to the following sentences by writing the appropriate number beside each sentence. Please be open and honest in your responding.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Slightly disagree</th>
<th>Neither agree nor disagree</th>
<th>Slightly agree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

1. ____ I often get carried away by what I am working on.
2. ____ I can bring up problems and tough issues in this workplace.
3. ____ I feel emotionally drained from my work.
4. ____ I feel used up at the end of the workday.
5. ____ It is safe to take a risk in this workplace.
6. ____ It is difficult to ask other people for help in this workplace.
7. ____ When I am working, I often lose track of time.
8. ____ If I make a mistake in this workplace, it is often held against me.
9. ____ When I am working, I am totally absorbed by it.
10. ____ I feel fatigued when I get up in the morning and have to face another day on the job.
11. ____ Working with people all day is really a strain for me.
12. ____ I really feel as if this organization's problems are my own.
13. ____ I will be with this company five years from now.
14. ____ No one in this workplace would deliberately act in a way that undermines my efforts.
15. ____ People in this workplace sometimes reject me for being different.
16. ____ I would be very happy to spend the rest of my career in this organization.
17. ____ I feel burned out from my work.
18. ____ When I am working, I completely engrossed by my work.
19. ____ I feel frustrated by my job.
20. ____ Working with other people in this workplace, my unique skills and talents are valued and utilized.
21. ____ I feel I'm working too hard on my job.
22. ____ I feel like I'm at the end of my rope.
23. ____ I do not feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.
24. ____ I do not feel like “part of the family” at my organization.
25. ____ Nothing can distract me when I am working.
26. ____ I will probably look for a job at a different company in the next year.
27. ____ Working with people directly puts too much stress on me.
SECTION-4

In the past twelve months, how often have you engaged in each of these behaviors? Using the following scale, place the appropriate number beside each behavior to indicate how much you have engaged in each behavior in the past year. Please be open and honest in your responding.

1 ——- 2 ——- 3 ——- 4 ——- 5 ——- 6 ——- 7
Never  Rarely  Seldom  Sometimes  Often  Usually  Always

1. _____ Helped others who have been absent.
2. _____ Left workplace early for unnecessary reasons.
3. _____ Volunteered for things that were not required.
4. _____ Resisted expressing my true feelings in the workplace.
5. _____ Had thoughts of being absent.
6. _____ Oriented new people even though it was not required.
7. _____ Let others do my work.
8. _____ Daydreamed.
9. _____ Helped others who have heavy workloads.
10. _____ Put on an act in order to deal with coworkers in an appropriate way.
11. _____ Spent work time on personal matters.
12. _____ Pretended to have emotions that I did not really have when I was at work.
13. _____ Helped others who had work related problems.
14. _____ Assisted my supervisor with his or her work.
15. _____ Chat with co-workers about non-work topics.
16. _____ Put less effort into job than I should have.
17. _____ Made innovative suggestions to improve department.
18. _____ Covered my true feelings about a situation in the workplace.

SECTION-5

How do you think your supervisor would rate you on each of the following performance dimensions, relative to others in your position? Please select one of the options below for each of the five dimensions. Please note that your response may be very different from how you would evaluate your performance. We ask you to indicate what your supervisor's rating would be.

1 ——- 2 ——- 3 ——- 4 ——- 5 ——- 6 ——- 7
Top 5%  Top 10%  Top 15%  Top 25%  Top 40%  Top 50%  Bottom 50%

1. _____ Ability to get along with others
2. _____ Quality of performance
3. _____ Ability to get the job done efficiently
4. _____ Achievement of work goals
5. _____ Overall performance
SECTION-6

People have many reasons for missing work. Most people miss an occasional day once in a while. How many times during the past twelve months have you taken a half day or more off for any of the following reasons?

1. Family responsibilities : _____ days
2. Community activities : _____ days
3. Personal illness : _____ days
4. Family illness : _____ days
5. Medical appointment : _____ days
6. Break from routine : _____ days
7. Personal business : _____ days
8. Just took a day off : _____ days
9. Break from co-workers : _____ days
10. House maintenance : _____ days
11. Time with friends : _____ days
12. Leisure time : _____ days
13. Other reasons : _____ days (please specify: _________________________)

SECTION-7

Using the scale provided below, please rate your performance based on each of the following eight work behaviors. Please try to be as objective as possible in your responding.

1- Coming up with new ideas
2- Working as part of a team or work group
3- Working to implement new ideas
4- Making sure my work group succeeds
5- Creating better processes and routines
6- Seeking information from others in the workplace
7- Responding to the needs of others in my workplace
8- Finding improved ways to do things


1- Needs much improvement 2- Needs some improvement 3- Satisfactory 4- Good 5- Strong 6- Superior 7- Excellent improvement improvement
SECTION-8

Now, we would like to ask you some more questions about your experience at work. Using the following scale, please indicate your response to the following sentences by writing the appropriate number beside each sentence. Please be open and honest in your responding.

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

1. _____ I feel very useful in my job.
2. _____ When there’s a job to be done, I devote all my energy to getting it done.
3. _____ I work at my full capacity in all of my job duties.
4. _____ Doing my job well really makes a difference.
5. _____ When I work, I really exert myself to the fullest.
6. _____ I feel like a key member of the organization.
7. _____ I think I fit in well to the emotional atmosphere of this workplace.
8. _____ When I work, I do so with intensity.
9. _____ The work I do is very valuable to the organization.
10. _____ I find the emotional atmosphere in this workplace disturbing.
11. _____ I rarely feel my work is taken for granted.
12. _____ I wish the emotional atmosphere in this workplace were calmer and quieter than it usually is.
13. _____ I strive as hard as I can to be successful in my work.
14. _____ I will be working at this company this time next year.
15. _____ My superiors generally appreciate the work I do in my job.
16. _____ I don’t think the emotional atmosphere in this workplace is a good match for me.
17. _____ The organization recognizes the significance of the contributions I make.
18. _____ I do not feel “emotionally attached” to this organization.
19. _____ My job is very challenging.
20. _____ I wish the atmosphere in this workplace were more active and energetic than it usually is.
21. _____ I will take steps during the next year to secure a job at a different company.
22. _____ I do not feel comfortable with the level of emotional energy in this workplace; it is too high (or too low) for me.
23. _____ This organization has a great deal of personal meaning for me.
24. _____ It takes all my resources to achieve my work objectives.
25. _____ The emotional atmosphere in this workplace is compatible with my character.
SECTION-9

Using the scale provided below, please indicate your level of satisfaction at work with respect to each of the following five dimensions

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Very Dissatisfied Neither dissatisfied Very Satisfied
neither satisfied

1. ____ Pay
2. ____ Promotion
3. ____ Supervision
4. ____ Co-workers
5. ____ Work environment
6. ____ Job

SECTION-10

This section consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Please, read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Indicate to which extent you GENERALLY feel this way, that is, how you feel on the average IN YOUR OVERALL LIFE.

Very slightly  A little  Moderately  Quite a bit  Extremely
1 2 3 4 5

____ Attentive  ____ Distressed  ____ Excited
____ Upset  ____ Interested  ____ Afraid
____ Proud  ____ Hostile  ____ Jittery
____ Irritable  ____ Ashamed  ____ Active
____ Enthusiastic  ____ Scared  ____ Guilty
____ Inspired  ____ Strong  ____ Determined
____ Alert  ____ Nervous
SECTION-11

How accurately would each of the following sentences describe you? Using the following scale, please indicate your response by writing the appropriate number beside each sentence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very inaccurate</td>
<td>Inaccurate</td>
<td>Slightly uncertain</td>
<td>Slightly inaccurate</td>
<td>Accurate</td>
<td>Slightly accurate</td>
<td>Very accurate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. ___ When I'm around angry people, I get angry myself.
2. ___ I tense up when overhearing other people have heated arguments.
3. ___ In different situations and with different people, I often act like very different persons.
4. ___ I notice myself getting tense when I'm around people who are stressed out.
5. ___ In order to get along and be liked, I tend to be what people expect me to be rather than anything else.
6. ___ Listening to the agitated voices of worried people makes me feel nervous.
7. ___ I'm not always the person I appear to be.
8. ___ My behavior is usually an expression of my true inner feelings, attitudes, and beliefs.
9. ___ I find it hard to remain calm when other people around me are excited.
10. ___ I sense my body responding when I'm around energetic members.
11. ___ I guess I put on a show to impress others.
12. ___ I feel sluggish when talking to a depressed person.
13. ___ When I am uncertain how to act in social situations, I look to the behaviors of others for cues.
14. ___ I pay attention to what others are feeling.
15. ___ I'm very accurate in judging other people's feelings.
16. ___ I'm very sensitive in picking up others' feelings.
17. ___ At parties and social gatherings, I do not attempt to do or say things that others will like.

SECTION-12

If you would like to make any additional comment about your work experience, we would really appreciate it. Please use the following spaces to share your reflections on:

The emotional atmosphere of this workplace: ________________________________

Your emotional experience in this workplace: ________________________________

Other comments: __________________________________________________________

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SECTION-13
This section consists of a number of general questions about you and your company. These responses are to be used to develop a general profile of the respondents of the survey.

1. Age: __________
2. Sex: Female _________ Male _________
3. What is your educational level? (check highest level completed)
   _________ High school       _________ Some college or advanced training from college
   _________ Bachelors Degree   _________ Graduate degree
   _________ Other (please specify: ____________________________)

4. Most people in Canada think of themselves as Canadians but also partly identify themselves based on the ethnic background of their ancestors. What would you say is the main ethnic background (or nationality) of your ancestors? (e.g. Australian, First Nations, Chinese, English, Scottish, French, Korean, Slovakian, etc.) ____________________________

5. How long have you been living in Canada? _____ Since birth    OR    _____ Years

6. What is your current job title: __________________________

7. At which department do you work? __________________________

8. How long have you been working in this work unit? ________ years

9. How long have you been working in this organization? ________ years

10. How much work experience do you have, in all? ________ years

11. Do you supervise employees? (please check one)
    _________ Yes    How many employees do you supervise? ________
    _________ No

12. How would you rank your status in this organization on a scale ranging from 1 (being the lowest rank) to 10 (being the highest rank)? ________

13. On the average day, with how many employees do you interact face-to-face? ________

14. Do you work in a cubicle? Yes ________ No ________
* Please Provide Your Name: _______________________________________

(We assure you that this page will be removed and destroyed as soon as this survey will be matched with the one collected from your supervisor, and that your name will not be recorded anywhere in our dataset.)

THE SURVEY IS OVER.
PLEASE MAIL IT BACK TO US IN THE SELF-ADRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE PROVIDED.
THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION.
APPENDIX-C: SUPERVISOR SURVEY

Name of the employee to be evaluated: ________________________________

I. Using the scale provided below, please rate this employee’s performance based on each of the following eight work behaviors.

    1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Needs much improvement Needs some improvement Satisfactory Good Strong Superior Excellent improvement improvement

1- ___ Coming up with new ideas
2- ___ Working as part of a team or work group
3- ___ Working to implement new ideas
4- ___ Making sure this work group succeeds
5- ___ Creating better processes and routines
6- ___ Seeking information from others in the workplace
7- ___ Responding to the needs of others in the workplace
8- ___ Finding improved ways to do things

II. Now, we would like you to consider this employee in relation to the emotional atmosphere of his/her work unit. Please answer each of the following questions using the scale provided below.

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

1- ___ This employee is usually emotionally calmer than others in this work unit.
2- ___ This employee fits in well to the emotional atmosphere of this work unit.
3- ___ This employee is not a good match for the emotional atmosphere in this work unit.
4- ___ This employee is usually emotionally more intense than others in this work unit.
5- ___ This employee is compatible with the emotional atmosphere of this work unit.

III. How would you rate this employee on each of the following performance dimensions, relative to others in the same position? Please select one of the options below for each of the five dimensions.

    1  2  3  4  5  6  7
Top 5%    Top 10%    Top 15%    Top 25%    Top 40%    Top 50%    Bottom 50%

1- ___ Ability to get along with others
2- ___ Quality of performance
3- ___ Ability to get the job done efficiently
4- ___ Achievement of work goals
5- ___ Overall performance