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## Effects of gender and perceived identifiability on whistle-blowing behavior

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EFFECTS OF GENDER AND PERCEIVED IDENTIFIABILITY  
ON WHISTLE-BLOWING BEHAVIOR

A Thesis

Presented to the  
Department of Psychology  
and the  
Faculty of the Graduate College  
University of Nebraska

In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Arts  
University of Nebraska at Omaha

by John Johanson

August 1995

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# THESIS ACCEPTANCE

Acceptance for the faculty of the graduate College,  
University of Nebraska, in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree Master of Arts, University of  
Nebraska at Omaha.

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## Abstract

Whistle-blowing--the disclosure of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate organizational practices--has received increased attention in recent years as a possible method for organizations to prevent loss due to theft, injury, law suits, etc. Few studies to date have examined this topic from more than a descriptive or correlational perspective. A new emphasis on controlled studies may shed more light on the topic. This study used a 3 x 2 x 2 design to examine the causal influences of three levels of perceived identifiability of the potential whistle-blower and the effects of the gender of both the potential whistle-blower and the authority to whom the whistle-blower might reveal information. Results concerning identifiability were insignificant but in the hypothesized direction. Results concerning the gender hypothesis were also insignificant but point to the potentially important role of the authority figure's gender upon the subjects' propensity to blow the whistle.

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## Chapter I

### Whistle-blowing

The phrase "blowing the whistle" and the label of "whistle-blower" have entered our language as metaphors and, as a result, have been used and defined very loosely. It is therefore essential to define the term before addressing the topic of whistle-blowing. Several different definitions have been used in the literature throughout the years (Elliston, Keenan, Lockhart, & Van Schaick, 1985), but one of the more common definitions in recent literature is "organization members' disclosure of illegal, immoral, or illegitimate practices under the control of their employers, to parties who may be able to effect action" (Miceli & Near, 1985, p. 525). Furthermore, organization members who disclose knowledge of questionable activities only to parties within the organization have been termed "internal whistle-blowers," and those who disclose this knowledge to parties external to the organization have been tagged "external whistle-blowers" (Miceli & Near, 1985).

Although whistle-blowing may be viewed as a threat to the organizational hierarchy (Near, 1989), whistle-blowing has received much support as a positive method of organizational dissent (Graham, 1986). It has been suggested as a potential method for

...organizations to correct unsafe products or working conditions or to curb fraudulent or wasteful practices and, thereby, to avoid substantial adverse consequences, such as harm to clients, customers, or employees and resulting loss of sales, costly lawsuits, and negative publicity. (Miceli & Near, 1985, p. 526)

Near (1989) suggested whistle-blowing may be useful to organizations, and may also prevent some public tragedies. With this in mind, the purpose of this study was to address some of the variables that may affect the likelihood of an organizational member blowing the whistle to an internal authority after observing the questionable activities of other organization members.

The topic of whistle-blowing has received considerable attention by the media in recent years (Barnet & Cochran, 1991; Near, 1989). There have also been reviews that suggest there is an increasing

frequency of whistle-blowing in today's society (Ewing, 1983). A majority of the states have legislated legal protection of whistle-blowers from retaliation (Westman, 1991). In addition, the topic has received considerable attention within psychological journals (Miceli & Near, 1984). A review of the relevant literature follows.

## Chapter II

### Review of Whistle-blowing Research

#### Case Studies

Literature addressing whistle-blowing has often focused on individual case studies. Perrucci, Anderson, Schendel, and Tractman (1980) described a whistle-blowing incident in which three engineers were fired as a result of expressing concerns to the press about the safety of the newly constructed Bay Area Rapid Transit System's automatic train control system. Lewis (1985) presented a case history of a whistle-blowing incident in a public child-welfare service which received considerable political, as well as media, attention. Blum (1988) recounted the events of a whistle-blowing incident that involved the overstated claims of an experimental X-ray laser beam by some of the heads of the Strategic Defense Initiative's "Star Wars" program. Again, this was a case that generated considerable media attention as well as political fallout.

### Correlational Research

Some of the more recent literature has focused on individual and situational correlates of whistle-blowing among different organizational groups. Miceli and Near (1984, 1985) examined the results of a 1980 United States Merit Systems Protection Board (USMSPB) survey of 8587 respondents from 15 major federal departments and agencies. They discovered several reliable correlates of whistle-blowing. It was found that employees with more education exhibited more whistle-blowing. They also found more whistle-blowing among employees with higher salaries, particularly among those employees with higher salaries because of greater tenure and merit rather than because of greater education. Not surprisingly, they also found that whistle-blowing occurred more frequently among employees for whom reporting questionable activities is role-prescribed, such as inspectors and supervisors. Miceli and Near (1988) found results similar to those above when they examined the completed questionnaires of 7861 respondents of a 1983 USMSPB survey of

employees in 22 federal departments and agencies.

Miceli, Near, and Schwenk (1991) surveyed Directors of Internal Auditing in North America who were members of the Institute for Internal Auditors. Examination of the 1046 returned questionnaires revealed correlations that were consistent with the earlier results of Miceli and Near (1984, 1985, 1988). Whistle-blowing was found to be more common among employees with longer service to the organization and among employees with greater worth to the organization.

It is interesting to note that these correlates suggest that whistle-blowing is not the domain of "the disappointed, the incompetent, the malicious, and the paranoid" (Bok, 1980, p. 278) as some have suggested (Jos, 1991) and many have assumed. Rather, whistle-blowers appear to be valuable members of organizations they wish to protect and defend. When organization members chooses to blow the whistle, they do so at some risk. Fear of retaliation is an important variable to prospective whistle-blowers, and perceived management hostility has been shown to be a strong predictor of

retaliation against whistle-blowers (Parmalee, Near, & Jensen, 1982).

An interesting result discovered by Miceli and Near (1988) and Miceli, Near and Schwenk (1991) is that the probability of a person blowing the whistle is greater when they are a member of a larger work group. Further, Miceli and Near (1985) found that whistle-blowing was more probable in larger organizations than in smaller organizations. These findings seem to contradict the widely accepted group inhibition effect of bystander intervention (Latane & Darley, 1968). The results also appear to somewhat contradict the findings of social loafing research (Brickner, Harkins, & Ostrom 1986; Harkins & Jackson, 1985) which suggest that individuals produce less effort when part of a group than when working alone.



### Chapter III

#### Current Investigation

##### Identifiability

It has been suggested that a possible reason potential whistle-blowers are more likely to act when part of larger groups than when part of smaller groups is that they fear they would be more easily identified and possibly face retaliation in smaller groups (Miceli, Near, & Schwenk, 1991). For example, in a work group consisting of five members, where it is known that one member among them blew the whistle, the probability of the whistle-blower being correctly identified as the "deviant" by their non-whistle-blowing coworkers would be .25. If a member of the work group blew the whistle on a non-member of the group, possibly a supervisor, the offender would have a .20 chance of correctly identifying the group member who turned them in. The probability of the anonymous whistle-blower being correctly identified would decrease as the work group size increased.

If whistle-blowing is inhibited by fear of retaliation, then decreasing the self-perceived identifiability of the potential whistle-blower, and thus their likelihood of experiencing retaliation, should increase their likelihood of acting. It follows that if perceived identifiability inhibits whistle-blowing, guaranteed anonymity for whistle-blowers should greatly facilitate whistle-blowing. Research has shown that potential whistle-blowers would be more likely to act if they were guaranteed anonymity (Miceli & Near, 1985), and researchers have stated that "policy changes to protect whistle-blowers against reprisal short of guaranteeing anonymity are unlikely to affect the behavior of this group" (Miceli & Near, 1984, p. 703).

Some have suggested that anonymity of whistle-blowers would lessen the utility of the whistle-blowers' information to the organization; others have suggested that information from anonymous sources would still be quite useful to the organization, and certainly more desirable than the lack of any

whistle-blowing whatsoever (Elliston et al., 1985).

Based on the above, the following hypothesis is suggested:

H1: Increased self-perception of identifiability of potential whistle-blowers will suppress their whistle-blowing behavior.

#### Gender of the Whistle-blower

Miceli and Near (1988) found that men are more likely to blow the whistle than women, according to a 1983 USMSPB Survey. Miceli, Near, and Schwenk (1991) also found, from a survey of directors of internal auditing, that men were more likely to blow the whistle. Additionally, a controlled experiment by Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991) found that men were more likely to blow the whistle than women, even when the possible confounds of locus of control and level of moral development were controlled.

One might assume that the increased prevalence of whistle-blowing among men is simply due to their presumed higher status, greater security in their position within the organization, or as Hollander

(1960) phrased it, greater "idiosyncrasy credits." Hollander described idiosyncrasy credits as a measure of the individual's worth to the organization. An employee gains credits from promotions, seniority or other achievements. Those employees with more idiosyncrasy credits realize their relative importance to the organization and are, therefore, more likely to exhibit a marginally acceptable behavior, such as whistle-blowing, with less fear of retaliation.

If one assumes that men command more credits because of their gender, thereby explaining their greater tendency to whistle-blow, it would follow that non-minority members of the organization would also command greater credits. If men are, indeed, more likely to blow the whistle because of their ascribed status, then the same would be true for non-minority members. However, Miceli and Near (1988) found no difference between the whistle-blowing tendencies of whites and minorities. This finding casts doubt on the idea that men are more likely to blow the whistle simply because of status differences.

In more direct contrast to the gender differences noted, Brabeck (1984) conducted one of the rare controlled experiments on the topic and found a gender difference that was opposed to the findings of Miceli and Near (1988) and Miceli, Near, and Schwenk (1991). Brabeck's study allowed subjects to call her attention (blow the whistle) to false facts she was about to publish in a textbook. All of the subjects in Brabeck's experiment who chose to blow the whistle were female; none of the male subjects blew the whistle.

A possible explanation of Brabeck's (1984) results is that the authority to whom the subjects would disclose their knowledge was female. The controlled experiment by Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991) found the opposite gender effect but they used a male authority to whom the potential whistle-blower could report. The studies of Miceli and Near (1988) and Miceli, Near, and Schwenk (1991), which concluded men were more likely to whistle-blow, involved surveys of actual organizations. In these actual organizations, it is likely that a disproportionately large percentage of the authorities

to whom observers of questionable activities might blow the whistle is male.

In reviewing the topic of self-disclosure, a topic somewhat related to whistle-blowing, Dindia and Allen (1992) conducted a meta-analysis which concluded that:

...females disclose more than males to females. However, females do not disclose more than males to males. In same-sex interactions, females disclose more to females than males disclose to males. In opposite-sex interactions, females disclose more to males than males disclose to females; however, the differences in self-disclosure are not as great as for same sex interactions. (p. 113)

These results indicate that females' self-disclosure behaviors are suppressed when they are interacting with males, and their self-disclosure behaviors are more likely when they are interacting with other females. Perhaps this finding is related to the less frequent occurrence of women blowing the whistle to authorities in the work place.

As there are some social norms against whistle-blowing (Dozier & Miceli, 1985), differing reactions between the genders under social pressure to

conform may also contribute to differences in whistle-blowing. Eagly and Chvrvala (1986) found that women (over the age of 19) are more likely than men to conform to social pressures. Additionally, a meta-analysis by Eagly and Wood (1991) concluded that women show more conformity in group-pressure situations and men are more likely to display behavior considered "heroic" or "chivalrous." Perhaps the depressed frequency of women blowing the whistle in organizations is due to the fact that women may feel more pressured to conform to social norms against "finking" and, furthermore, feel less confident disclosing their knowledge of questionable activities to males, who are likely to be the only available authorities to whom they may whistle-blow. Thus, it is predicted:

H2: The gender of potential<sup>4</sup> whistle-blowers and of the authorities<sup>5</sup> to whom they would report will interact such that females will be as likely as males to whistle-blow when the authority is a female,<sup>6</sup> but less likely than males when the authority is male.

### Controlled Experiments

Thus far, the majority of studies addressing whistle-blowing have utilized correlational research methods. Obviously, correlational studies cannot show whether cause-effect relationships truly exist between the variables (Miceli, Dozier, & Near, 1991). Conclusions about causal relationships may be further muddled by the fact that employee attitudes may follow from, rather than precede, behavior (Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). This may be especially true in whistle-blowing situations where the potential behavior is affected by personal values and opposing organizational norms against "finking" (Jansen & Von Glinow, 1985). The ethical ambivalence resulting from these opposing influences may cause whistle-blowers to construct attitudes to confirm their choice of behavior. Indeed, the study of individual correlates such as personality variables may be of little utility, since behavior in work settings is viewed by some as more a function of organizational environment than of individual values (Waters, 1978). Due to the obvious



difficulties of manipulating subjects' knowledge of questionable activities, only recently have controlled studies of whistle-blowing become more commonplace (e.g. Miceli, Dozier, & Near, 1991; Trevino & Victor, 1992). To determine causal links, this is the necessary direction for this research to follow, and is the method used in this study.

### Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study are repeated below:

- H1: Increased self-perception of identifiability of potential whistle-blowers will suppress their whistle-blowing behavior.
- H2: Gender of potential whistle-blowers and of the authorities to whom they would report will interact such that females will be as likely as males to whistle-blow when the authority is a female, but less likely than males when the authority is male.

## Chapter IV

### Methods

The design of this study is 3 x 2 x 2 (perceived identifiability x gender of the whistle-blower x gender of the authority). The purpose of this experiment was two-fold, therefore two different analyses were performed. First, a three level one-way design was used to examine the influences of three levels of perceived identifiability on potential whistle-blowers. Secondly, a 2 X 2 factorial design (gender of whistle-blower x gender of authority) examined the interaction between the gender of the potential whistle-blower and the gender of the authority to whom they would report.

It is acknowledged that the use of two separate analyses precludes the inspection of interaction effects between perceived identifiability and gender of whistle-blower or authority. However, the prior research shows no reason to expect such interactions; therefore, this potential shortcoming of the design is of little concern. Given the above considerations, the present analysis was chosen primarily for economy of

subjects. The methods and materials used closely resemble those used by Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991). This method takes advantage of students' affiliation with the university. The university is an existing organization which can be used for the experiment, and the students are organizational members who have a vested interest in the success of the organization.

### Subjects

Subjects were 96 volunteers, 48 male and 48 female, from introductory Psychology classes at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. They received course credit for participation. To accommodate students' schedules, many experimental sessions were held, each was to have had eight male and eight female subjects. It was anticipated that groups of sixteen would be small enough to be practical when conducting the experiment, yet large enough to ensure group pressure towards conformity (Asch, 1965). The times and places of these sessions were announced in the subjects' classes and posted on a departmental bulletin board used for such purposes. See Appendix A for an example

of the sheet which subjects used to volunteer for the experiment.

### Research Confederates

Three separate confederates were necessary to administer the experiment. One male confederate played the role of the "graduate researcher" (GR) who administered the bogus cover experiment as part of a "class assignment." This confederate's age and appearance were typical of other male graduate students' age and appearance. One of two other confederates, depending on the experimental condition, played the role of the "Class Representative" (CR). Under the "female authority" conditions, a female confederate assumed the role of the CR. Under the "male authority" conditions, a male confederate assumed the role of the CR. Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991) used only a male CR.

### Independent Variables

Gender. Subjects reported their gender on the bogus job application task materials.

Gender of Authority. Subjects in the condition of

"male authority" had the post-task questionnaire administered by a male confederate in the role of CR. Subjects in the condition of "female authority" had the post-task questionnaire administered by the female confederate in the role of CR. The confederate in either condition was similar in age to the GR and appeared to be a peer.

Perceived Identifiability. In the "guaranteed anonymity" condition, subjects were asked to respond to the post-task questionnaire without revealing their identity, and responded to the cover experiments' tasks without supplying a sample of their handwriting. Subjects in the "moderate anonymity" condition were asked to respond to the post-task questionnaire without revealing their identity, but responded to the cover experiments' tasks in writing, thus supplying the GR an example of their handwriting. Subjects in the "identified" condition were told to write their name and social security number on the post-task questionnaire before completion of the questionnaire, "for possible follow up."

## Procedure

Subjects scheduled themselves to participate in what they were told was a "decision-making study." After the subjects entered the room, informed consent was obtained from each participant. See Appendix B for an example of the informed consent form. Each subject was then given the materials needed for a bogus "job applicant selection task." Included in the materials were three "applications for employment," and a rating form for the three "applicants." Appendix C includes the applications of the three hypothetical job applicants and Appendix D includes the rating forms used in the low, medium, and high identifiability conditions. The rating form included 9 point scales to rate each of the three applicants on intelligence, ability to deal with people, ability to deal with new situations, and overall ratings. The researcher then read the following passage aloud:

This experiment is being conducted as part of a class assignment for a graduate level class. Today I'll be asking you to assume the

role of a manager who must determine which job applicant is best suited for a particular job. Following completion of this task a representative from the class will be here to ask you to complete a questionnaire.

Administration of this questionnaire is in compliance with rules regarding student experiments conducted in the class.

The GR then explained how to perform the selection task and answered any questions the subjects had. After all questions had been addressed, the GR made the following request:

That's all of the "official" instructions. I have another request to make. I've been doing this study for a while, and, unfortunately, the results are not coming out quite the way I hypothesized. It's going to be difficult to get a good grade the way things are going. You're in condition 4 and I've hypothesized that you will say that Applicant 1 is less qualified than Applicants 2 and 3. So, could

you indicate on your scoring sheets that 1 is less qualified? This will mean that I'll get a better grade for this study. Thanks.

This request to "fudge" the data of the "study" functioned as the organizational wrongdoing about which the subjects were able to blow the whistle. Subjects were actual members of the organization (the University) in which the wrongdoing appeared to be occurring. Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991) found that when this request to "fudge" the data was posed hypothetically to students, 76.3% of them responded that the request was "very wrong." An additional 13% described the request as "wrong." Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991) also found that 82.1% of the subjects from the student population identified at least one party that was harmed by the wrongdoing, and 82.1% identified at least one consequence of the wrongdoing that was "somewhat important" to them.

A pilot study conducted by the author using 40 subjects similar to the those in this subject pool revealed similar results. When asked in an open ended



questionnaire how they would react to such a request in a hypothetical situation, 87% of the subjects reported some type of negative reaction ("it would be wrong", it would be offensive", "I would feel used"; etc.). In addition, 97.5% of the subjects reported at least one person who would be harmed by such a request. Of the 40 subjects, 90% (70% of the males and 97% of the females) stated that they would report the offensive request made by the researcher. See Appendix E for the complete questionnaire used in the pilot study.

After all the materials were completed by the subjects and collected by the "Graduate Researcher," he left the room, explaining that the Class Representative would be entering to administer the "post-experiment questionnaire." See Appendix F for the post-experiment questionnaires used in the low, medium, and high identifiability conditions. Either the male or female CR (depending on the experimental condition) entered and administered the questionnaire. Depending on the condition, group members were asked to provide their name and social security number on the questionnaire

"for possible follow up of responses" or were asked to respond to the questionnaire anonymously.

Following completion of the questionnaire, the GR returned to the room and both confederates revealed their roles and debriefed the subjects concerning the real purpose of the study. See Appendix G for the script used during debriefing as well as during the rest of the experiment. Subjects were asked to refrain from discussing the study with other students; they were also asked if they had heard anything about the study from other subjects who had previously participated. None of the subjects reported any prior knowledge of the study's true purpose.

#### Dependent Variables

Conformity. Though not the central focus of this study, it was possible to collect data to determine the extent to which subjects conformed to the request to falsify their responses, and to determine how conformity related to the probability of blowing the whistle. The scores (on a scale of 0-9) which the subjects assign to each of the applicants served as a

measure of conformity. Miceli, Dozier, and Near (1991) operationalized conformity as the combined score of the two less qualified applicants, minus the score of the clearly superior applicant yielding a score of 0-18. The same operationalization was used in this study using the subjects' overall rating of each subject. Higher scores represent a higher degree of conformity.

Whistle-blowers. Buried among several bogus items on the post-task questionnaire was an item asking if the subject was "asked to do anything you consider objectionable during the experiment?" Subjects who responded affirmatively were asked to describe what they considered objectionable. The question was purposely worded broadly so as not to arouse suspicion about the real purpose of the study and not to encourage reporting of the request to "data fudge" from subjects who did not truly find it objectionable. The subjects' responses were divided into those of either "whistle-blowers" (subjects who described the data fudging request on the questionnaire) or "non whistle-blowers" (those who did not report the data

fudging request). The frequency of whistle-blowing among each group served as the dependent variable.

## Chapter V

### Analysis

As the dependent variable of interest is dichotomous, the hypotheses were tested by using Chi square analyses. The data were entered into a one-way matrix to analyze the effects of the levels of perceived identifiability on whistle-blowing frequency. The data of the same subjects were then entered into a 2 X 2 matrix to analyze the effects of gender of the whistle-blower and the authority.

Secondly, a correlation was calculated between the degree of conformity and whistle-blowing behavior. Prior research has not found a correlation between the two variables. Consequently, this correlation analysis was not of direct interest to the study and was primarily an attempt to replicate earlier studies.

## Chapter VI

### Results

Because of unforeseen difficulties recruiting subjects, data from subjects in the low identifiability condition were not collected from the same sized groups as under the medium and high identifiability conditions. Data from the subjects in the male authority, low identifiability condition were collected from a group of six subjects and from a group of ten subjects. Data from the subjects in the female authority condition were collected from a group of 12 subjects and a group of four subjects. There remained an equal number of male and female subjects in each group however.

The collection of data from smaller groups may have influenced those subjects' responses because of less diffusion of responsibility among those subjects. Because of this potential confound, analyses were performed using the data from the entire subject pool and separate analyses were performed excluding the subjects from the low identifiability conditions. Both

sets of analyses are presented below.

When data from all the subjects are examined, 17 of the 96 subjects blew the whistle. This is a base rate of 17.7% which is similar to the results of other whistle-blowing research. Other research has shown that men tend to blow the whistle more often than women. A Chi square analysis suggests that this was not true for this sample ( $X^2=.058$ ,  $df=1$ ).

With respect to hypothesis one, that decreased identifiability would encourage whistle-blowing, the results from the entire subject pool were in the hypothesized direction, but were not significant ( $X^2=2.24$ ,  $df=2$ ). See Table 1 for the results.

With respect to hypothesis two, that there would be an interaction between the gender of the subjects and the gender of the authority, the results were again nonsignificant ( $X^2=2.06$ ,  $df=3$ ). See Table 2 for these results.

When the data from the subjects in the low identifiability condition were excluded, a test of hypothesis one yielded stronger results but still did

not reach significance ( $X^2=2.27$ ,  $df=1$ ). This is short of the 2.71 necessary for significance of a one-tailed test at the .05 level, but exceeds the 1.64 necessary for significance of a one-tailed test at the .10 level.

When the data from the subjects in the low identifiability condition were excluded, a test of hypothesis two also yielded stronger results, but also failed to reach significance ( $X^2=6.81$ ,  $df=3$ ). This is short of the 7.82 necessary for significance of a two-tailed test at the .05 level, but exceeds the 6.25 necessary for significance of a two-tailed test at the .01 level. Since it may be argued that this interaction is marginally significant, a test of the predicted interaction was performed while still excluding the data of the low identifiability subjects. It was predicted that under conditions of female authority that there would be no difference between the amount of whistle-blowing among male and female subjects. Indeed, the analysis proved there was no significant difference in the amount of whistle-blowing between male and female subjects ( $X^2=1.0$ ,  $df=1$ ). It was also



hypothesized that a greater number of male subjects would blow the whistle than female subjects under conditions of male authority. The test of this hypothesis was insignificant ( $X^2=1.0$ ,  $df=1$ ).

A correlation coefficient was calculated between the degree of the subjects' conformity to the immoral request and their whistle-blowing behavior. As was expected, the relationship was nonsignificant ( $r=-.09$ ,  $p=.36$ ). The overall mean of the conformity score was 6.16 with a standard deviation of 2.72. There appeared to be no differences in mean conformity between groups of subjects either. The mean score for male subjects was 6.14, standard deviation of 2.57. The mean score for female subjects was 6.18, standard deviation of 2.89.

As a means of exploring the data more fully, a series of Chi square analyses were performed. It is recognized that such "data snooping" behavior greatly increases the likelihood of Type I errors and that any statistically significant results should be viewed with great caution. Only one statistically significant result was uncovered. A greater number of subjects

blew the whistle to a male authority than to a female authority ( $X^2=4.45$ ,  $p<.05$ ,  $df=1$ ). While this result was not hypothesized, it is neither surprising nor counter-intuitive.

Table 1

Number and Percentage of Subjects who Blew the Whistle  
as a Function of Authority Gender and Identifiability

---

Gender of Authority	Low Identif.	Medium Identif.	High Identif.
Male	2 (12.50%)	6 (37.50%)	3 (18.75%)
Female	4 (25.00%)	2 (12.5%)	0 (0.00%)
Total	6 (18.75%)	8 (25.00%)	3 (9.38%)

---

N=96, 16 per cell

Table 2

Number and Percentage of Subjects Who Blew the Whistle  
as a Function of Subject Gender and Authority Gender

---

Gender of Subjects	Male Authority	Female Authority	Total
Male	6 (37.50%)	0 (0.00%)	6 (18.75%)
Female	3 (18.75%)	2 (12.50%)	5 (15.63%)
Total	9 (28.13%)	2 (6.25%)	11 (17.19%)

---

N=96, 24 per cell

## Chapter VII

### Discussion

Whistle-blowing is an infrequent behavior, even in the face of clear cut wrongdoing. Based on data from pilot testing, it was expected that the manipulations of this study would be strong enough to raise the likelihood of whistle-blowing throughout the subject population. This elevated potential to blow the whistle did not materialize, and in its absence the study suffered from too little power to detect any differences between treatment groups. Aside from the result that subjects blew the whistle more often to men than to women authorities, the strongest effect related to hypothesis one, that decreased identifiability would increase whistle-blowing. One could easily argue that with greater power the results would have reached significance. It certainly seems likely that decreased identifiability would encourage whistle-blowing behavior.

The results that suggest the presence of a female authority did not enhance the likelihood of female

subjects blowing the whistle, coupled with the unanticipated results that subjects were more likely to blow the whistle to male authorities, raises some interesting possibilities. While it was expected that the presence of a female authority would enhance whistle-blowing among women, it appears that the presence of a female authority suppressed whistle-blowing among male subjects. The frequency of whistle-blowing appears consistently low across gender of the authority for female subjects. For male subjects, however, the presence of a female authority resulted in a lack of whistle-blowing, but the presence of a male authority resulted in a 37.5% whistle-blowing frequency. It may have been the case that female subjects viewed either themselves or the authority equally (in)capable of effecting change if they blew the whistle regardless of the authority's gender. Furthermore, perhaps male subjects viewed female authorities as unable to effect change if a whistle was blown, whereas male authorities were seen as more capable of effecting change. This interpretation would

explain the higher incidence of whistle-blowing among men as found in other research. If one assumes that the majority of authority figures to whom one might blow the whistle are men, it isn't surprising that men blow the whistle more often. In fact, a female authority may actually suppress the incidence of whistle-blowing. In female dominated fields, however, these results suggest that the prevalence of male versus female authorities would have no appreciable effect on the likelihood of whistle-blowing.

## Chapter VIII

### Conclusion

This study suffered primarily from a lack of power. The customary solution to the problem of low power is to increase the sample size. However, the difficulty of collecting data using this methodology which requires equal sized groups, elaborate deception, research confederates, and constant gender ratios of the groups discourages larger samples. Rather, a different, more efficient methodology is needed. Because of the low base rate of whistle-blowing, this research requires a method that allows a large number of subjects to be run without incurring the difficulties of the present method. Perhaps the subjects could be led to believe that they are part of a group of subjects, each working on a physically separated computer. An illegal or immoral act of another "virtual" subject could serve as the stimulus, and the frequency of the subject's whistle-blowing to the researcher could be assessed.



In short, more research needs to be done. The above hypotheses need to be retested utilizing a more powerful technique. There are many other interesting aspects to this phenomenon which may also be investigated relating to the observers, the offending member of the organization, and the authority figure.

While this study was conducted using newly assembled groups, pre-existing work groups may respond differently after witnessing an offending event. In addition, cultural differences between organizations may also mediate the groups' responses. There may also be differences caused by the unique histories of individual groups. Group membership may play an important role in determining the whistle-blowing behavior of the members. Depending upon any or all of the above group variables the offending event may be perceived as more or less serious by different groups, which could make them more or less likely to blow the whistle. For example, an offense of sexual harassment may be especially salient to a group of primarily female members, a group who had encountered such an

offense previously, or a group otherwise sensitized to the issue because of their training or purpose.

Similarly, an offense of racial discrimination may be especially salient to a group of primarily minority members or otherwise sensitized to the issue.

Characteristics of the offending individual, the GR in this study, may also influence group members' whistle-blowing behavior. This study was conducted using primarily introductory psychology students. Students with a longer history at the university, or longer tenure if they were employees of an organization, may have responded differently. The age, or any other variable which would influence the perceived authority of the offending individual, may play a role in the group members' decision to blow the whistle or not. The familiarity of the offending individual may also play an important role. Certainly there would be differences between blowing the whistle on a stranger versus blowing the whistle on someone which you interact with daily or perhaps even consider a friend.

Lastly, characteristics of the authority figure may be an important variable. In this study, due to the older than average student population at this university, the authority figure was the same age as or younger than many of the subjects. Perceived authority may be an important mediating variable. Conversely, perceived familiarity with the authority figure may also play an important role. One may feel more confident reporting to a trusted supervisor than to an unfamiliar authority figure.

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## Appendix A

## Subject Sign-up Sheet

## P S Y C H O L O G Y      E X T R A      C R E D I T

PURPOSE: Decision making study.

TIME REQUIRED: Approximately 35 minutes.

EXTRA CREDIT: Two points.

INVESTIGATOR: John Johanson, Phone: 554-4817

DATE:

TIME:

ROOM:

## MALES

## FEMALES

name	phone	name	phone
1. _____		1. _____	
2. _____		2. _____	
3. _____		3. _____	
4. _____		4. _____	
5. _____		5. _____	
6. _____		6. _____	
7. _____		7. _____	
8. _____		8. _____	
9. _____		9. _____	
10. _____		10. _____	
11. _____		11. _____	

## Appendix B

## Informed Consent Form

ADULT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Page 1 of 2

IRB# 249-94

APPLICANT DECISION MAKING TASK

You are invited to participate in this study. The following information is provided to help you make a decision whether or not to participate. If you have any question, please ask.

You are eligible to participate because you are a college student.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate your decision making concerning the situation before you.

You will be asked to review the job applications of three applicants for the hypothetical position of restaurant manager. After you have reviewed the applications you will be asked to rate each of the applicants on different dimension. Following completion of this decision making task, you will be asked to complete a post-task questionnaire concerning your perceptions of the study.

There are no known risks/discomforts associated with this research.

You may find the task of employee selection interesting and may learn something about decision making. The knowledge gained from this experiment may be of value in the field of psychology. You will also be awarded one academic extra credit point for each 30 minutes of participation.

If you choose not to participate in this experiment, there are alternative methods by which you may earn academic extra credit. Your present psychology instructor can suggest alternative activities, most often research reviews, by which you may earn extra credit.

Any information obtained regarding this study which could identify you will be kept strictly confidential. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at scientific meetings, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

Your rights as a research subject have been explained to you. If you have any additional questions concerning your rights, you may contact the University of Nebraska Institutional Review Board (IRB), telephone (402)55906463.

You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigator(s) or the University of Nebraska. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

#### DOCUMENTATION OF INFORMED CONSENT

YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE CERTIFIES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE INFORMATION PRESENTED. YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM TO KEEP.

---

SIGNATURE OF SUBJECT

---

DATE

IN MY JUDGMENT THE SUBJECT IS VOLUNTARILY GIVING INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY.

---

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCHER

---

DATE

John Johanson                      Dr. Jim Thomas (advisor)  
Office: ASH 345 "O",  
Phone: 554-4807 (Office) 391-1318 (Home)

## Appendix C

## Applications

XYZ Corporation

## APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Referral Source:         Advertisement        Friend/relative  
        Walk-in         X Gov't employment Agency  
 Private Employment Agency Other                                 

-----  
 Name (last, first) Gonzales, Maria

Address: 302 Axtel Street

Phone number: (402 )345-2408 Soc. Sec. No.: 986-55-2234

What is the best time to contact you by phone? After 8 pm

Have you ever filed an application here before?         yes Xno  
 if yes, give date(s)                                 

Have you ever been employed here before?         yes Xno  
 if yes, give dates (from-to)                                 

Are you legally eligible for employment in this country?  
Xyes         no

Date available to begin work: presently

Type of employment desired: X full time         part time  
        temporary         seasonal

Will you relocate if job requires?         Xyes         no

Will you travel if job requires?         Xyes         no

Will you work overtime if the job requires? Xyes         no

Have you been convicted of a felony in the last 7  
 years?         yes Xno

(answering yes will not necessarily bar you from employment)

if yes, please explain   

\_\_\_\_\_

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

List you last two(2) employers, starting with the most recent.

-----  
Employer: Pizza Hutch

Address: 5525 Nelson Rd Phone number: (402) 392-2107

Job title/tasks: morning prep. supervisor

Dates of employment (from-to): Jan. 1990 - present

Reasons for leaving: I am still employed with them

May we contact them for reference? yes no X later  
-----

Employer: University Food Services

Address: 222 University Drive Phone number: (402) 455-4800

Job title/tasks: shift supervisor

Dates of employment (from-to): Sept. '84 to Jan. '90

Reasons for leaving: I graduated school and left (moved)

May we contact them for reference? X yes no later  
-----

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

List last two (2) schools you attended. Begin with most recent.

School: University of Nebraska at Omaha

Address: Omaha, NE

Years completed: 2 Degree received: MBA

GPA or rank: 3.51 Major/minor: Business

School: University of Nebraska at Omaha

Address: Omaha, NE

Years completed: 4 Degree received: B.S.

GPA or rank: 3.5 Major/minor: Business

## VOLUNTARY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INFORMATION

Completion of the information below is strictly voluntary and is subject to strict confidentiality.

Sex of the applicant.....      male X female

Check one of the following racial/ethnic groups:

X Hispanic      Black      White

     American Indian/Alaskan Native

     Asian/Pacific Islander

If you so wish to be identified, check if any of the following are applicable.      Vietnam era veteran

     Disabled veteran

     Individual with a disability

XYZ Corporation  
APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Referral Source: ☒ Advertisement ☐ Friend/relative  
☐ Walk-in ☐ Gov't Employment Agency  
☐ Private Employment Agency Other \_\_\_\_\_  
-----

Name (last, first): Campbell, Paul

Address: 8435 Pierson Drive

Telephone number: (402) 342-2125 Soc. Sec. No.: 543-81-3443

What is the best time to contact you by phone? before 9 am

Have you ever filed an application here before? ☒ yes ☐ no  
if yes, give date(s) 8-15-92

Have you ever been employed here before? ..... ☐ yes ☒ no  
if yes, give dates (from-to) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you legally eligible for employment in this country?  
☒ yes ☐ no

Date available to begin work: now

Type of employment desired: ☒ full time ☐ part time  
☐ temporary ☐ seasonal

Will you relocate if job requires? ..... ☐ yes ☒ no

Will you travel if job requires? ..... ☒ yes ☐ no

Will you work overtime if job requires? ☒ yes ☐ no

Have you been convicted of a felony in the last 7  
years? ☐ yes ☒ no

(answering yes will not necessarily bar you from employment)

if yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

List you last two (2) employers, starting with the most recent.

-----  
Employer: Soloman's Sandwich Shop

Address: 5432 Nelson Road Phone number:

Job title/tasks: Night Shift Supervisor

Dates of employment (from-to): June 1990 - present

Reasons for leaving: I want better pay and better hours

May we contact them for reference? yes ☒ no later  
-----

Employer: The Nation's Finest Yogurt

Address: 7230 Randall St. Phone number: (402) 342-2211

Job title/tasks: Night Manager

Dates of employment (from-to): May 1987 to June 1990

Reasons for leaving: I didn't like the work atmosphere

May we contact them for reference? ☒ yes no later  
-----



## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

List last two (2) schools you attended. Begin with most recent.

School: West High School

Address: 9009 W. Ryan Drive, Omaha, NE

Years completed: 4 Degree received: H.S.

GPA or rank: 2.80 Major/minor: ----

School: West Middle School

Address: 8610 W. Foster, Omaha, NE

Years completed: 2 Degree received: ---

GPA or rank: --- Major/minor: ---

## VOLUNTARY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INFORMATION

Completion of the information below is strictly voluntary and is subject to strict confidentiality.

Sex of the applicant..... X male    female

Check one of the following racial/ethnic groups:

   Hispanic    Black   X White  
   American Indian/Alaskan Native  
   Asian/Pacific Islander

If you so wish to be identified, check if any of the following are applicable.

   Vietnam era veteran    Disabled veteran  
   Individual with a disability

XYZ Corporation  
APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

Referral Source: ☒ Advertisement ☐ Friend/relative  
☐ Walk-in ☐ Gov't Employment Agency  
☐ Private Employment Agency Other \_\_\_\_\_  
 -----

Name (last, first) Nelson, Donald

Address: 7520 Gordan Road, Omaha, NE

Phone number: (402)391-0508 Soc.Sec.No.: 748-81-8283

What is the best time to contact you by phone? after 4 pm

Have you ever filed an application here before? ☐ yes ☒ no  
 if yes, give date(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Have you ever been employed here before?..... ☐ yes ☒ no  
 if yes, give dates (from-to) \_\_\_\_\_

Are you legally eligible for employment in this country?

☒ yes ☐ no

Date available to begin work: presently

Type of employment desired: ☒ full time ☐ part time  
☐ temporary ☐ seasonal

Will you relocate if job requires?..... ☒ yes ☐ no

Will you travel if job requires?..... ☒ yes ☐ no

Will you work overtime if the job requires? ☒ Yes ☐ no

Have you been convicted of a felony in the last 7

years? ☐ yes ☒ no

(answering yes will not necessarily bar you from employment)

if yes, please explain \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

List you last two(2) employers, starting with the most recent.

-----  
Employer: D & D Pizza Parlor

Address: 8002 Gordan Rd. Omaha Phone number: (402) 345-2408

Job title/tasks: Day shift operations manager

Dates of employment (from-to): 9-1990 to present

Reasons for leaving: I desire a more challenging job

May we contact them for reference? yes ☒ no later  
-----

Employer: Northern State College Food Services

Address: NSC, Aberdeen SD Phone number: (605) 831-1318

Job title/tasks: food preparer/part time supervisor

Dates of employment (from-to): 9-88 to 5-89 & 9-89 to 5-90

Reasons for leaving: I graduated from the college and moved

May we contact them for reference? X yes no later  
-----

## EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

List last two (2) schools you attended. Begin with most recent.

School: University of Nebraska at Omaha

Address: Omaha, NE

Years completed: 2 Degree received: MBA

GPA or rank: 3.02 Major/minor: Business

School: Northern State College

Address: Aberdeen, SD

Years completed: 4 Degree received B.S.

GPA or rank: 3.43 Major/minor: Business

## VOLUNTARY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION INFORMATION

Completion of the information below is strictly voluntary and is subject to strict confidentiality.

Sex of the applicant..... X male    female

Check one of the following racial/ethnic groups:

   Hispanic    Black   X White

   American Indian/Alaskan Native

   Asian/Pacific Islander.

If you so wish to be identified, check if any of the following are applicable.

   Vietnam era veteran    Disabled veteran

   Individual with a disability

## Appendix D

## Rating Sheets

Subject number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Condition4 (L) \_\_\_\_\_

This is the rating sheet for the three applications in front of you. When rating the applicants on each of the dimensions indicated, please use the rating scale provided below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very		Moderately		Average		Moderately		Very
Low		Low				High		High

## APPLICANT NUMBER ONE

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICANT NUMBER TWO

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICANT NUMBER THREE

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Subject Name \_\_\_\_\_

Subject number \_\_\_\_\_

Condition 4 (M)

This is the rating sheet for the three applications in from of you. When rating the applicants on each of the dimensions indicated, please use the rating scale provided below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very		Moderately		Average		Moderately		Very
Low		Low				High		High

APPLICANT NUMBER ONE

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT NUMBER TWO

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT NUMBER THREE

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Subject number \_\_\_\_\_  
 Condition 4 (H)

This is the rating sheet for the three applications in from of you. When rating the applicants on each of the dimensions indicated, please use the rating scale provided below:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Very		Moderately		Average		Moderately		Very
Low		Low				High		High

APPLICANT NUMBER ONE

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT NUMBER TWO

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

APPLICANT NUMBER THREE

Intelligence (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with employees and/or customer (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Ability to deal with new or unexpected situations (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

Overall rating of applicant (1to9): \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Pilot Study Questionnaire

#### Instructions:

This questionnaire asks some hypothetical questions about a situation which could be encountered. Your individual responses are CONFIDENTIAL and will be seen only by the researcher, so please be completely honest. You may discontinue your participation at any time and still receive appropriate credit.

Please report your gender (M or F) \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Part I.

Imagine that you volunteered to be a research participant in a decision making experiment. The researcher (a graduate student) explained that he was conducting the experiment because it was a class assignment. He asked you to evaluate three applications for employment and that you should select the applicant that you believe to be the most qualified for the position. After the researcher read the instructions for the task he made the following request:

Well, that's all of the "official" instructions. I have another request to make. I've been working on this study and, unfortunately, the results are not coming out the way I hypothesized. It's going to be difficult to get a good grade the way things are going. You're in Condition 4 and I've hypothesized that you will say that Applicant 1 is less qualified than Applicants 2 and 3. So, could you indicate on your computer sheets that 1 is less qualified? This will mean that I get a better grade for this study.

The following questions ask how you would perceive the situation.

1. Explain how you would feel about the request made by the researcher.
-



2. How would you feel about the researcher?

---

---

---

3. Who (if anyone) is being hurt by the researcher's request? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

## Part II.

Imagine again that the hypothetical situation described on page 1 occurred, and that you and the others were asked to report false evaluations of the applicants you were rating. After all the subjects completed the task, the researcher collected his materials and left the room. At that time a student representative from the researcher's class entered the room with a questionnaire designed to reveal if the researcher used the appropriate procedures for an experiment. The questionnaire provided an opportunity to report anything you found objectionable during the experiment to the researchers' instructor.

The following questions ask how you might react to this situation.

1. Would you report the request that the researcher made? Why or why not? \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

2. What do you think would happen to the researcher (if anything) if you reported him?

---

---

---

3. What do you think would happen to you (if anything) if you reported the researcher?

---

---

---

## Appendix F

## Post-experiment Questionnaires

Subject Number \_\_\_\_\_

## POST-EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is in accordance with departmental regulations concerning experiments conducted as part of class assignments.

1. Were you presented with an informed consent form? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

2. Was the consent form read aloud to you and were you given ample opportunity to ask the researcher any questions you may have had? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel you fully understand your rights as a subject based upon the informed consent form? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

4. Were you able to complete the task in the time allotted? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you think you learned anything of value because of your participation in this study? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

6. Were you asked to do anything that you found offensive during your participation? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

7. Based upon your experience in this experiment,  
will you be likely to participate in experiments  
in the future? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_  
If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

---

## POST-EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is in accordance with departmental regulations concerning experiments conducted as part of class assignments.

1. Were you presented with an informed consent form? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

2. Was the consent form read aloud to you and were you given ample opportunity to ask the researcher any questions you may have had? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel you fully understand your rights as a subject based upon the informed consent form? . Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. Were you able to complete the task in the time allotted? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you think you learned anything of value because of your participation in this study? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

6. Were you asked to do anything that you found offensive during your participation? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Based upon your experience in this experiment,  
will you be likely to participate in experiments  
in the future? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Subject Name \_\_\_\_\_ Subject Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Soc. Sec. Number \_\_\_\_\_

POST-EXPERIMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is in accordance with departmental regulations concerning experiments conducted as part of class assignments.

1. Were you presented with an informed consent form? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

2. Was the consent form read aloud to you and were you given ample opportunity to ask the researcher any questions you may have had? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel you fully understand your rights as a subject based upon the informed consent form? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

4. Were you able to complete the task in the time allotted? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you think you learned anything of value because of your participation in this study? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

6. Were you asked to do anything that you found offensive during your participation? Y\_\_\_ N\_\_\_

If yes, explain \_\_\_\_\_

7. Based upon your experience in this experiment,  
will you be likely to participate in experiments  
in the future?

Y\_\_\_\_ N\_\_\_\_

If not, explain \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix G

### Script for "Decision Making Experiment"

#### Instructions

"This study is being conducted as part of a class assignment in the Department of Psychology at the University of Nebraska at Omaha. The researcher (me) is a graduate student at the University of Nebraska at Omaha and is completing the class for graduate credits."

"In accordance with departmental regulations concerning experiments conducted as part of class assignments, a class representative will enter the room following your completion of this study and administer a short "post-experimental questionnaire."

"For this experiment, you will be asked to pretend that you are a restaurant owner. You are going to hire a new manager for your restaurant. In front of you are the applications of the three finalists for the position. This is all the information you will be given concerning each of the applicants. Your task is to review each of the three applications and rate each of the applicants."

"Please do not mark any of the applications. You have been given a piece of scratch paper on which you may make any notes you may wish. Write only on the scratch paper and on the rating sheet provided."

"Please fill out the rating sheet completely. Answer all the questions and make sure you mark down the subject number that was provided to you in the appropriate blank."

If moderate condition, "Also make sure you provide your name in the appropriate space on the rating sheet."

"Remember that your answers are completely confidential. No one will have access to your responses except for me."

"Following completion of your ratings, please hand in all of the materials and return to your seat. When all of you have completed the task, a class representative will enter the room and administer the post-experimental questionnaire."

"Do you have any questions?"

"That's all of the "official" instructions. I have another request to make. I've been doing this study for a while and, unfortunately, the results are not coming out quite the way I hypothesized. It's going to be difficult to get a good grade the way things are going. You're in condition 4 and I've hypothesized that you will say that Applicant 1 is less qualified than Applicants 2 and 3. So, could you indicate on your scoring sheets that 1 is less qualified? This will mean that I get a better grade for this study. Thanks."

#### Research Confederate's Script

"As was already explained to you, the study you have just participated in is part of a class assignment. This short post-experiment questionnaire" is in accordance with departmental regulations concerning experiments conducted as part of class assignments."

"Make sure that you write your subject number in the blank provided."

If low anonymity condition, "Also make sure that you write your name and social security number in the blanks provided. Your names are necessary for possible follow up."

"Following completion of this questionnaire, please return to your seat. When everyone has completed the questionnaire. You will be debriefed and any questions you have will be answered."

"Any questions?"

#### Debriefing

"Thank you for your participation. I would like to take this chance to inform you of the real purpose of this research."

"This study was not part of a class assignment, rather it is part of my thesis research concerning whistle-blowing. This was a decision making experiment, however the decision of interest was not your decision concerning the three job applicants. The decision of interest was whether or not you chose to use the post-experiment questionnaire to report my request of you to falsify data."

"Several studies have shown that very few people actually blow the whistle on others when they witness them doing something illegal or immoral. The purpose of this

study was to determine if it is possible to increase the percentages of people who will blow the whistle when they see someone do something wrong."

"One variable of interest was the level of anonymity. You were in the low/medium/high anonymity group. Another variable of interest was the gender of the class representative. Some research may indicate that the gender of the authority to whom you would report may influence your decision to blow the whistle."

"Do you have any questions or concerns?"

"If any of you have any more concerns that you do not wish to convey in front of your peers, you may talk to me after this group is dismissed. You may call me at the numbers listed on your informed consent form. You may call my advisor at the number listed on the informed consent form or you may contact the IRB board."

"Because of the nature of this research, please do not discuss the true purpose of this experiment with anyone who may be a potential subject in this study at a later time."

"If you feel you have any insights concerning your decision to blow the whistle or not to blow the whistle, please take a minute after you are dismissed to discuss them with me."

"Any other questions?"

"Thank you."