DOES PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH CAUSE EXIT OR VOICE IN ELEARNING ENVIRONMENT?
Integrating Social Exchange Theory and Hirschman EVLN Theory (1970) in Virtual Environment

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Abstract;

This study integrates the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and Hirschman’s theory of organizational decline (Hirschman, 1970) in a way that psychological contract breach which is an outcome of aversive exchange relationship, was hypothesized to generate two possible reactions as either exit or voice. Exit and voice constructs are proposed by Hirschman (1970) in case of unpleasant and dissatisfying situation. The mediating role of psychological contract breach was also investigated between instructor factor to exit and voice and course factor to exit and voice. Moreover, situational factor was considered to be having moderating effects on the relationship between psychological contract breach to exit and voice relationship.

Questionnaire survey was designed to collect data from 127 students enrolled in the elearning system (online mode). Results provided support to nearly all of our hypothesis. Instructor factor and course factor were found as key predictors toward psychological contract breach while psychological contract breach itself emerged as key parsimonious variable towards exit and voice. In addition, psychological contract breach also strongly mediated the proposed relationship while situational factor only showed interactive effects between psychological contract breach to exit relationship.

Keywords: elearning, distance learning, Instructor factor, course factor, psychological contract breach, situational factor, exit, voice, social exchange theory, EVLN theory of organizational decline, psychological contract theory

Introduction;

Globalization has forced many companies to make significant changes in their business operations. This might be the reason, organizations have incorporated latest technology in their workflow to reduce cost and enhance client/customer satisfaction (Roy and Elfner, 2002). Considering the educational sector, the current shift has increased focus towards the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) in making education available to the doorstep of students and even employees (Dag and Geçer, 2009; Arbaugh, 2002). Various institutes, universities and even organizations are making best use of ICT in providing education to their widely separated learners which is termed as online learning, web based learning or e-learning (Lee, 2010). Online learning or e-learning is defined as a process that employs ICT for delivering or supporting learning and
education. It refers to the use of internet technologies to deliver a broad array of solutions that enhance knowledge and performance (Rosenberg, 2001 p. 28). Key benefits of elearning includes, cost effectiveness better student support, timely, accessibility, consistent quality, greater participation, effective monitoring, flexible learning, convenience, and greater efficiency (Nisar, 2004). Literature shows various terms that describe this phenomenon such as online education, online learning, e-learning, web-based learning, online learning, distributed learning, computer-assisted instruction, or internet-based learning and online classes (Lee, 2010; Ruiz, Mintzer and Leipzig, 2006). From the last two decades, the world has witnessed new developments and advancements in elearning mode of education. According to an estimate, elearning enjoyed a growth rate of 35.6% despite several failure of courses offered online. Student dissatisfaction is the key predictor to elearning failure. This is probably the reason that various researches have been conducted to know the determinants and antecedents of student satisfaction from elearning (Malik, 2010). According to Roy and Elfner (2002), technological proliferation needs investment even of millions of dollars, therefore organizations and universities should strive to examine the satisfaction of their clients out of huge investments.

**Student Satisfaction and elearner satisfaction:**

In elearning domain, student satisfaction matters a lot because it further leads toward elearning acceptance and success (Ayub and Iqbal, 2011; Lee, 2010; Freeze, et al., 2010). This enticed many researchers to explore the factors causing student satisfaction under online mode or elearning. It is also imperative because students keenly use and prefer elearning system when they are satisfied with this particular mode of education (Liaw, 2008). Therefore, various attempts have been made to know the factors causing elearner satisfaction (Chen, Hsieh and Huang, 2011; Lim, 2001; Lee, 2010) Since this study attempts to know the predictors towards psychological contract breach under elearning environment therefore, two of the most important antecedents of students’ satisfaction were examined in terms of their influence towards psychological contract breach.

**Instructor Factor**

Instructors’ competences, expertise, support and counseling provided during elearning process, have key influence on student satisfaction (Paechter, Maier and Macher, 2010). Therefore, to successfully implement elearning, the elearning administrator should emphasis at frequent student-faculty contact, collaboration and feedback (Arbaugh and Hornik, 2006). Moreover, skills of faculty members are also among the strong predictors of student learning and satisfaction (Arbaugh 2002).

Especially, instructor support is very important at the start of the course (Hong, 2002). Their teaching methodology is instrumental in capturing the attention of students towards course and readings (Collis, 1995; Willis, 1994). A teacher needs to be friendly during teaching to stimulate
the interest of the students (Webster and Hackley 1997). The study of Webster and Hackley (1997) argued that student satisfaction and acceptance of elearning largely depends upon his attitude towards delivering lectures and his teaching methodology. Precisely, one cannot ignore the role of instructor or teacher in elearning. His operational as well as subject command, friendly behavior and problem solving attitude can positively affect students' satisfaction (Volery and Lord, 2000).

**Course Factor**

Providing quality content is a key to enhance student satisfaction (Webster and Hackley 1997). Wang (2003) claimed that personalized content bundled with user friendly interface had strong influence over elearning satisfaction. Lu and Chiou (2010) also reported nearly similar results by highlighting the importance of interface friendliness, perceived community, content richness, and perceived flexibility towards students’ satisfaction with e-learning. Course quality is of utmost importance when institutes are endeavoring to establish new learning mechanism (i.e. elearning). It not only enhances student satisfaction but also support successful implementation of elearning (Piccoli et al., 2001).

Literature has sufficient support in examining the instructor factor and course factor in relation with student satisfaction. Since psychological contract breach is a perceptual and attitudinal phenomenon like student satisfaction, about a rising feeling that either party has not fulfilled one or more of its perceived obligations (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Therefore, following relationships are hypothesized;

**H1**: Instructor factor has positive relationship with psychological contract breach.

**H2**: Course factor has positive relationship with psychological contract breach.

**Hirschman EVLN theory of Organizational Decline**

Albert Hirschman’s famous theory of organizational decline (Hirschman, 1970) provided the basic underpinning for this study. This theory was basically originated in relation with dissatisfaction felt by the customers (from quality, price behavior etc) from any offering of the organization. Hirschman stated that customer may show their dissatisfaction in the form of exit, voice, loyalty and neglect. The responses have far reaching consequences therefore; various authors have tested these reactions in different aversive situations. Such as legitimacy crises (Gel’man, 2010), romantic relationships (Sinclair and Fehr, 2005), market disappointments and failures (Gurdon, Savitt and Pribova, 1999), voters discomfort (Feld, 1997), service failure (Colgate and Norris, 2001), declining job satisfaction (Rusbult et al., 1988), job insecurity (Sverke and Hellgren, 2001), problematic events (Hagedoorn et al., 1999) organizational cynicism (Naus, Iterson and Roe, 2007), organizational politics (Vigoda, 2001), unpleasant work relationships (Fritz, 1997) etc

But, substantial evidences are not available where students’ reactions to dissatisfying situation are evaluated in terms of exit, voice, loyalty and neglect (Hart and Rush, 2007). Duque and Lado (2009) in their study stated that educational institutes are facing consistently rising competition
which prompted students to switch to other available alternatives in case of any unfavorable situation. Students can either raise their voice through formal and informal channels or stay committed due to motivational loyalty. Normally, educational sector lacks any support through which students can raise voice. More efforts need to make in building culture (and in particular cultures of excellence) to facilitate student voice (Hart and Rush, 2007). This provided the following hypothesis of the study. However, only extreme reactions were selected as exit and voice to know their relationship with psychological contract breach.

**H3:** Psychological contract breach has positive relationship with exit.

**H4:** Psychological contract breach has positive relationship with voice.

**Psychological contract breach (History and Theoretical Background)**

Argyris (1960) was the first to introduce the idea of psychological contract which was originally developed within the context of organizational behavior. According to Argyris (1960), psychological contract is a perceptual agreement between employees and his supervisor/employer about a relationship which can be developed when employees yield higher productivity and low grievances in exchange of compensation and secure employment (Taylor & Tekleab, 2004). It is an exchange of tangible resources offered by the employee and employers to satisfy the needs of both parties (Argyris, 1960; Coyle-Shapiro, Jacqueline and Parzefall, 2008).

The basis of psychological contract breach are aligned with the social exchange theory which has wide implications for economics, psychology and sociology. Social behavior largely depends on exchange of tangible and intangible materials. All human relationships are formed by considering the cost-benefit analysis. In economic terms, individual pay some cost to gain something. This cost may be in terms of time, money, energies etc while in return some rewards are obtained as acceptance, affection, assistance etc. Relationships are formed when rewards are adequate enough to dominate cost (Hormans, 1958). **Social exchange theory (SET) is one of the most influential conceptual paradigms in organizational behavior** (Cropanzano and Mitchell, 2005). In organizational behavior, employment relationships are established when employees perceive that the salary and other compensations overweigh the work demands (Blau, 1964, P.91). In information system sphere, to develop and sustain students’ elearning relationship, students should be given all the resources and facilities promised by the administrator and universities. User friendly interface, instructor competency and responsiveness, interactive discussion forums, updated information etc., are the factors keenly desired and expected by the students in exchange of their money and efforts. If there exists any gap in establishing such relationships, it may lead towards breach of psychological contract. The psychological contract is thus defined as an individual’s belief regarding the terms and conditions of an exchange relationship with another party (Rousseau, 1989) and a violation/breach occurs when one party in the relationship perceives another to have failed to fulfill promised obligation(s) (MacNeil, 1985). This provides the clear definition of psychological contract breach.
which refers to the cognitive identification that an employer has not fulfilled one or more of its perceived obligations (Morrison and Robinson, 1997).

Previously Turnley and Feldman (1999) conducted a study to know the impact of psychological contract violations on various reactions proposed by Hirschman (1970). Precisely the research shed light at finding the predicting qualities of psychological contract violations towards exit, voice, loyalty, and neglect behavior of employees. Results showed that psychological contract violations positively influenced exit, voice, and neglect behaviors among employees whereas negatively impacted the loyalty to the organization.

In educational environment, Wilson, Jackman and Kennedy (2002) explored the psychological contract violation in terms of student plagiarism and it’s after affects. When the violations were made, both the parties worked out to restore the equity by sharing understanding about the academic integrity or both worked to re-establish the psychological contract explicitly.

The psychological contract has been given due importance in view of its wide implications to different disciplines. Wilson, Jackman and Kennedy (2002) suggested that psychological contract breach can be examined in educational context to unfold the multiple and complex ways in which academic integrity is exchanged between students and academia (Wilson, Jackman and Kennedy, 2002). Anderson (1987) also accentuated to uphold psychological contract to enhance student satisfaction. Taking into account the significance of psychological contracts, following hypothesis are further formed for evaluation in virtual environment;

**H5:** Psychological contract breach mediates the relationship between instructor factor and exit.

**H6:** Psychological contract breach mediates the relationship between instructor factor and voice.

**H7:** Psychological contract breach mediates the relationship between course factor and exit.

**H8:** Psychological contract breach mediates the relationship between course factor and voice.

**H9:** Situational factor has moderating effects on the relationship between psychological contract breach and exit.

**H10:** Situational factor has moderating effects on the relationship between psychological contract breach and voice.

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*Figure I. Conceptual Framework*
Objectives of the study;

By reviewing the literature, following objectives of the study were formulated;

- To know the predicting qualities of instructor factor and course factor towards psychological contract breach under elearning environment.
- To investigate the effects of psychological contract breach on exit and voice tendency of elearners.
- To understand the mediating role played by psychological contract breach in the relationship between instructor factor and exit as well as between instructor factor and voice.
- To examine the mediating role of psychological contract breach between the instructor factor and exit as well as instructor factor and voice relationships.
- To examine the moderating effects of situational factor on the psychological contract breach to exit and voice relationship.

Methodology

Participants

Allama Iqbal Open University and its e-learning effort

Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is among the mega universities of the world which has more than 1 million students enrollment according to the latest statistics (VC Annual Report 2010-11). It is a distance university established in 1974 to cater the educational needs of the special segments of the society who cannot continue their education due to any bondage. AIOU in collaboration with Commonwealth of Learning offered MBA and MPA programmes (known as Commonwealth Executive MBA/MPA CEMBA/CEMPA) in 2003 for executive students. After successful inception and penetration of CEMBA/CEMPA programmes, AIOU established elearning portal to offer all of the courses through online mode of education. This moodle (LMS) based Elearning platform was named as Open Learning Institute of Virtual Education (OLIVE). Later, some of the programmes offered by the English department also became apart of elearning offerings. Presently, university is offering CEMBA and CEMPA programmes through both face-to-face and online mode of education. Students can opt any mode according to their convenience and preferences.

Students enrolled in the online CEMBA/CEMPA programme were selected as the population of the study. Irrespective of their age, occupation, level and programme, all the online students constituted the population. However, it was deemed necessary to take only those students onboard who had completed at least one semester through OLIVE, so that they could better respond about the subject matter.

Procedure

In view of the total strength of students enrolled in online mode, all the students were targeted...
for the purpose. With the help of the OLIVE administrator, a soft copy of the questionnaires were sent to all the students with the objective of the study and its significance. A reminder emails were also sent to them to enhance response rate. By taking such measures a total of 137 questionnaires were received while 123 usable questionnaires were analyzed using SPASS 15.0.

**Measures**

All the measures used in this study were adopted from the previous studies. Items set for instructor factor and course factor were negatively phrased to investigate positive relationship between these two with psychological contract breach. Moreover, existing literature from the organizational behavior domain reflects some standard and widely accepted inventories to measure psychological contract breach, exit and voice constructs, however some modifications were made in the items set to align the conceptual understanding of psychological contract breach, exit and voice with respect to elearning environment. A pilot testing was also made on 15 students to know the reliability and reliability of the instrument before floating to the target respondents.

**Instructor Factor**

Instructor’s characteristics were measured with the help of items taken from the study of Selim (2007). However a precise version of items set consisting of six items were used to tap responses. Five point likert scale ranging from 1. Strongly Disagree to 5. Strongly Agree was used to record responses.

**Course Factor**

To measure course factor, items were selected from the study of Wang (2003). The questionnaire contained four items to measure course factors. All the items were based on five point likert scale ranging from 1. Strongly Disagree to 5. Strongly Agree.

**Exit and Voice**

The behavioral manifestations of exit and voice were measured with self-descriptive items used by Hagedoorn et al., (1999). Four items were given to measure exit and four to measure voice. Five point likert scale was employed ranging from 1. Strongly Disagree to 5. Strongly Agree to measure both constructs.

**Psychological Contract Breach.**

Psychological contract breach was assessed with the help of five-items PCB measures developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). All the items were based on five point likert scale ranging from 1. Strongly Disagree to 5. Strongly Agree.

**Organizational Constraints as Moderator**

Although researches have shown that an individual may show various attitudinal and behavior responses but their reactions may also be influenced by some other factors. Various researchers have claimed that the relationship between psychological contract breach and its various outcomes
are influenced by some situational factors (Rousseau, 1995; Turnley and Feldman, 1999). Keeping these arguments into consideration, situational factor or justification sufficiency was assumed to be having moderating effects at the relationship between psychological contract breach and the reactions prescribed by Hirschman (1970) as exit and voice.

The moderating effect of situational factor was described in terms of organizational constraints which are usually out of organizational control. The moderator was measured with the help of single item i.e. How much have forces outside your organization’s control (such as general economic conditions, government regulations, or technological constraints) caused your organization to change the commitments it made to you?” taken from the study of Turnley and Feldman (1999).

Data analysis
Correlation Coefficient;

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Factor</td>
<td>3.65</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Factor</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>0.18*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Contract Breach</td>
<td>3.55</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.27**</td>
<td>0.30**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exit</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.21*</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.24**</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table I. Correlation Analysis

To examine the relationships between the variables, correlation analysis was carried out. Instructor factor and course factor are found significantly related with psychological contract breach. Correlations coefficients are found as \( r=0.27, p<0.01 \) and \( r=0.30, p<0.01 \), respectively. Following the model, psychological contract breach was found significantly correlated with exit \( r=0.43, p<0.01 \) and voice \( r=0.31, p<0.01 \). In addition to these results, instructor factor and course factor was also found significantly associated with exit \( r=0.21, p<0.05 \) and \( r=23, p<0.01 \) and voice \( r=0.22, p<0.05 \) and \( r=0.24, p<0.01 \).
Simple linear regression analysis was performed to know the variance explained by the independent variables. As indicated in the above given equations, instructor factor and course factor were assumed to predict psychological contract breach. Course factor individually explain 9% variance in the psychological contract breach while instructor factor explained 7% variance. Coefficient values for course factor and instructor factor were reported as ($\beta=0.22$, $p < 0.01$) and ($\beta=0.20$, $p < 0.01$), respectively. Rest of the variance is explained by other explanatory variables, which were not apart of this study. Psychological contract breach was also found to have significant effects on exit ($\beta=0.43$, $p < 0.05$) and voice ($\beta=0.40$, $p < 0.05$). While it helped to explain 9% variance in voice and 18% in exit.

**Regression Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Dependent Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>Adj. R2</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Factor (CF)</td>
<td>Psychological Contract Breach (PCB)</td>
<td>0.22*</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>12.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Factor (IF)</td>
<td>Psychological Contract Breach (PCB)</td>
<td>0.20*</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.075</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>10.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Contract Breach (PCB)</td>
<td>Voice (Vc)</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>13.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Contract Breach (PCB)</td>
<td>Exit (Ex)</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>27.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** Coefficient is significant at the 0.01 level.

* Coefficient is significant at the 0.05 level.

Table II. Linear Regression Analysis

**Mediation Analyses**

In order to test the mediating effects of PCB between the relationships of independent and dependent variables, the method prescribed by Baron and Kenny (1986) was applied.

Table-III, shows the process of mediating analysis. First condition to establish the mediation relationship was fulfilled when the exit was regressed with instructor factor and course factor separately and both instructor factor ($\beta=0.15$, $p < 0.05$) and course factor ($\beta=0.17$, $p < 0.05$) were
found significant predictors towards exit. Same applied for other dependent variable and voice was regressed with instructor factor and course factor and both instructor factor ($\beta=0.2$, $p < 0.05$) and course factor ($\beta=0.23$, $p < 0.05$) were found significant predictor towards voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Outcomes</th>
<th>EXIT</th>
<th>VOICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructor Factor</td>
<td>0.15*</td>
<td>0.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCB</td>
<td>0.4**</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-1A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Factor</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step-2B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCB</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R2</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$\Delta$ Adjusted R2</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: *p<0.05; **p<0.001; PCB = Psychological Contract Breach

Table III. Mediating Analysis

Both the independent variables, instructor factors ($\beta=0.20$, $p < 0.05$) and course factors ($\beta=0.22$, p<0.001) (Independent variables) had already been found significant predictor towards mediator that is psychological contract breach in separate analysis.

In the next step, mediator (psychological contract breach) was entered in the regression equation and the effects of both independent variables were examined towards exit and voice. Table-III, shows that by adding mediator in the regression equation, psychological contract breach
yielded significant results toward exit ($\beta=0.40, p<0.001; \beta=0.39, p<0.001$) and voice ($\beta=0.35, p<0.05 \; \beta=0.34, p<0.05$) while both instructor factor and course factor became insignificant predictors toward exit ($\beta=0.07, p>0.05; \beta=0.09, p>0.05$) and voice ($\beta=0.13, p>0.05; \beta=0.15, p>0.05$).

This proves the full mediating role played by psychological contract breach between the relationships of independent (instructor factor and course factor) and dependent variables (exit and voice).

**Moderating Analysis;**

Two step hierarchical multiple regression method was used as proposed by Cohen (2003), to test the moderating effects of situational factor on the relationship between psychological contract breach and exit as well as on the relationship between psychological contract breach and voice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>EXIT</th>
<th>VOICE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step-1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCB</td>
<td>0.43**</td>
<td>0.40**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SitFactor</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Step-2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PCB X SitFactor</td>
<td>-0.25*</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>0.43</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adj R²</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ΔR²</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>-0.004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>13.72</td>
<td>11.13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** *p<0.05; **p<0.001; PCB = Psychological Contract Breach

Table IV. Moderating Analysis

Following the prescribed procedure, initially exit was regressed with the situational factor and psychological contract breach. Both situational factor and psychological contract breach explained 17% variance in the dependent variable. In the second step, interaction term (PCB X SitFactor) was added in the regression equation and exit was regressed with the situational factor, psychological contract breach and the interaction term. The results showed that interaction term was found
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statistically significant ($\beta = -0.25, p<0.05$) in predicting exit.

The incremental increase in the variance explained was 2 percent.

Same procedure was applied to know the moderating effects of situational factor on the relationship between psychological contract breach and voice. While the interaction term showed insignificant results ($\beta = -0.11, p>0.05$) towards voice. Therefore, situational factors moderate the relationship between psychological contract breach and exit but results do not support the hypothesis about moderating role of situational factor between the relationship of psychological contract breach and voice.

**Evaluation of hypotheses;**

All the established relationships between the independent variables and dependent variable were found to be positive providing support to H1, H2, H3 and H4. Later the mediating role of psychological contract breach was analyzed and provided support to H5-H8. Lastly, an interaction was found between psychological contract breach and situational factor for exit. Therefore, H9 was also substantiated but no support was found for H10.

**Discussion;**

This paper attempts to measure the predicting qualities of course factor and instructor towards psychological contract breach and the exit and voice as an outcome of psychological contract breach. In addition it also investigates the mediating role played by psychological contract breach between independent and dependent variables. Moreover, the moderating role of situational factors was also examined on the relationship between psychological contract breach and, exit and voice.

Mediating relationships were also hypothesized about the mediating role played by psychological contract breach between the independent (instructor factor and course factor) and dependent variables (exit and voice). Analysis fully supported the mediating role played by the psychological contract breach which indicates that the link between dissatisfying instructor and course factor doesn't necessarily lead to raise voice or exit behavior rather there exist a mediator i.e. psychological contract breach. When elearners feel that psychological contract is breached then they either go to raise voice or to exit the situation.

Theoretically examining, we can conclude that psychological contract breach is occurred when elearners develop the perception that all the promises made by the institute (offering elearning) could not be fulfilled. This situation further leads to work out solution to rectify the adverse situation or to leave the scenario.

In addition to mediation, situation factor was assumed to have moderating effects on the relationship between psychological contract breach to exit and psychological contract breach to voice. Situational factor was operationalized in terms of “how much forces outside university control (such as general economic conditions, government regulations etc) caused the institute to change the commitments it made to you”.

المؤتمر الدولي الثالث للتعلم الإلكتروني والتعليم عن بعد
Step-wise regression analysis was carried out which showed the significant interaction that has emerged in the present study indicating the moderating effects of situational factor on the relationship between psychological contract breach and exit. Whereas, support was not obtained about the psychological contract breach to voice relationship.

Situational factor has strong negative effects on the psychological contract breach to exit relationship. This shows that when elearners feel a violation in the perceived contract in the educational process due to either instructor factor or course factor or both, it further leads to leaving the situation depending upon the influence of situation factor. If students feel that the institute couldn't fulfill its obligations due to some factors out of its control then the likelihood to quite the situation may not take shape.

Conclusion;

Psychological contract breach is a pervasive phenomenon in the organizational behavior. However, it can be generalized to any segment where social exchanges are made. In this way, psychological contract breach was examined in terms of possible causes and consequences in the elearning environment. Instructor factor and course factor were found as key predictors towards psychological contract breach while exit and voice were concluded as outcomes of psychological contract breach as proposed by Hirschman (1970).

The present study contributed the existing literature in many ways.

- First, psychological contract breach construct has been examined thoroughly in the context of elearning. This is probably the first attempt from developing world in finding the key causes and outcomes of psychological contract breach from virtual environment.

- Moreover, theory of psychological contract breach and the famous EVLN theory of organizational decline presented by Hirschman (1970) were integrated to come at definite conclusion.

- The mediating role of Psychological contract breach was analyzed between instructor factor to exit and voice, and course factor to exit and voice.

- Interacting role of Situational factor was also examined on the relationship between psychological contract breach to exit and voice relationship.

Results confirmed the mediating role of psychological contract breach. It elucidates that when students feel constraint due to course factor or instructor factor, they do not raise voice or exit the situation instantly unless they have the perception of breach in psychological contract by the institute or university providing education through elearning.

In addition, if psychological contract breach is occurred, the relationship between psychological contract breach and exit is further contingent upon situational factors. When students feel that some uncontrollable factors caused the university to avert from promised commitments. This causes to continue education through the elearning mode of study rather quitting online mode.
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ACADEMIC CAREER:

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</table>

PROFESSIONAL AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE:

- Working as a permanent faculty member (Lecturer BS-18) in AIOU from the last seven years.
- Apart of visiting faculty in Army Public College of Management Sciences and Mohammad Ali Jinnah University from last two years.
- Three years working experience at corporate level of different organizations working under private sector of Pakistan.
PUBLICATIONS:

Research Articles:
- Twenty research papers have been published in the International Journals.
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- Eight of the research articles have been presented in international conferences held in United Kingdom, Malaysia, Germany, Australia and USA.

Case Studies;
- Case study entitled “We Wont Change” published in ECCH, UK.
- Case study entitled,” Lets look for something New” Published in the course book of “Marketing Management” for Commonwealth Learning System, Vancouver, Canada.

Books;
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ACHIEVEMENTS:
- Awarded an appreciation letter by Central Connecticut State University on presenting paper in Germany.
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