

The Relationship between Psychological Contract Breach and Engagement: Job Satisfaction and Organisational Support as Moderators

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to investigate the moderating effect of job satisfaction and organisational support on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement. An experimental design involving quantitative research methodology was used, conducting a survey of 1029 respondents. The relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement is more complex than previous studies suggest: This research concludes that job satisfaction moderates the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement. Organisational support, however, does not have a significant moderating effect on this relationship. It was also limited to South African organisations; comparative studies in other African countries and other emerging markets would be useful. Psychological contract breach has an adverse effect on work engagement. This finding is particularly important for organisations going through economic difficulties with resultant resource losses - that are perceived by employees as a breach of psychological contract. This study suggests that organisations ought to commit their limited resources to increase job satisfaction during periods of change. It will lead to employees having a buffer between this breach and the risk of potentially lower engagement levels. Increased levels of employee job satisfaction would moderate the effect of psychological contract breach on work engagement – thus reducing the probability of poor work engagement. Surprisingly, organisational support did not have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.

Keywords: *Moderating effect; job satisfaction; organisational support; psychological contract breach; work engagement*

1. Introduction

During times of economic pressure organisational performance declines and subsequent turnaround interventions regularly involve restructuring or downsizing (Boyne, 2004). Downsizing, in turn, leads to a lack of job security and trust in the organisation (Mishra, Mishra & Spreitzer, 2009), for both those employees leaving as well as those who survive the process (Noer, 2009). The retrenchment rate in South Africa is at a ten-year high and 4.6 million people are unemployed (Maswanganyi, 2014; Sapa, 2015). The country has a deep-seated history of struggle relating to power and values (Seneque & Bond, 2012). The post-apartheid South African environment is also characterised by large-scale transformational societal change. The introduction of the Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act (Act 46 of 2013), for example, led to even more intense feelings of insecurity for white people in South Africa and a lack of psychological safety, which negatively influences work engagement (Simpson, 2009). It is important for organisations to understand how victims of retrenchment processes experience and comprehend these changes, to ensure their remaining employees continue to be a key source of competitive advantage (Chaundhry & Song, 2014; Noor, 2009). Modern organisations need healthy and motivated employees to survive and prosper during changing times (Salanova, Llorens, Cifre & Martinez, 2012).

The consequential cost associated with disengagement has been well researched. Studies have found, for example, that employee engagement is paramount for organisational performance, because it ensures sustainability, customer satisfaction (Harter, Schmidt & Keyes, 2002), positive perceptions of organisational change (Leiter & Maslach, 2004) and, ultimately, profitability (Scrima, Lorito, Parry & Falgares, 2014). Scholarly research has also identified a number of antecedents to engagement, including psychological safety (May, Gilson & Harter, 2004) and authentic leadership (Scheepers & Elstob, 2016). Asiwe, Rothmann, Jorgensen and Hill (2017) also highlight relationships at work to foster engagement, since these relationships can create psychological safety. The psychological contract as an antecedent to engagement has received only limited attention, however, and the influence of a contract breach during times of economic pressure even

less (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Employee engagement is both physical and mental and should be nourished for performance (Simpson, 2009) and to enable employees to face the challenges of uncertain economic environments. However, work engagement is dwindling the world over (Gallup Inc., 2013) and further research into this area is therefore required.

Furthermore, organisations would benefit from understanding what might lessen the impact of the breach of the psychological contract on engagement. This study argues that the relationship between employer and employee may be strengthened by the support offered by an organisation during these times. The study investigated another moderator, the level of job satisfaction in this relationship, as it was hypothesised that intrinsic motivation could provide a buffer against the negative influence of a contract breach. This study therefore focused on investigating the moderating effect of both organisational support and job satisfaction on the relationship between psychological contract breach and engagement. The enhanced understanding of the relationship between psychological contract breach, job satisfaction, organisational support and work engagement, could help employers to proactively increase work engagement levels when there is a possibility of psychological contract breach and employees to develop mechanisms to remain engaged during trying times. Increased engagement would in turn increase organisational performance.¹

2. Literature Review

Engagement: Employee engagement depends on the perceived commitment of employers to meet their obligations (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). It also follows that once these obligations are met, employees are content with their jobs (Kahn, 1990; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). With the increasing economic hardship amid tight competition across the globe, resources are getting scarce and thus organisations are shifting from extrinsic benefits (pay) to intrinsic motivation, such as job satisfaction. Kahn's seminal work describes engagement as "the employing or expressing of oneself physically, cognitively, and emotionally during work role performances" (Kahn, 1990: .694). When an employee is engaged, he/she is understood to be involved physically, is cognitively vigilant and connected emotionally (Simpson, 2009). The study of engagement has become very active, with more than 1 800 citations, mostly in the last five years (Saks & Gruman, 2014). Work engagement has been defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind, characterised by vigour, dedication and absorption (Schaufeli, Bakker & Salanova, 2006; Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002). Vigour, in the motivational model, speaks to the ability of the individual to display "high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, it also underlines the willingness to invest effort in one's work, and be persistent even in the face of difficulties" (Schaufeli et al., 2006:702). "Dedication refers to an individual who is strongly involved in their work and someone who is experiencing a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge" (Schaufeli et al., 2006: 702). "Absorption is described as being fully focused and happily engrossed in one's work, where time passes too quickly and one has difficulty detaching oneself from the work" (Schaufeli et al., 2006:702).

In times of economic difficulty and uncertainty, such as is currently being experienced in South Africa and globally, it becomes even more important for organisations to have an engaged, and thus focused and committed, workforce. When organisations are in distress, it impacts on the employees, whether as a result of unexpected reductions in staff, management replacements, loss of talent or union unrest (Yakola, 2014). Scholars have uncovered a number of antecedents to engagement, for example, job resources (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004), autonomy (Bakker, Tims & Derks, 2012), job demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and job control (Mauno, Kinnunen & Ruokolainen, 2007; Tufail et al., 2016). Human resources management can introduce interventions to assist both the individual and the organisation (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), such as workplace behavioural health practices that address job design, supervisory communication, corporate culture, working conditions and leadership style (Attridge, 2009). The consequences of engagement include customer loyalty (Salanova, Agut & Peiro, 2005), business unit performance (Blackwell 2014), organisational citizenship behaviour (Bakker, Demerouti & Verbeke, 2004) and proactive behaviour (Bakker, Tims & Derks, 2012).

¹ The paper is based on the report of Tjaart van der Westhuizen's research towards fulfilling the requirements of his Masters in Business Administration (MBA) research.

Breach of Psychological Contract: Today's organisational workplaces have become increasingly complex due to new and flexible forms of engagement (Cullinane & Dundon, 2006). This has increased the need for psychological contracts between employers and employees. Joubert and Feldman (2017) contend that leadership and followership are interrelated events with a focus on interactions, connections, dependences and exchanges. These associations can be explained as psychological contracts (Rousseau, 1989) that refer to an individual's system of beliefs grounded in commitments articulated or implied. Joubert and Feldman (2017) go on to say that leaders play a prominent role in the creation of the views followers have of leadership. The psychological contract is thus a social exchange theory (SET) process (Blau, 1964) that compels reciprocal engagement from employees when the organisation meets their expectations (Rousseau, 1989). From the social exchange point of view, individuals remain satisfied when there is a balanced exchange between employers and employees. If the balance is not maintained, a psychological contract breach occurs (Bashir & Nasir, 2013). Failure to comply with the obligations by either party has a negative effect on the relationship between the employee and the organisation and is perceived as a violation. This adversely affects the belief of the affected party with regard to the reciprocal obligations of the two parties (Robinson, Kraatz & Rousseau, 1994). Psychological contracts are stable unless information is not shared transparently about the changes experienced (Chaundhry & Song, 2014). Past experiences, as well as the context in which employees find themselves, contribute to creating employee perceptions of what the organisation is owed and what the employee owes in return (Rousseau, 1989). Psychological contracts are influenced by the different human resource practices imposed by organisations which can result in different types of contracts being established. These include relational, balanced, transitional and transactional contracts (Scheepers & Shuping, 2011).

The concept of psychological contract involves an employee's expectation of an employer fulfilling promises, while psychological contract breach is the belief that the other party has failed to fulfil the promise (Rousseau, 1989; Tibaingana, 2014). The compromise of any of these obligations of either of the parties, constitutes a psychological contract breach. Zhao, Wayne, Glibkowski and Bravo (2007) declare that a psychological contract breach is an employee's perception of the extent to which the organisation has failed to fulfil its promises or obligations. Tomprou, Rousseau and Hansen (2015) call this a violation of the psychological contract and say it may generate a strong negative emotional response such as distress and anger. This can be expressed in a variety of ways including absenteeism, job neglect or resignation. Delivering on each party's promise is therefore important in enhancing workplace harmony (Tomprou et al., 2015). The psychological contract breach not only has a harmful impact on employees, but also negatively affects the performance of the organisation (Mallah, Syed & Memon, 2016). Proactively learning one another's concerns and needs before disruptions take place can enable employees to improve their ability to handle these changes before they take place (Tomprou et al., 2015). Although psychological contract breach is not a new phenomenon in the field of human resource management, too many organisations do not recognise its importance and there is continued organisational distress, turnover and talent loss, which slow down operations (Yakola, 2014).

In South Africa, some companies are experiencing the impact of psychological contract breaches and finding it difficult to keep staff engaged (ITWeb Africa, 2015). In an era of turnarounds and retrenchments it is important to understand what processes could lessen the impact of, or increase support to 'soften', breaches in psychological contracts and structure post-violation psychological contracts to ensure work engagement (Tomprou et al., 2015). Bakker, Albrecht and Leiter (2011) suggest that future research should look at the impact of moderators on work engagement. Disruption is different to a perceived breach in that it occurs when a partner is willing, but simply not able, to follow through on promises made (Rousseau, 1995, as cited by Eckerd et al., 2013). It was also found that psychological contract breach is experienced when organisations are performing poorly; performance from employees is reported to be low; there is a lack of socialisation through a formal process; and prior to their being hired, employees had little experience with the members of the organisation (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). "Psychological contract breach and violation are two conceptually distinct constructs, wherein breach relates to the cognitive aspect and violation relates to the emotional aspect of a failure in the psychological contract" (Eckerd et al., 2013:569). Psychological contracts, and particularly their breach on the part of the organisation, play a role in employees' experience of stress (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003). Psychological contract fulfilment increases commitment and decreases psychological distress (Rodwell & Ellershaw, 2015). The importance of attending to psychological contract

breach is evident from the literature showing the negative impact it has on important organisational outcomes, such as citizenship behaviour; commitment and employee intention to remain with the organisation (Ahmad & Khan, 2015; Robinson et al., 1994). "When employers do not fulfil their promises and obligations, the employee reciprocates by altering his or her contributions to the organization" (Bal, Chiaburu, & Jansen, 2010: 253). Employees may arrive at a verdict of breaches as a result of continuous minor events that alone are insufficient to trigger breach perceptions; however, the accumulation may lead to perceptions of breach (Parzefall & Coyle-Shapiro, 2011).

Job satisfaction: "Job satisfaction is the pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as achieving or facilitating the achievement of one's job values" (Locke, 1969: 316). Satisfaction, dissatisfaction and other emotional reactions are value responses. "When the employee sees that his expectations are not met in the job environment, job dissatisfaction emerges" (Adenike, 2011: 154). In times of economic contraction, for instance, job security increases worker job satisfaction more than in times of economic expansion, as job losses are feared more when job openings are fewer (Artz & Kaya, 2014). Job satisfaction plays a critical role since it affects the behaviour of employees, which, in turn, influences the performance and functioning of the organisation (Rowden, 2002). "A positive emotional and cognitive evaluation of their jobs is expected to push employees into being engaged with their jobs as reciprocation for the job satisfaction enabled by the organisation" (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014: 2386-2387).

Wulandari, Mangundjaya and Utoyo (2015) explore job satisfaction as a moderator or mediator in the relationship between change leadership and commitment to change. Those employees with a 'good job' tend to have the highest wellbeing of those in the workforce (Clifton & Marlar, 2011). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more productive, show higher levels of organisational commitment and are less likely to leave the organisation (Adenike, 2011). These factors influence the performance and functioning of the organisation positively. A positive relationship has been found between engagement and new ways of working (Ten Brummelhuis, Bakker, Hetland & Keulemans, 2012). The impact of psychological contract breach on turnover intention and job satisfaction has been researched by Ahmad and Khan (2015). Their findings show that employees are happy to work for an organisation while there are no other job opportunities. Scholars have found a positive correlation between job satisfaction and motivation, and the correlation is stronger with older, more experienced employees (Van Scheers & Botha, 2014). Other researchers have found that job satisfaction is a consequence of work engagement (Mache, Vitzhum, Klapp & Danzer, 2014). There is an ongoing debate about job satisfaction and the role it plays in complex relationships (Thabane, Radebe & Dhurup, 2017; Wulandri, Mangundjaya & Utoyo, 2015).

Perceived organisational support: "Employees develop global beliefs concerning the extent to which their organisation values their contributions and cares about their well-being. This is known as perceived organisational support" (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison & Sowa, 1986: 500). Employees offer work engagement to the organisation in return for receiving perceived organisational obligations (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Such perceived organisational support reduces absenteeism and is assumed to increase the employee's affective attachment to the organisation with the expectancy that greater work effort will be rewarded (Botha & Mostert, 2014; Eisenberger et al., 1986). Perceived organisational support predicts both job engagement and organisation engagement (Saks 2006). Higher engagement was found to be a result of a work environment with higher support (Laschinger & Leiter, 2006). Rich, Lepine and Crawford (2010) believe that one of the antecedents of engagement is perceived organisational support (if the organisation is, for example, trustworthy, secure, predictable, fair, and offers supervisor support, organisational rewards and favourable job conditions) (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002).

Pomirleanu and Mariadoss (2015) have explored the impact of organisational and functional support on the development of a salesperson's job satisfaction. Their findings indicate that higher levels of organisational support positively relate to higher levels of trust by the employee in both the supervisor and organisation. They found that, building on the social exchange theory, trust mediates the relationship between organisational support and job satisfaction (Pomirleanu & Mariadoss, 2015). Job resources support individuals with regard to achieving their goals and encourage learning; personal growth; and development (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Favourable working conditions positively related to perceived organisational support, include quality of training offered (Leppel, 2012) as well as visibility to and

recognition from upper-level management (Aselage & Eisenberger, 2003). Open communication between management and employees is an effective way to increase employee performance, because it signals that the organisation cares about the wellbeing and values the contributions of its employees (Neves & Eisenberger, 2012). The more employees experience support from their organisation the more they become absorbed in their roles and jobs and willing to take risks. This translates into doing their jobs with dedication and vigour (Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2014). If employees are unable to make sense of environmental changes, they are likely to hold the organisation responsible and this leads to them believing that there is not adequate organisational support (Cullen, Edwards, Casper & Gue, 2014). Caesens and Stinglhamber (2014) found that organisational support has a direct positive effect on work engagement, and through mechanisms like self-efficacy, leads to higher job satisfaction and extra-role performance, with less psychological stress.

Relationship between variables: Hallberg and Schaufeli (2006) found that work engagement, job involvement and organisational commitment are three distinct constructs. This was an important finding and directed future research to focus on these constructs separately. Some researchers argue that job satisfaction is an outcome of work engagement while others believe job satisfaction is an antecedent of work engagement (Maleka, 2018; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014; Saks, 2006). Rayton and Yalabik (2014) confirm that the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement is more complex than previous research had suggested. They established that psychological contract breach indeed impacts engagement, but that job satisfaction mediates this relationship. When employees perceive that their organisation meets its obligations they are content in their jobs and their work engagement is more probable (Kahn, 1990; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Rayton and Yalabik (2014) surveyed 191 employees at one company in the United Kingdom and recommended that future research involve other antecedents of work engagement, like organisational support. In addition, it has been recommended by previous researchers that future research be extended to other organisations with different jobs, and across industries. This study focuses on a larger sample size across various corporate, occupational and industrial contexts in South Africa. Given the literature review above, the study formulated specific objectives.

- Objective 1: Determine the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.
- Objective 2: Determine the moderating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.
- Objective 3: Determine the moderating effect of organisational support on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.

3. Methodology

Research Design: As this study followed a deductive approach, in which existing theories were used in their entirety or in part, the positivism philosophy was adopted (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). The study tested observable social realities to aid in the generalization of the findings. Also, as the positivist paradigm posits, the study adopted a highly-structured methodology to enable possible future replication (Gill & Johnson, 2002; Remenyi, Williams, Money & Swartz, 1998). The researchers thus used quantifiable observations with advanced statistical techniques in their analysis. Therefore, given the chosen philosophy, the study used a quantitative design. As Saunders and Lewis (2012) argue, positivism seems like a law of cause and effect, thus corroborating the route taken in this study. Given the above literature and objectives the researchers suggest the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a linear relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.

Hypothesis 2: There is a linear relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement.

Hypothesis 3: There is a linear relationship between organisational support and work engagement.

Hypothesis 4: Job satisfaction has a moderating effect on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.

Hypothesis 5: Organisational support has a moderating effect on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement.

The researchers thus examined the causal relationship between the independent variable, psychological contract breach, and dependent variable, work engagement, and the impact of organisational support and job satisfaction as moderators on this relationship. The researchers collected data by means of questionnaires

distributed through an online platform and conducted a pilot test of the questionnaires using 20 conveniently selected members. The researchers received positive feedback in which respondents mentioned that; the flow was satisfactory, questions were easy to understand and the survey tool was easy to use.

Participants: The study focused on employees who were members of a national service provider that provides services to individuals from different sectors of the South African economy. Notably, these employee members are not organisations, but individuals, employed by companies throughout South Africa. The researchers targeted a population of about 139 000 employee members. A written request to distribute the questionnaires was forwarded to the Managing Director of the service provider organisation. Researchers received formal written permission from the service provider allowing access to its member database, including e-mail addresses. In addition, the service provider enabled the researchers to distribute the questionnaires to the population of employees via its platform. Thus, the researchers were able to obtain the complete list of these members of the population with e-mail addresses and targeted this group for the study. Although many researchers collect their data by selecting a sample, rather than targeting a population, for logistical and practical reasons (Saunders & Lewis 2012), in this case the researchers had a complete list of members which allowed them to target a population as a whole. The researchers divided members into two groups, those with e-mail addresses and those without. Then 8 000 members were randomly chosen from those with e-mail addresses, which was reduced to 7 932 members, once members with incomplete e-mail addresses had been eliminated. A total of 1 029 (approximately 12.9%) fully-completed questionnaires were received and processed for analysis. Of the 1 029 respondents, who represented employees in organisations in South Africa, there were 551 females (53.5%) and 478 males (46.5%). Figure 1 below shows the distribution of respondents with regards to age. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 36 and 55, making up 62.3 percent of the total respondents.

Figure 1: Age of respondents

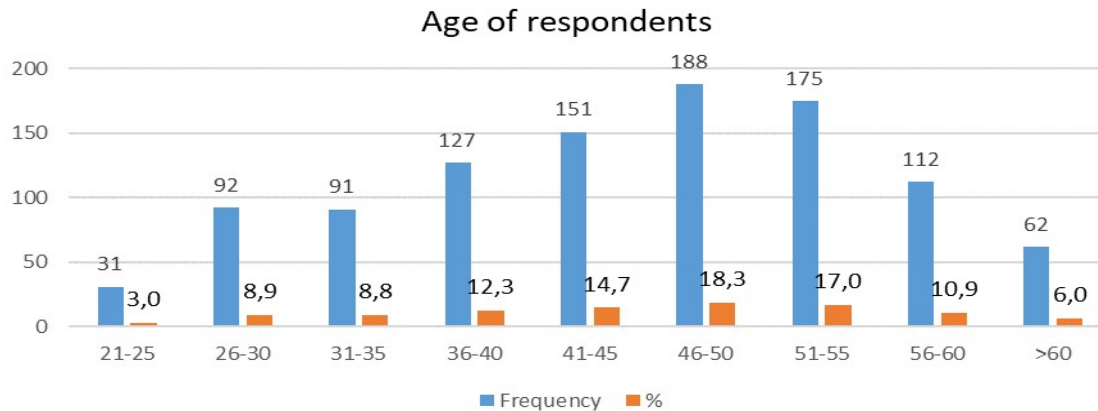
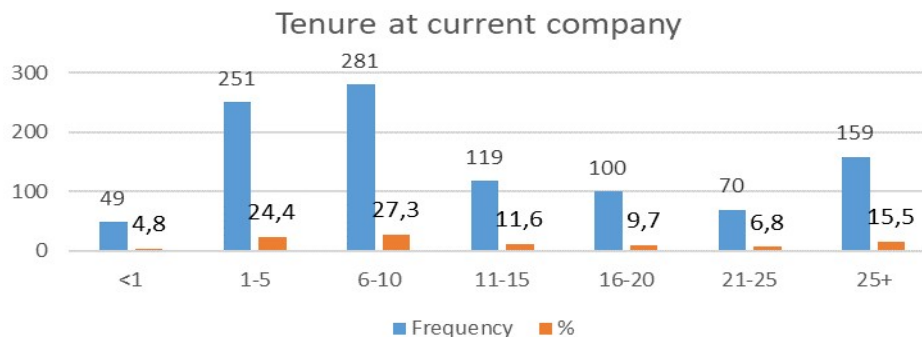


Figure 2 below shows the tenure of the respondents to have been mainly between 6 and 10 years, accounting for 27.3% of the respondents. Those with tenure of 1 to 5 years accounted for 24.4% of respondents.

Figure 2: Tenure at current company



Questionnaire Design: The survey instrument consisted of three main sections: (a) introduction, (b) biographical data and (c) survey questions. Section b) consisted of six categorical questions; age, gender, academic qualification, tenure at the company, working experience and industry. Section c) comprised questions to measure the variables of interest. A Likert-type scale with six possible outcomes was used. Following an extensive literature review, the researchers developed a questionnaire based on the four variables to be measured:

Work engagement (UWES-9): The researchers adopted the measures from Schaufeli et al. (2006) to gauge work engagement. The scale measures a) vigour, b) dedication and c) absorption, following the conceptualisation of engagement as suggested by Rayton and Yalabik (2014). They posited that the UWES-9 scale consisted of acceptable psychological elements and could be used to study positive organisational behaviour (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Thus, the items were tested for reliability and validity and deemed suitable for this study. A Likert scale was designed, consisting of options ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

Job satisfaction: For this variable, the researchers used the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire, which consists of only three items to reduce the likelihood of attrition. The questionnaire has been meta-analysed and found to have acceptable reliability measures across different sectors (Bowling & Hammond 2008). Since this study was conducted at the national level, the instrument was relevant. For this construct the researchers also used a Likert scale with options ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

Psychological contract breach: The researchers used the five-item scale by Robinson and Morrison (2000) to measure this construct. The scale is regarded as a global measure of breach and replaced the use of multiple questions from other instruments which measured specific domains of breach (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). The researchers thus considered the scale suitable for capturing perceptions of whether the organisation fulfilled its promises holistically. The scale included both positive and negative questions about psychological contract breach. A six-point Likert scale was used, with anchors from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree.

Organisational support: To gauge this variable, the researchers adopted the scale by Eisenberger et al. (1986), which has eight items measuring Perceived Organisational Support. Again, the scale was Likert with options ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (6) strongly agree. Although the research questionnaires used in this study had been used and tested in many previous studies, the researchers piloted the questionnaire with 20 selected participants, following the advice of Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) that piloting is crucial for good study design.

4. Analysis and Results

First, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was calculated to measure the adequacy of the sample. Table 1 below shows that three factors had eigenvalues greater than 1. As Kaiser (1974) recommends, factors with the eigenvalue greater than 1 should be viewed as common factors. The researchers thus retained the first three factors.

Table 1: Factor analysis - Principle factor analysis (Unrotated)

Factor	Eigenvalue	Difference	Proportion	Cumulative
1	11.96261	9.62477	0.7424	0.7424
2	2.33785	1.30069	0.1451	0.8875
3	1.03716	0.36982	0.0644	0.9518
4	0.66734	0.14491	0.0414	0.9932
5	0.52242	0.21162	0.0324	1.0257

Note: N = 1029

Retained factors = 3 (> 1)

To further the calculations above, the researchers included the factor loadings of the three factors. Table 2 below shows these loadings. Additionally, researchers calculated the mean scores across gender. Table 3 below reflects the mean scores across gender for work engagement (WE), job satisfaction (JS), organisational support (OS), and psychological contract breach (PCB). The lower the mean score the higher the perceived level of WE, JS and OS. However, it should be noted that the higher the mean score for PCB, the higher the level of breach experienced. Higher levels of job satisfaction and organisational support were found among women than among men, and lower levels of PCB were perceived by female respondents than by male respondents. Men, however, show a higher level of work engagement than women - as found on the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale - in line with previous findings (Schaufeli & Bakker 2004).

Table 2: Factor loadings

Variable	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Uniqueness
All in all, I am satisfied with my job	0.7406			0.4311
In general I don't like my job	0.5685			0.6497
In general I like working here	0.7112			0.4778
Almost all the promises made by my employer during recruitment have been kept so far	0.7509	-0.3327	0.4166	0.1519
I feel that my employer has come through in fulfilling the promises made to me when I was hired	0.7177	-0.3296	0.4301	0.1912
So far my employer has done an excellent job of fulfilling its promises to me	0.7754	-0.3335	0.3959	0.1308
I have not received everything promised to me in exchange for my contributions	0.4544	-0.3125		0.6849
My employer has broken many of its promises to me even though I've upheld my side of the deal	0.6653	-0.3574		0.4068
At my work I feel like I am bursting with energy	0.7450	0.3744		0.3040
At my job I feel strong and vigorous	0.7835	0.3817		0.2387
I am enthusiastic about my job	0.7785	0.4261		0.2119
My job inspires me	0.7784	0.3832		0.2467
When I get up in the morning I feel like going to work	0.8153			0.2555
I feel happy when I am working intensely	0.4684	0.3108		0.6784
I am proud of the work that I do	0.4454	0.3918		0.6466
I am immersed in my work	0.4659	0.4346		0.5912
I get carried away when I am working	0.4688	0.3883		0.6253
The organisation values my contribution to its well-being	0.7925			0.3377
The organisation fails to appreciate any extra effort from me	0.6129	-0.3187		0.4402
The organisation would ignore any complaint from me	0.6845	-0.3179		0.3782
The organisation really cares about my well-being	0.7740			0.3612
Even if I did the best job possible, the organisation would fail to notice	0.7126	-0.3410	-0.3135	0.2776
The organisation cares about my general satisfaction at work	0.7946			0.3466
The organisation shows very little concern for me	0.7349		-0.3229	0.2748
The organisation takes pride in my accomplishments at work	0.7778			0.3237

(Blank spaces represent loadings <0.3)

Table 3: Mean scores across gender

	Number of respondents	Work engagement	Job Satisfaction	Organisational Support	Psychological contract breach
Male	478	11.79	4.12	18.73	10.08
Female	551	12.23	3.68	18.28	8.42

Note: N = 1029

Second, the researchers calculated the descriptive statistics to determine the inter-correlations between variables for the summated scales. The results are shown in Table 4 below and are significant at $p < 0.0001$.

Table 4: Correlations between constructed variables

	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]
[1] Job satisfaction	1			
[2] Psychological contract breach	0.5941*	1		
[3] Work engagement	0.7215*	0.4956*	1	
[4] Organisational support	0.6488*	0.7054*	0.6202*	1

Notes: Pearson correlation coefficients between variables constructed using summated scales* $p < 0.0001$

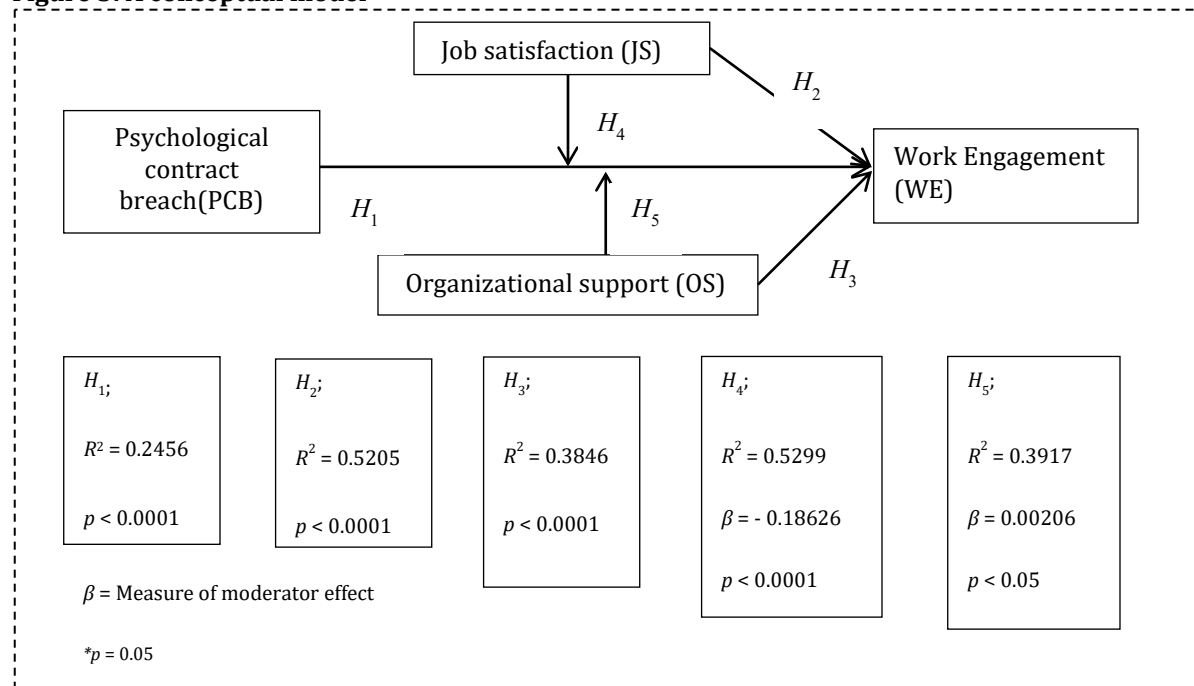
The researchers then calculated the Cronbach's alpha to gauge the reliability of the instruments used. They followed Nunnally's (1978) guidelines that scores above 0.60 to 0.70 should be regarded as acceptable whereas those above 0.8 are good. Table 5 below shows how excellent the questionnaires were in terms of reliability of the constructs measured. No items were removed from the questionnaire to improve the scores.

Table 5: Cronbach alpha scores

	Job satisfaction (JS)	Psychological contract breach (PCB)	Work engagement (WE)	Organizational support (OS)
Cronbach Alpha	0.7048	0.8811	0.9052	0.9249

To test the hypothesis statements, researchers adopted simple linear regression to measure the relationship between two constructs (hypothesis 1 (H_1), as shown in Figure 3 below). Then, multiple regression techniques were used to measure the relationship between JS and WE (H_2), between OS and WE (H_3), the moderation of JS between PCB and WE (H_4), and finally the moderation of OS between PCB and WE (H_5).

Figure 3: A conceptual model



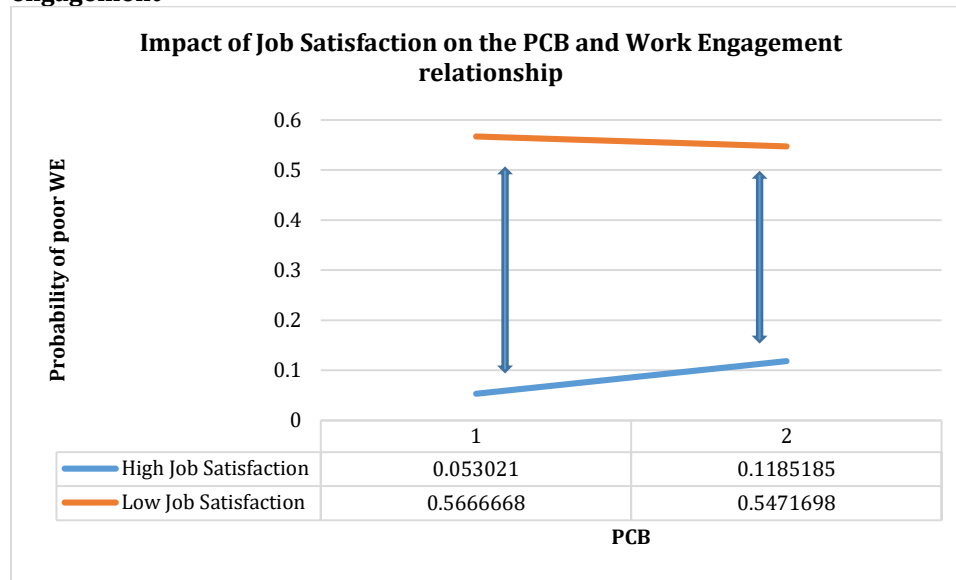
The results show that there was indeed a relationship between PCB and WE ($R^2 = 0.2456$, $p < 0.0001$), thus the researchers accept H_1 . 24.56% of the variation in WE can be explained by the variation in PCB. Significantly, these results negate those of Rayton and Yalabik (2014) who found no relationship between PCB and WE. Also, the researchers found a significant relationship between JS and WE ($R^2 = 0.5205$, $p < 0.0001$). These results show that 52.05% of the variation in WE is explained by that in JS. The researchers thus accepted H_2 . These results further support the empirical findings by Rayton and Yalabik (2014) that there is indeed a relationship between JS and WE. However, their study focused on the mediation of JS on the relationship between PCB and WE. Furthermore, the results show that there was a statistically significant relationship between OS and WE ($R^2 = 0.3846$, $p < 0.0001$). This implies that the 38.46% variation in WE can be explained by the variation in OS. Thus, H_3 was accepted. The results further confirm the findings by Ceasens and Stinghamber (2014) whose study also focused on the effect of OS on WE. The researchers then turned to the moderation calculation of OS and JS on WE. The multiple regression calculations performed on the interaction between PCB and JS on WE found this interaction to be significant ($p < 0.020$). H_4 was therefore accepted. The β was negative, - 0.18626, indicating a weakening of the relationship due to the moderation effect. This shows that JS is a moderator of the relationship between PCB and WE. The researchers then ran a logistic regression to check the predictive margins and assess the extent of the effect that job satisfaction has on the relationship as a moderator between OS and WE. Table 6 illustrates the moderation effect that had been significant:

Table 6: Moderating effect

Dependent variable:		Work engagement	
		Analysis P value	
Model		<.0001*	
R-Squared		0.5299	
		Effect of explanatory variable	P value of variable
Independent & moderator variables:			
Psychological contract breach		0.21498	<.0001*
Job satisfaction		2.07514	<.0001*
PCBJS (measure of the moderator effect)		-0.18626	0.020*
* p -values < 0.05			

Figure 4 below depicts the strength of the moderator effect.

Figure 4: Impact of job satisfaction as moderator on the relationship between PCB and work engagement



The top horizontal line in Figure 4 shows the significant effect of JS compared to the difference of the probability of poor WE, represented by the bottom horizontal line. These differences are shown by the two vertical lines. When good JS was introduced to a tolerable (low) level (1) of PCB, it was found to reduce the probability of poor WE more than 10.6 times. However, when good JS was introduced to an intolerable (high) level (2) of PCB, it was found to reduce the probability of poor WE more than 4.6 times. This confirms the extent to which JS moderates the relationship between PCB and WE. And lastly, the multiple regression results on the interaction between PCB and OS on WE show that there is no statistically significant relationship ($p < 0.483$). H_5 was thus rejected. This shows that OS does not moderate the relationship between PCB and WE.

Limitations of research: The research was conducted as a cross-sectional study, which does not provide the depth of analysis of a longitudinal study. It also investigated the causal relationship between psychological contract breach, organisational support, job satisfaction and work engagement, but did not examine other factors that influence work engagement. Finally, the study was conducted within the boundaries of South Africa and did not include respondents from other African countries.

Discussion of research objectives: The first research objective was to determine the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement. A significant correlation between psychological contract breach and work engagement was confirmed. The coefficient of the correlation was calculated at r equals to 0.2456 with a p value of <0.0001 . The R-Square value of 0.2456, if expressed as a percentage (24.56%), confirms that 24.56% of the variation in the dependent variable, work engagement, is explained by the variation in the explanatory variable, psychological contract breach. Some of the existing literature shows no significant direct linear relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). These findings differ, however, and confirm a significant direct linear relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement, which indicates that psychological contract breach negatively affects work engagement. It is clear from the findings of this study that it is beneficial for both the employee and the organisation to lessen the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement because it is significant and, if not managed, destructive.

Considering the consequences of improved work engagement, organisations could improve their chances of success by reducing the frequency and severity of psychological contract breach. These findings are based on how employees perceive the level of contract breach they experience - albeit subjective. It would, therefore, be advantageous to the organisation to understand the type of psychological contracts it has with its

employees (their expectations and experiences of the development of its violation) to enable the organisation to proactively manage these perceptions of psychological contract breach, reduce psychological distress and improve work engagement (Rodwell & Ellershaw, 2015). The findings of this study add further empirical evidence to support a significant relationship between job satisfaction and work engagement (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014) as well as a significant relationship between organisational support and work engagement (Caesens & Stinglhamber, 2014) engagement. Caesens and Stinglhamber (2014) focused on the effect that organisational support has on work engagement by looking at the direct relationship as well as the mechanics through which organisational support has this effect. The interaction between psychological contract breach and job satisfaction on work engagement is found to be significant ($p = 0.020$). The null-hypothesis, H04, is rejected. It is concluded that the overall fit of the model is significant and the alternate hypothesis is confirmed; job satisfaction is a moderator for the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement. The effect of job satisfaction is to reduce the negative impact that psychological contract breach has on work engagement. The relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement is thus more complex than suggested by previous research.

Studies have reported job satisfaction as a mediator in the relationship between change leadership and commitment to change (Wulandari, Mangundjaya & Utoyo, 2015) and, in 2014, Rayton and Yalibik's study on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement pointed to job satisfaction as mediator in this relationship. This study, by contrast, points to job satisfaction not as a factor through which influence is exerted, but rather as a variable that weakens the relationship. The conclusion that job satisfaction moderates the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement is one both employees and organisations should consider. Whether it is employees who assess their jobs, or organisations that assess the environment they create for their employees - including job fit, both stand to gain from the understanding of this relationship. It is important for organisations to comprehend the impact of job satisfaction as previous research has confirmed a significant relationship between work engagement and the performance and success of organisations. Organisations gain competitive advantage as a result of employees being engaged in their work (Scrima et al., 2014).

The finding is particularly important for organisations going through adverse changes (such as resource losses) that are seen by employees as a breach of the psychological contract. This study has shown that organisations ought to commit their limited resources to increasing job satisfaction during these periods of change. Increased employee job satisfaction will impact on the perceived psychological breach by moderating the effect of psychological contract breach on work engagement – and thus reducing the probability of poor work engagement. This understanding would ensure that organisations focus on the areas with the most impact for competitive advantage when they have limited resources in times of change (Chaundhry & Song, 2014; Scrima et al., 2014). This study found that organisational support does not have a significant moderating effect on the relationship between psychological contract breach and work engagement. By contrast, previous literature, regarding the JD-R model, indicates that job resources, including organisational support, reduce job demands (including mental and emotional demands) (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This study, however, does not support this finding, suggesting that it is important for organisations to understand exactly where they should focus limited resources to maximise impact. Organisations must ensure that money and effort spent on organisational support is done in a way that has the desired effect.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Research

Improved levels of work engagement are possible if organisations understand the relationship and effect that other variables, like job satisfaction, organisational support and psychological contract breach, have with work engagement. While several studies confirm the importance of cultivating higher levels of work engagement, the current research demonstrates that work engagement is unfortunately negatively affected by psychological contract breach. Organisations should therefore take note of the impact that breach of the contract with their employees would have on these employees' engagement with their work. Fortunately, this current study found that job satisfaction moderates this negative impact of the psychological contract breach on engagement. It appears that the intrinsic motivation derived from job satisfaction in effect forms a buffer to the negative impact of the psychological breach. Employees would thus benefit from focusing on their actual jobs in times of increased uncertainty and ensure to derive satisfaction from their jobs. The fit between

employees and their jobs must therefore be an important management and particularly human resources' focus area to lessen the risks of the potential psychological contract breach in times of economic pressure. This would enable organisations to focus limited resources and management capacity on these risks to ultimately have the highest possible impact on work engagement.

The study was limited to one country, and it is recommended that future research is conducted across borders to explore differences and similarities. It is recommended that a longitudinal study be conducted to add more depth. As this study focuses on psychological contract breach and the impact of moderators, it is suggested that future research look at the different psychological contracts and breaches in the different contract categories (Rousseau 2009) to determine if job satisfaction and organisational support have different effects across the different contracts when breached. Organisations need to understand the severity of the psychological contract breach across different contracts by evaluating the following three factors: attribution, severity and time of breach (Eckerd et al, 2013). The study endeavoured to contribute to understanding the relationships between work engagement and other constructs to improve the level of work engagement to the benefit of the organisation and employees.

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