AN APPRAISAL ON RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT & HR PROCESSES AFFECTING THE RETENTION OF EMPLOYEES

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Abstract: *Current article reviews psychological contract literature with the purpose of increasing awareness of the exclusive employment agreements and work milieu, the purpose of this conceptual study is to give practical information, future research directions, and to cover extant gaps in understanding concerning the employee-employer verbal contract. In the current state of affairs, the industry is witnessing dynamic changes in HR's approach to managing a company's internal environment, particularly in the employee-employer relationship. The retention of employees has become a big challenge for management. The psychological contract has been steadily increasing in popularity among HR departments, since it can be used to assess aspects influencing individual employee and employer behaviour in the workplace. Implicitly we aim to unravel the intricate link between psychological contracts and employee retention.The study focuses on future directions for research in psychological contract and in creating this area of inquiry for research and practise. The review critically evaluated the forerunners of the psychological contract literature, and then looked into some of the key theoretical contributions and understanding in this field. Later on, theoretical and conceptual questions that have remained unanswered in the literature are then addressed. The psychological contract measurement and its theoretical consequences, according to this research, need to be revisited. As a conclusion, this study recommends areas for future research into the psychological contract, but not before dismantling the psychological bond as a discursive invention that promotes managerialist goals at the expense of other social actors in the work relationship model. The implications of earlier studies have been the subject of restricted study in this topic.*

Keywords: *Psychological contract, Organizational philosophy, Work organization process, Employee retention.*

INTRODUCTION

Scholarly attention to the elusive concept of 'psychological bond' between employers and their employees has rapidly evolved for last couple of decades. Anecdotally, established literature led the way to greater insights into the variability commonly reported in various national and international organisations spanning across different geographical locations. Plethora of studies carried out on this imperative issue put forth complex and managing dynamic relationship between employee and employer, the reciprocal expectations and obligations both accrued over a time span. Interestingly, few researches stated the importance of forming the psychological contract as an important role informing employee retention

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and success. Human resource management is positioned as one of the main functions within the organization where working conditions, worker welfare and job satisfaction are valued, which helps to maintain high levels of organizational commitment (Tiwari & Singh, 2014; Kurtessis et al., 2017).

In the current literature on organisational settings, there has been an increasing interest in analysing the quality of exchange interactions in recent years. It has been found to have implications on organizational success as well as employee psychological well-being (D'Art & Turner, 2006). Increasingly, scholars and practioners alike have felt the need to have a framework which takes a fuller account of the context of employment relationship (Johns, 2001) and explores the emerging employment dynamics. Questioning the one-size-fits all approach to managing employees, Rousseau (2001) and Rousseau & Schalks (2001) propose pertinence of considering individual as the focal point in work agreements, going as far as to state that the more idiosyncratic or individualized the agreement becomes, more positive the outcomes will be. In reality, in the current situation, traditional employment contracts have been rendered non-compliant due to corporate restructuring and the loss of organised labour. Future promises are the fundamental essence of contracts, but they are becoming increasingly harder to make (and keep). Many decisions people make, such as whether to take a job or prepare for retirement, buy a product or commission a service, are based on their interpretation of promises made by employers, product manufacturers, and service firms. Despite this, many people believe that business challenges and competition have rendered loyalty, trust, and dedication obsolete. The formation of organizational commitment is related to the inputs that the worker receives from the organization and is intimately linked to the results of the relationship between both parties, as well as to the emotional bond between the goals and values of the organization and the employee (Buchanan, 1974). This exchange relationship between worker and company can affect work performance, absenteeism and job rotation (Betanzos and Paz, 2007). The literature in many works has also related the organizational commitment to the fulfillment of the psychological contract, that is, the degree of compliance with the promises made by the organization (Rousseau & Parks, 1993), framing it as an explanatory and determining variable of the organizational commitment (Guest, 1998; Zaragoza & Solanes Puchol, 2013). Rousseau (1995/6), who defined 'psychological bond' as 'individual's views created by the organisation about parameters of an exchange arrangement between employee and the organisation,' was based on this expanding body of material and disregarded a widespread consensus. 'Implied contract' and the 'normative contract' signifies as interpretations the third party makes while the shared psychological contract that emerges through common shared beliefs in a given group refers to normative contract. The psychological contract essentially refers to the mutual expectations people have of one another in a relationship, and how these expectations change and impact our behaviour over time (Schein, 1965). The phrase is now mostly used to define an employee's expectations of the organisation, as well as the organization's expectations of the employee.

PAST CONCEPTUALIZATIONS AND EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

One of the first writers to use the term psychological contract was Argyris (1960) who defined

it as the implicit understanding between a group of employees and their foreman. The psychological contract was refined by Schein (1965) in his seminal work on organisational psychology in the form it is used today by many human resource practitioners. According to Argyris understanding between the organisation towards the individual and the individual insight towards the organization holds the key element in the mutual bond or agreement. However, Schein's concept emphasises on the high-level collective interaction that exists between an individual employee and the company's management, in other words, the organisation. Although such body of empirical research has made significant contributions, the primary focus has been at the individual level, and neglects to consider the context, "situational or environmental constraints which in turn affect the occurrence and meaning of organizational behavior" (Johns, 2017, p. 577), under which responses to psychological contract are modified or moulded. Therefore, in the current appraisal we aim to understand past concepts, approaches to measure psychological contract, importance of breach and unravel the organisational process as a whole.

A psychological contract, according to Schein (1980), reflects the expectations that the employee and the organisation have regarding the specific resources that each owes the other. Schein explained and maintained that psychological contracts are important determinants of employees' attitudes and behaviours in the workplace. It has been found to be a determinant of organizational outcomes such as job satisfaction, commitment, organizational loyalty, career loyalty, intention to quit, work effort, quality of work, organizational citizenship behaviour, productivity, absenteeism, innovative work behaviour and turnover (Lester &Kickul, 2001; Guzzo, Noonan & Elron,1994; King, 2000; Sims,1990; Flood et al, 2001;Rammamorthy et al., 2005). Earlier, Rousseau (1989) defined the psychological contract in terms of employees' perceptions of the mutual obligations existing between themselves and the organization. While Rousseau gave emphasis on individual's (employees) perception regarding mutual obligations and commitments, other researchers (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler; Guest; Herriot et al., 1997) take a dyadic view of the contract and emphasize the need to consider the changing expectations and obligations of both the organization and the employee in framing psychological contract (Herriot et al., 1997).

Shore and Tetrick (1994) argued that psychological contracts afford employees a sense of control and security in their relationship with employers, while providing employers a way to manage and direct employee behavior without heavy handed surveillance. Rousseau (1995, 1990; Rousseau & McLean Parks, 1993) maintained that psychological contracts vary in strength and generality. Transactional responsibilities refer to the trade of economic resources over a short period of time, whereas rational conceptual duties refer to the exchange of socio emotional resources over a longer period of time. Accordingly, transactional and relational obligations have been found to be empirically distinct (Robinson, Kraatz, & Rousseau, 1994), although alternative multidimensional characterizations of obligations have been suggested (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2000; Kickul & Lester, 2001).

Regardless of how different kinds of contracts are characterized, the distinction between short-term, limited involvements versus long-term, open-ended involvements remains a key

feature of PCT (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998). Rousseau (1995) suggested that employees derive the terms of their psychological contract in three main ways. According to Rousseau (1995) *first* individuals may receive persuasive communications from others. Before recruiting, recruiter or interviewer provide implicit or explicit promises to the individual co-workers and supervisors discuss their feelings about the duties that exist between employees and the company after they are hired. *Second*, employees' observations of their co-workers' and supervisors' behaviour and how they are treated by the business serve as social cues that remind them of their contractual commitments. Formal remuneration and benefits, performance assessments, and organisational literature, such as handbooks and mission statements, all play a role in the construction of the psychological contract for employees, which are managed by a third-party institution. Shore and Tetrick (1994) suggested that the nature of an employee's psychological contract would be influenced by the organization's inclination to cultivate long-term or short-term relationships with its employees. According to Tsui, Pearce, Porter, and Tripoli (1997), companies use a variety of ways to determine the worth of the resources they are prepared to spend in their personnel. Many organisations claim that those with high investment strategies are more prone to use psychological contracts involving the exchange of extremely valuable resources than those with low investment strategies. Shore and Tetrick also mentioned that the psychological contract will be shaped by the employees' professional goals. Employees who have a high attainable objective with the company are more likely to seek out information on comprehensive mutual duties. Employees with modest achievable objectives, on the other hand, will exhibit little enthusiasm in working for the company, will seek out information about it, and will establish contracts with minimal mutual duties.

APPROACHES TO MEASURE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT

The psychological contract idea is based on qualitative and quantitative measurements. Different employer requirements that make up psychological contract have been acknowledged in both circumstances. Initially Argyris (1960) and Levinson (1962) utilized emic approach to understand how contracts link to organizational culture as well as to the psychodynamic processes of individuals (Rousseau & Tijoriwala, 1998) clinical and ethnographic studies are a part of Emic frameworks which are generated by respondents themselves and reflect the individual's mental model in an unfiltered fashion. These researchers utilized employee interview to create descriptions of psychological PCT contract within firms (Argyris, 1962; Levinson, 1962). After interviewing 874 employees at a large utility service, Levinson et al. (1962) identified expectations that relate to psychological issues, job performance, use of specific skills, social relations in the workplace, job security and economic rewards. More than three decades later, Herriot et al. (1997) using critical incidents technique asked employees and organizational agents to recollect incidences at workplace where organizations went far beyond or fell short of what might be reasonable to expect of it in their treatment- as the other party. Employees were seen to have major employer duties in terms of training, fairness, consultation, discretion, recognition environment, justice, remuneration, benefits, and security.

Questionnaire is one of the quantitative approaches utilised in psychological contract. Rousseau (1990), after interviewing 13 human resource managers, determined seven types of Organizational obligations emerging during employment advancement, high pay, performance-based pay, training, job security, development and support. This has been the most utilized set of employer obligations (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002; Coyle-Shapiro & Neuman, 2004; Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003; Robinson & Morrison, 1995; Shore & Barksdale, 1998). By expanding Rousseau's original instrument, Robinson and Morrison (1995, AOM) further developed a general measure of psychological contract which comprised of 18 items focused on six areas of psychological contract, which was used by Lester et al. (2002).A researchlooked at the content of 102 scholarly and trade journal articles about psychological contracts published between 1995 and 1999 and came up with a list of 13 organisational requirements. Roehling et al. (2000). Likewise, Kickul (2001) came up with 38 organizational obligations comprising the contract, while Kelley-Patterson and George (2002) with Bellou (2007) based on Kelley et al. (2002) and Roehling et al. (2000) developed a new list of items to measure the organizational obligations of Greek employees working in private and public sector.

Although research of the said construct has been on for more than two decades, it appears that cultural differences have not been considered large enough to override the explanatory and predictive nature of behavioral theories developed in the west (Chhokar et al., 2001). Except for Herriot et al., (1997) and Conway and Briner (2002), all previous studies have examined the content and evaluation of PC by using list of organizational obligations developed in western culture and not paid attention to cultural interpretation of PC (Blancero et al., 2007). In a study on employee-employer obligations in the United States, researchers were unable to cross-validate the results when comparing groups. Robinsons and Morrison (1995). Consequently, due to lack of information about psychological contract in cultures contrary to U.S, research on PC does not provide a complete picture of the challenges of managing the employee-employer relations in the other countries (Westwood et al., 2001). Employee expectations and perceptions about the roles and obligations of employees and organizations as well as the interpretation of psychological contracts are influenced by the social context (Kickul, Lester &Belgio, 2004). The primary goal of this study is to identify perspectives on employment relationships in the Indian context, based on the literature need for identifying the cultural specificity of psychological contract contents and the belief that a better understanding of employee psychological contracts can enhance our understanding of employment relationships and facilitate effective management.

*Fig: 1 Creating an Individual's Psychological Contract*
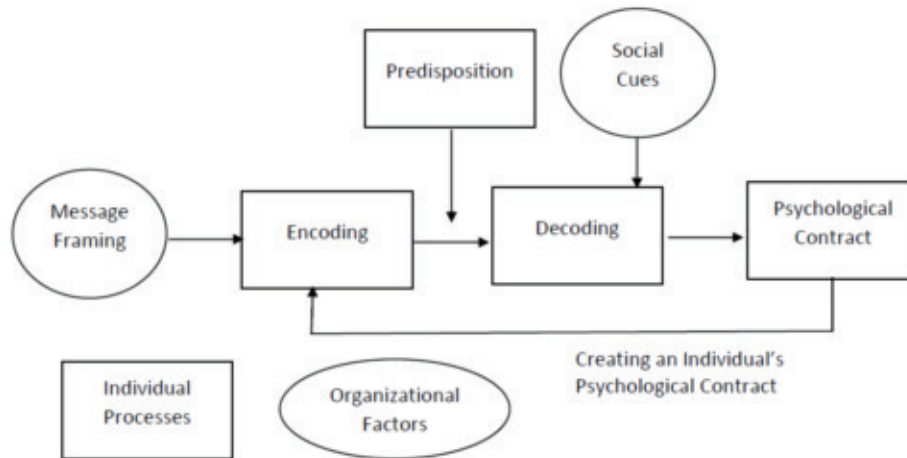
Source: Rousseau (1995, p. 33)

In the model above (Figure 1), Rousseau (1995) defined external factors as messages and signals that an organization sends to convey future commitments through communications with managers, recruiters, and coworkers. Newcomers pick up on social cues from their coworkers and work groups. Individuals understand and evaluate organisational events, communications, and social cues as promises through the process of encoding. Decoding refers to an individual's assessment of whether or not the organization's promises to them are being kept on purpose. Individual predispositions reveal a person's personality traits and influence how they encode and interpret information while constructing and assessing psychological contracts. The most significant predispositions in psychological contract construction include cognitive biases, information-processing techniques, and professional goals. (Rousseau, 1995).

Similar to Rousseau's (1995) model, Shore and Tetrick (1994) drew upon cognitive psychology and schemas and proposed that similar to mental schemas, psychological contracts help employees to go through ambiguous times and predict the complex employment relationship. However, Shore and Tetrick (1994) included the organizations' goals and highlighted that both potential employees and organizational agents start the employment relationship with a set of expectations. According to psychological contract, expectations are not the only factors in shaping the individuals'. The dynamic nature of the interactions between parties, different goal orientations, and environmental conditions are some of the other factors that make the exchange relationship unique for each individual (Shore &Tetrick, 1994). In their model (see Figure 2), Shore and Tetrick (1994) described organizational agents (coworkers, supervisors, and recruiters) as important contract makers who have direct influence on the formation of psychological contracts. This notion is evident as: "coworkers may share their perceptions of the fairness of the supervisor and the

trustworthiness of the organization, so that the new hire is able to revise their contract or at least estimate the likelihood of violation" (p. 101).

Figure 2: Systematic representation of the development of the psychological contract
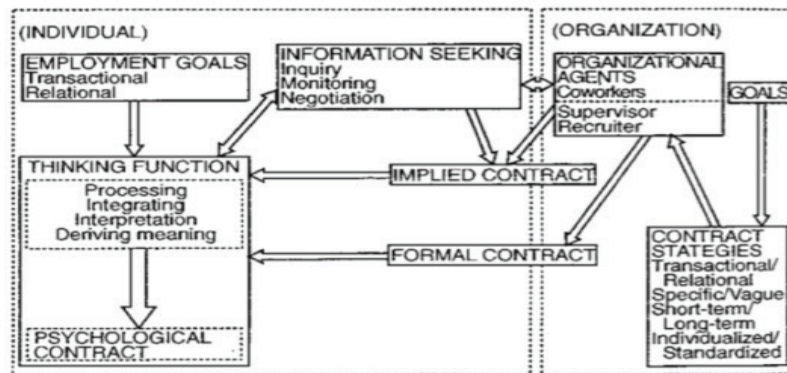
Source: Shore and Tetrick (1994, p. 96)

Perceptions of individuals with whom newcomers work and engage intimately may have a vital link with the establishment of their psychological contract, as shown in both Rousseau's (1995) and Shore and Tetrick's (1994) models.A study conceptualized newcomers' psychological contract formation as a sense making process. According to De Vos, Buyens, and Schalk (2003) sense making refers to cognitive processes that individuals employ to cope with surprise and ambiguity, such as the organizational entry and socialization periods (Louis, 1980; De Vos et al., 2003). Moreover, sensemaking guides individuals to measure how close their expectations are to the reality (Weick, 1995) and may thus reduce the likelihood of perceived psychological contract breach.

The sensemaking process starts prior to organizational entry when future employees start forming their expectations (De Vos, De Stobbeleir, & Meganck, 2009). During organizational entry and socialization, newcomers experience a series of events that may trigger them to evaluate their existing expectations and form new expectations, perceptions and beliefs (De Vos & Freese, 2011). In fact, De Vos et al. (2003) acknowledged that their conceptualization of psychological contract formation as a sense making process is comparable to Rousseau's (1995) conceptualization as individuals' cognitive schemas.

All were distinct in their approaches, De Vos and colleagues' (De Vos et al., 2003; De Vos, Buyens, & Schalk, 2005; De Vos et al., 2009; De Vos & Freese, 2011) conceptualization of psychological contract formation as a sense making process and Rousseau's (1995) conceptualization of psychological contract formation as a cognitive schema complement each other in many ways. In a series of studies, De Vos and colleagues (De Vos et al., 2003, 2005; De Vos et al., 2009; De Vos & Freese, 2011) suggested that information seeking is a sense making tool and that sense making is a process of evaluating and creating cognitive schemas. In a more recent study, De Vos and Freese (2011) investigated how the

psychological contract related information-seeking changes over the first year of employment. According to one study, the intensity of psychological contract-related information-seeking decreases during the first few weeks of work. Likewise, Rousseau (1995) also highlighted that people seek information when they think they need to, but they become resistant to change once this information is incorporated into their cognitive schemas.

Nelson and Quick (1991) discussed that secure social relationships are the basis for the successful adaptation of newcomers into organizations and the formation of positive psychological contracts. They founded their line of reasoning upon the attachment theory of Bowlby (1982), who suggested that attachment is an instinctual human need and mainly needed in times of distress, anxiety, and anger, such as organizational entry and socialization (Nelson & Quick, 1991). Bowlby (1982), who had studied attachment in infants, argued that children who cannot develop secure attachment ties with their parents at developmental years are at risk. However, after Bowlby's (1982) study, other scholars have shown that the need for attachment does not solely exist in infants but also exists in adults (Hazan & Shaver, 1987; Kobak, 1985; Main & Goldwyn, 1985). Drawing upon these findings, Nelson and Quick (1991) applied Bowlby's infant–parent attachment theory to newcomers. Organizational socialisation, according to researchers, is a difficult and uncertain stage that drives newcomers' desire for connection in order to feel comfortable and psychologically driven. By analogy, they considered newcomers as an "organizational child" and insiders as "parental figures" with whom newcomers form secure attachments, which provide the solid foundation upon which psychological contracts are then formed (Nelson & Quick, 1991, p. 59).

CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS

Psychological contracts can be referred as the commitments an employee feels they have made to their company and what the employee believes the organisation has pledged in return. In other words, rather than the mechanism of how the psychological contract works, it is about what is really in the transaction between the employee and their organization. The contents of psychological contracts are significant because particular types of deals with different kinds of contents are more or less likely to result in more or less beneficial employee and organisational outcomes, such as job satisfaction and performance. The majority of these studies focus on describing the sorts of deals that lead to good results, as well as the summary of such deals. Making a sufficient effort, contributing skills and information, caring about quality, and being adaptable are all examples of employee contributions. Promotion, training, income, respect, and feedback are all things that the company delivers in exchange. The contents have also been defined as an employee's 'expectations of what the employee feels she or he owes and is owed in turn by the organization' (Rousseau 1990: 393), and as what 'employees expect to give or contribute and what it is that employees expect to receive in return—their entitlements' (Parks, Kidder, and Gallagher 1998: 725). It's vital to highlight that the psychological contract's contents are not what the employees really offer and get from their employers, but rather the implicit and explicit promises that surround

this trade. Reciprocity, or the concept that the employee offers some kind of contribution 'in exchange' for something from the company, is a key part of the definition. This means that the elements in the employee's psychological contract—both what they offer and what they feel they have been promised in return—must be linked in a reciprocal manner.

Despite the fact that the contents of the psychological contract are probably the second most investigated issue after psychological contract breach, there have been very few studies in this field. The number of elements that make up the content is potentially enormous, as content definitions appear to embrace everything and everything that the employee pledges to contribute to and anything that the organisation offers in return. As a result, researchers have focused their content analyses on a small number of employee-perceived promises that are thought to be the most essential. Rousseau (1990) generated content items by asking managers about promises and commitments they sought from graduate recruits during selection, and promises and commitments made to recruits. In a survey of expatriate managers, Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron (1994), based on the human resource practises of the organisation that participated in their study, they came up with 43 elements that generally span the three categories of financial inducements, general assistance, and family-oriented support.

Probably the most thorough study of the contents of the psychological contract was undertaken by Herriot, Manning, and Kidd (1997) which explored both employee and organization's perspectives (captured through asking managers to give the organization's perspective) using the critical incident technique, asking about occasions where the organization and employee had fallen short of or positively exceeded expectations. The researchers assumed that in order for an expectation to be met or surpassed, there must be an underlying promise that is part of the psychological contract's content. The occurrences that were created utilising these strategies were then grouped together into themes. Employee and organisational perspectives differ on the organization's obligations to employees, according to Herriot, Manning, and Kidd (1997): employees value more basic aspects of work such as pay and fairness, whereas organisations value relational aspects of work such as humanity and recognition.

While each of these investigations may contribute to a better understanding of the psychological contract's contents, they also have methodological flaws that raise doubts about whether what is being assessed is the psychological contract's content as stated by theory. The failure to analyse the trade features of promises is a common flaw in all of this research. In other words, they don't evaluate what employees do in exchange for what they get from their employers—those behaviours that are performed in exchange for some sort of organisational incentive. As previously stated, many definitions and debates of contents exclude the transmission of information about contents. In some situations, these investigations simply assume that exchange underpins the promises under consideration (e.g., Herriot, Manning, and Kidd 1997), whereas in others, exchange is inferred using statistical approaches (e.g. Rousseau 1990). Only psychological contract elements that are proved to be part of a transaction may be treated as part of the psychological contract, according to

theory. The only published measure of the contents of the psychological contract that does in part capture exchange is Millward and Hopkin's (1998) Psychological Contract Scale (PCS), used recently in a revised form by Raja, Johns, and Ntalianis (2004). The contents of the questionnaire items were obtained from the literature, and some of them clearly tap exchange by tying company benefits to employee contributions.

We've provided a rather thorough examination of the empirical data on contents. Although investigating contents is likely the second most common type of study published, the number of relevant studies remains quite modest, as previously stated. Furthermore, these studies had significant methodological flaws. What we really know about the contents of psychological contracts appears to be extremely reliant on the method utilised, and hence constrained by that approach's recognised flaws. Despite the low number and quality of evidence available, some extremely speculative inferences concerning the contents of the psychological contract may be drawn. To begin with, content measurement differs greatly between researches. Second, some promises (e.g., good workplace) are considerably more likely to be included in psychological contracts than others (e.g. good pay). Third, content perceptions differ significantly across employers and employees. Much empirical and theoretical work has to be done before we have a better understanding of the contents of psychological contracts, as we shall describe later.

As we've seen, much research on the contents of the psychological contract has focused on characterising the dimensions of the contract rather than understanding what causes or shapes the content or how it influences outcomes. This neglect is a serious omission and there is considerable scope and need for future research and development in this area (Rousseau, 2001). To summarise, while researchers have seen the content as having a variety of causes and consequences, the psychological contract is a dynamic exchange process in which the content's causes and effects cannot be seen statically. The exchange's results at one point in time become the catalyst for the next cycle of the exchange. A popular definition of the psychological contract is 'individual beliefs, shaped by the organization, regarding terms of an exchange agreement between the individual and their organization' (Rousseau, 1995). Levinson et al. (1962) measured the responses from 874 employees at a US utility plant which offered considerable insight into the links between psychological contracts and, for instance, reciprocity, workplace and role change, boundaries between work and non work, and trajectories of the psychological contract change over life stages. A model named as dynamic phase model of psychological contract developed which mainly focuses on guidance to employees and managers about how goals can be attained while creating, fostering, and altering the psychological contract. (Rousseau, Hansen and Tomprou, 2018). Laulié and Tekleab, (2016) shared a model of two key constructs of PCF at the team level: shared team psychological contract fulfilment and shared individual psychological contract fulfilment. At the team level, the model uncovers new information regarding the antecedents and consequences of PCF constructs. The study found five distinct psychological contract pathways through socialisation, in which fulfilment and breach influence adjustment by facilitating or restricting opportunities to learn and integrate, as well as influencing attitudes

and behaviour, based on 112 critical incident interviews with 27 newcomers over the course of their first year of work. The analysis reveals that whilst perceived psychological contract fulfilment facilitates newcomer adjustment, perceived breach can disrupt the process (Woodrow &Guest, 2020). The Perceived organisational support and psychological contract fulfilment, according to the study's theoretical model, affect both employees' desire to stay and leave. Psychological contract fulfilment aspires to operate as a bridge between perceived organisational support and individuals' contradictory motivations to stay or leave the business. Finally, the role of psychological contract fulfilment and perceived organisational support on individuals' inclinations to stay or leave is studied. By investigating the Push and Pull impact of the organizational inducement, employer, especially the HR managers, can efficiently manage the retention and turnover of the employees (Akhtar et al., 2018). Employee loyalty was found to have a substantial positive association with relational psychological contract. The study recommends the followings: Banks should ensure that the psychological make-up of their staff is taken into consideration when planning their retention strategies; Managers and employers in the financial industry should pay more attention to relational psychological issues in order to achieve employee loyalty (Nnaji-Ihedinmah et al.,2021). Three factors have been proposed for specific leadership style (vertical or distributed): organizational culture, knowledge sharing and project management practices, which results the state of psychological contract (fulfilment/breach). A flexible, collaborative organizational culture supports knowledge sharing and the adoption of agile methods, enabling distributed leadership and leading to psychological contract fulfilment (Agarwal et al., 2021). Outside of the workplace, there are a very wide range of factors to consider, including pre-employment work experiences, exposure to work experiences through family and friends, and media, as well as experiences gained from membership in other institutions that communicate psychological contracts, such as schools (Anderson, 1987; Holloman, 1972; Kolb, Rubin &Mclntyre,1984; Lobutsa &Pennewill, 1984). Two primary antecedents of contract breach identified by Morrison and Robinson (1997) are reneging and incongruence. When organisation agents consciously breach a promise to an employee, this is known as reneging, whereas incongruence occurs when the employee and the agents have different understandings of the commitment. Although either of these two elements can cause a disconnect between an employee's view of what was promised and what was delivered, the likelihood of an unfulfilled promise is dependent on how closely an employee watches the organization's contract fulfilment. As a result, organisational change and an employee's history of contract breach are two monitoring-related factors investigated in this study as antecedents of contract breach. Turnley and Feldman (1998) reported that managers in organizations undergoing downsizings, reorganizations, and mergers and acquisitions were significantly more likely to feel their psychological contracts have been breached. Organizational change leads to uncertainty on the part of employees about the ability of the organization to meet its obligations to employees. This is particularly so, if the change was precipitated by poor organizational performance and therefore, indicative of the organization's inability to meet its obligations. Study revealed that staff in the Irish health service (nurses, community care, and administration), Conway and Monks (2008) found

that what they referred to as 'basic' HR practices communications, staffing and rewards were more strongly associated with the psychological contract than practices characterizing more sophisticated HR systems, such as team working and career development. Social contact and comparison among employees are thought to have a significant influence on the formation of psychological contracts. Employees that place a high value on financial benefits requested information about financial promises (Conway & Briner, 2009). These studies illustrate that employees are not merely passive receivers of organizational communications regarding psychological contracts; they also actively shape their psychological contracts through information seeking behaviour consistent with personal values (De Vos, Buyensand Schalk, 2005). The association between perceived similarity and psychological contract breach is often mediated by the quality of the supervisor-subordinate relationship (measured in terms of leader-member exchange). However, neither gender nor race differences in the supervisor-subordinate dyad were associated with breaches of the psychological contract. (Suazo, Turnley & Mai-Dalton, 2005). The findings show that (1) psychological climate dimensions of autonomy, involvement, performance feedback, and clarity of organisational goals affect the psychological contract breach, (2) psychological contract breach mediates the impact of autonomy, involvement, performance feedback, and clarity of organisational goals on job attitudes, and (3) job attitudes mediate the impact of psychological contract breach on turnover intention, based on a sample of 308 respondents. Findings support psychological contract breach as a critical framework for understanding salesperson–employer relationships (Hartmann & Rutherford, 2015). Trust in employer fully mediated the relationship between psychological contract breach and the work outcomes of psychological withdrawal behaviour (Lo &Aryee, 2003).

While psychological contract theory shares some features with other employment or social exchanges approaches such as equity and justice, organizational support and leader–member exchange – it also contributes uniquely to our understanding of the exchange through, for example, the concept of breach (Conway & Briner, 2005). With just a few researches addressing the basic notion of psychological contract explains employee outcomes, the concept that employees' psychological contracts may incorporate ideological benefits has been widely neglected. Studies proposed that consequence of the psychological contract has two main approaches: it influences outcome through social exchange (Conway and Briner, 2009). But it is said that the social exchange model has minimal support, implying that the reciprocity norm has relatively minor impacts at most. The second approach toward examining the consequences of psychological contract contents involves the use of variants of Schein's (1965) matching hypothesis. Dabos and Rousseau (2004) explored mutuality (i.e. agreement) between researchers and directors (i.e. employers) at US universities. Mutuality was defined as 'the degree to which the two parties agree on their interpretations of promises and commitments each party has made and accepted (i.e. agreement on what each party owes the other)' (Dabos & Rousseau ,2004). The findings underscore the value of compensatory inducements in resolving psychological contract breaches, as well as the importance of other elements like as communication and the availability of work

alternatives. Taking the psychological contract into consideration, suggestions are made for strengthening employee interactions in times of organisational transition. The results imply that to maintain reciprocity, new ways of remediation are needed to cope with the expected changing circumstances (van Gilst et al., 2020). The magnitudes of the link between psychological contract breach and organisational commitment are moderated by the psychological contract type. The negative relationship between psychological contract violation and organizational commitment is stronger among professionals with a relational psychological contract than among those holding a more transactional contract (Chiang et al., 2012). Psychological contract breach was found to be adversely associated to the three components of supervisor trustworthiness, namely ability, compassion, and integrity, based on data from 243 newcomers. Supervisor integrity also mediated a favourable association between psychological contract violation and 8-month voluntary turnover. At high levels of negative affectivity, psychological contract violation interacted with negative affectivity, making it less adversely connected to supervisor trustworthiness measures. At high levels of negative affectivity, the indirect connection between psychological contract violation and voluntary turnover as mediated by supervisor integrity was also reduced. Trustworthiness dimensions that indicate a voluntary contribution (i.e., a responsibility) of the supervisor for contract breach should lead to voluntary turnover while those that do not should not have the same deleterious effect (Lapointe, É. &Vandenberghe, C., 2021). A total of 103 individuals took part in the study, who were chosen using basic random and stratified procedures. The findings revealed that the majority of employees believe they should hunt for new employment. On the other hand, the results revealed that the majority of employees hunt for new employment through other individuals while they are still employed. The inability of companies to keep their commitments leads to higher employee turnover rates. The rate of staff turnover has a negative impact on an organization's productivity. Thus, it is deduced that lack of negotiations between the employer and the employees lead to conflict and disagreements, forcing the employee to have turnover intention (Algamdey, N., 2021). When employees both attributed the breach to the employer's wilful reneging and were unjustly treated in the process, perceived breach was connected with more strong sentiments of violation. Data was collected from 147 managers before they started their new work (time 1) and 18 months afterwards (time 2). When organizational and self-reported employee performance were low, the employee had not gone through a formal socialization process, the employee had little interaction with organizational agents prior to hire, the employee had a history of psychological contract breach with previous employers, and the employee had many employment options at the time of hire, perceived contract breach was more likely at time 2 (Robinson & Wolfe Morrison, 2000). Employee behaviour is influenced by a positive relationship with their superior, according to a study. The study reveals that an employee psychological contract breach constitutes a negative impact on employee behaviour in the workplace which may result to decreased performance, erosion of productivity and eventual employee turnover in the organization; hence the need to frame a workable relationship that will encourage employees' acceptance and propel them to be committed to the organizational goals and objectives (Nwokocha, 2015). Katz's (1964) theorization of the behavioural

prerequisites of a functioning organization are: (1) joining and remaining in the organization (defined by turnover intentions); (2) dependably performing prescribed duties (psychological withdrawal behaviour), and (3) participating in non-prescribed, inventive, and spontaneous behaviours that improve organisational effectiveness (defined by the civic virtue dimension of citizenship behaviour).

RELEVANCE OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH

Breach is an imperative approach in psychological contract theory since it is the primary means of understanding how the psychological contract influences employees' feelings, attitudes, and behaviours. The breach concept's strength and flexibility are further highlighted by how it may be utilised to explain other ideas within psychological contract theory. Furthermore, due to the various circumstances that might impact the working relationship, psychological contract violation is considered as occurring very frequently at work. Given its importance, it's no surprise that the majority of psychological contract research has concentrated on breach, with the great majority of studies taking into account the employees' perspective when they believe their company has violated a promise made to them.

The idea of a breach of the psychological contract is a metaphor taken from legal contracts where a breach is taken to be a less than perfect performance by one of the parties regarding contract terms (Cheshire, Fifoot, and Furmston 1989). A breach of the psychological contract occurs similarly 'when one party in a relationship perceives another to have failed to fulfil promised obligation(s)' (Robinson and Rousseau 1994: 247). Researchers used the terms 'breach' and 'violation' interchangeably until Morrison and Robinson (1997) made a key distinction that is now accepted by most working in the field. Breach is defined as a cognitive appraisal of what was received with what was promised, while violation is defined as the severe subjective or emotional emotions that often accompany breaches. In other words, breaches are perceived disparities between what has been promised and what has been delivered, whereas violations are the emotional reactions that may accompany such inconsistencies. Differences in manager and employee perceptions of psychological contract breach are probably due to a number of factors, such as variations in information employees receive from different psychological contract makers (e.g. line manager, HR department, senior management), and the likelihood that employees tend to view inducements offered by the organization less favourably than do organizational representatives (Lester et al. 2002). The variables that are assumed to trigger a breach are known as antecedents of breach. The origins of psychological contract breach have only been studied in a few researches. Inadequate human resource management techniques are the first likely cause of a breach. There are two types of empirical work that are important in this case. The first are studies that consistently find employees are more likely to report psychological contract fulfilment if they perceive that their organization adopts human resource management practices (Guest and Conway 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002a, 2004). This conclusion is backed up by research that looks at the employers' point of view. Senior HR managers from different companies are more likely to report that their organization keeps its promises

if the organization has also adopted human resource practices (Guest & Conway, 2002b). The second line of research implies that psychological contract fulfilment is caused not just by the availability of human resource management practises, but also by the human resource management organisations' ability to communicate with management about what those practises are and should produce. Several case studies show that employees perceive psychological contract breach when there is a mismatch between management communications about human resource management practices and what employees actually experience (Grant 1999; Greene, Ackers & Black 2001). A second cause of breach is when employees feel unsupported by either the organization (Tekleab, Takeuchi & Taylor 2005) or their supervisors (Sutton and Griffin 2004). In a longitudinal study, Tekleab, Takeuchi, and Taylor (2005) found that perceived organizational support predicts psychological contract fulfilment. Employees are more inclined to accept minor breaches or forgive more major violations as one-time incidents if they have organisational support. The reasons why supervisor support leads to employees overlooking a breach are comparable to the reasons why organisational support leads to a breach. In keeping with earlier research that indicates how support moderates emotional reactions to stressful events, organisational support is likely to be a crucial modulator of how employees react to breaches.

Events that occurred outside of the organisation or before the employee became a member of the organisation are the third sort of cause of employee breach.Robinson and Morrison (2000) found that employees are more likely to perceive breach by their current employer where, first, they have experienced breach by former employers and, second, where employees perceive themselves to have many employment alternatives. Employees who have previously experienced breaches in previous employment relationships will be less trusting of their present employer and hence more inclined to scrutinise it more closely to ensure that commitments are kept. A higher level of alertness enhances the chances of discovering a breach. Employees who have few other work possibilities due to external economic factors such as high unemployment are less likely to remain watchful since they have no control over the breach in terms of pursuing new employment. Employees who have employment options, on the other hand, are more likely to monitor whether their business keeps its commitments since they may easily seek a better deal elsewhere if their firm fails to deliver, and hence are more likely to identify a breach.

Finally, Robinson and Morrison (2000) present a theoretical model proposing two pathways through which breach can occur. The first is when an organization's poor overall performance in relation to its targets causes it to renege on commitments, which causes employees to feel a psychological contract breach. Using a longitudinal survey, Robinson and Morrison (2000) found that poor organizational performance predicts employee perceptions of breach. The authors did not, however, determine whether the breach was caused by the organization's purposeful reneging (apparently, companies do not intentionally underperform) or by causes outside its control. The second path to breach is where insufficient organizational socialization and misleading pre-hire interaction causes misunderstandings between employees and organizations, referred to as incongruence, which in turn leads

employees to perceive breach (Morrison & Robinson 1997). Certain beliefs, for example, have been found to limit the amount to which possible causes of breach, such as organisational changes, actually lead to psychological contract violation. Edwards et al. (2003) examine the ideology of employee self-reliance, which refers to an employee's belief that he or she should depend on the employer as little as possible and take responsibility for his or her own employability. In an imaginative study combining the results from experiments and questionnaire surveys, Edwards et al. (2003) found that the ideology of employee self-reliance reduces the extent to which employees perceive redundancy programmes as psychological contract breach. This link was created for employees who had been laid off as well as those who were watching layoffs take place. Employees are less likely to consider their company as accountable for job security as a result of an employee self-reliance attitude, and any failure by the organisation to supply job security is less likely to be perceived as a breach. To summarise, research has found a number of critical antecedents to breach, but additional theoretical and empirical study is certainly needed to acquire a better understanding of the elements that lead to breach and how they causally interrelate and interact.

UNDERSTANDING PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT AS A PROCESS

The psychological contract, according to most researchers, is a vibrant, ongoing process. However, we fail to conceive a single piece of psychological contract research that looks at processes in a way that reflects contemporary developments in process analysis (Langley 1999; Andersson & Pearson 1999). Schein (1980: 24) sees the psychological contract exchange as unfolding in the sense that it is in operation at all times and 'constantly renegotiated'. Employee and organization 'interact in a complex fashion that demands systems approach capable of handling interdependent phenomena' (Schein 1980: 65). For Meckler, Drake, and Levinson (2003: 223) psychological contracts develop through reciprocation, which 'is the process of working through a series of unfolding psychological contracts in efforts to meet the expectations and concerns of the parties'. Typically this feedback is not explicitly monitored nor carefully understood, so that mutual adjustments are haphazard and often painful to both parties' (Meckler, Drake & Levinson, 2003: 225). As previously noted, the definition of process is important to the concept of the psychological contract for experts and others.

A process has been defined as a sequence of events that precede and explain the occurrence of an outcome (Shaw & Jarvenpaa, 1997). In terms of the psychological contract, the process of how and why a breach of the psychological contract leads to the withdrawal of particular behaviour and the related factors affecting such casual mechanism often needs further deliberations. In a recent review of theorizing from process data, Langley (1999) describes processes as having four characteristics: first, processes are concerned with sequences of events, with events defined as happenings at work that cause some sort of affective, cognitive, or behavioural reaction which are often precisely located in time and space. Unlike the idea of a variable, events either occur or do not occur, but a variable assumes that phenomena may vary in degree in some quantifiable way along a certain

dimension. Various actors are frequently included in process techniques, as are multiple subjective viewpoints that may clash with one another. Third, the time between events, as well as the temporal boundary around an event, can vary significantly within processes. As an example of the latter, a line manager may publicly humiliate an employee, but the individual's feelings of hurt and resentment may last for months. Finally, processes can encompass a wide range of 'events,' including shifting connections, expectations, objectives, sense-making, and emotions.

In addition to identifying the characteristics of processes Langley (1999), building on Mohr's discussion (1982) of types of organizational theory, makes a distinction between variance and process theories. Variance theories are characterized by relationships between independent and dependent variables and tend to reflect static, linear models where causation is oversimplified. The goal of variance theories is to explain variation in an outcome variable by examining the impact of a set of independent factors. Hypotheses, models defining the connections between variables, the use of statistical regression to assess models, and no attempt to systematically arrange the independent variables with regard to one another or the dependent variable define research based on variance theories. This definitely applies to nearly all contemporary psychological contract studies. Process theories, in contrast, deal with discrete states and events and the time ordering among them is often seen as critical to arriving at the final outcome (Mohr 1982). Rather of utilising the labels of independent and dependent variables derived from variance theories, Mohr feels it is more appropriate to think of a process as a series of precursors to a result. The idea of a straightforward linear relationship between inputs and outputs is promoted by variance models. Escalation, vicious and virtuous cycles, upward and downward spirals, thresholds, feedback effects, recycling between phases, parallel tracks, changes between equilibriums, and other forms of interactions may all occur within process models (Mintzberg 1980; Masuch 1985; Langley 1999). Due to variations in the patterns of events, with individuals moving through events that are affecting them in some way while making sense of previous events, important psychological constructs relevant to processes are such things as selective attention, selective retention, anticipation of future events, sense making and revising previously held views (Pentland, 1999).

MANAGING THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT FOR EMPLOYEE RETENTION

We might theoretically handle any component of the psychological contract since it is multidimensional. For example, in order to prevent misunderstandings between workers and employers, we can strive to regulate the subjective elements of psychological contracts by making psychological contract less subjective. Another example is controlling what or who should be considered 'the organisation,' since psychological contracts are more likely to be effective when both sides have a shared concept of the primary contract makers.

Researchers' advice for managing the psychological contract moistly comprise of two

primary areas of contents and breach. In practice, managing the contents of psychological contracts should help to decide what promises should be made between parties, how the contents of psychological contracts can be managed during change, and how psychological contracts can be negotiated and renegotiated, among other things. The major rationale for managing contents is that certain types of psychological contract contents and specific ways of modifying the contents are more or less likely to result in beneficial outcomes for both the employee and the employer. Employees with specific sorts of contracts (e.g., relational) are more likely to feel committed to their company and are less likely to resign, according to research described elsewhere. The second area in which management recommendations are offered is in connection to psychological contract breach and fulfilment. This might entail keeping track of psychological contracts to ensure that both parties fulfil their end of the agreement, preventing breaches, and devising measures to deal with breaches if they do occur. The primary goal of breach and fulfilment management is to ensure that both parties meet their end of the agreement in order to maximise good results while avoiding or minimising the negative repercussions of breach. The usage of psychological contract concept in an effective way indicates the improvement of the research and employee satisfactory mechanism as well as it would lead to the positive outcomes for organization.

CONCLUSION

Overall, psychological contract and employee retention often reported as a major caveat while understanding the process of organisational behaviour challenges in the current ever evolving multidimensional companies. A well designed recruitment process and proper policy frameworks for working employees always eschew augmented growth and success in most sectors of human resource management. Further, current appraisal highlights the importance of the interconnected nature of individuals' psychological contract evaluations with other team members' perceptions as a result of the social context of their team environment. Retention of qualified employees based on psychological contract perceptions and career concerns plays dominant role as antecedents of contentment. Further, the core retention practices like compensation, training and development, supervisor support and ample career growth opportunities redefine the unwritten bond between such employees and employers in most of the HR domains. Finally, evaluating employees' concerns on a regular basis and ensuring such concerns are addressed and kept to a minimum may result in them being satisfied and subsequently strengthened the psychological contract facets more pronouncedly.

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