A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH AND ORGANIZATIONAL CYNICISM PERCEIVED BY COLLEGE TEACHERS

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Abstract:

Objective of this study is to reveal the level of perceived psychological contract breach and perceived organizational cynicism of college teachers and whether or not a correlation exists between psychological contract breach and organizational cynicism. It was actualized with 100 college teachers selected by random sampling from Arts and Science colleges in kallakurichi district of Tamil Nadu in the academic years 2021-2022. In the study, "Psychological Contract Breach" and "Organizational Cynicism Scale" have been utilized in order to determine perceived psychological contract breach and perceived organizational cynicism, respectively, as data collection tool. In analyzing data thus collected, SPSS packaged software have been used, and arithmetic mean, standard deviation, Pearson correlation analysis have been made based on the data. According to data analysis results, it has been observed that overall perceived Psychological Contract Breach has a positive impact on perceived organizational cynicism of college teachers.

Keywords: College Teacher, psychological contract breach, organizational cynicism

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Business world whose parties comprised of employees, employers and organization has recently changed. Employers used to commit providing support to their employees in areas such as safety at work, training and promotion and etc. They were expecting loyalty, trust and commitment towards their organizations in the exchange of this. Thus, employer- employee relationships were inter-balanced. However, changes introduced by globalization have also influenced the balance between employer- employee relationships. Changing business relationships have brought about longer shift time for employees, more extensive job definitions, expectancy from them to be more flexible and be tolerant for continuous change and uncertainty. In the exchange of employers' growing expectations, on the contrary, no notable change has been observed with employers' responsibility towards employee apart from sustaining their employment. These changes occurred in employees' employment relationships have resulted in differences in terms of interpretation of changing balance in their minds. It was observed that individuals have developed various attitudes towards their organization for self-defense. Perception of psychological contract breach and organizational cynicism could

be considered as employees' answer against this unfair situation based on the self-defense reaction (Naus et al., 2007: 684-685).

In contemporary organization structures, psychological contract, described as the reflection of social contract concept in sociology science to organizations, maintains the relationship between employer and employee, ensures fulfillment of expectations of employees and organization, and guides managers (Isci, 2010: 2). Psychological contract concept has been utilized extensively to comprehend structure of dynamic business relationships and to explain behaviors and attitudes at work (Bal and Vink, 2011: 2795). Psychological contract breach refers the conscious of failing in fulfillment of obligations mandated by psychological contract existing between the individuals and their employer organization (Johnson and M. O'leary-Kelly, 2003: 629).

On the other hand, organizational cynicism is considered as an attitude that arises as a reaction among employees against these negative conditions. Organizational cynicism represents employees' disbelief towards organizational decisions, mistrust towards their intentions, and the belief that managers do not reflect their real characteristics (James, 2005: 25). There are studies which investigate the relationship between the two concepts in the domestic and global literature (Andersson, 1996; Abraham, 2000, Delken, 2004; James, 2005; Percin et.al., 2012; Arslan, 2012; Aslan and Boylu, 2014). According to findings reported by aforesaid studies, psychological contract breach is related with organizational cynicism in general; and psychological contract breach is antecedent of organizational cynicism.

1.1.1. Definition:

Organizational cynicism is the negative attitude of individuals towards the organization where they work and its procedures, processes and management; in other words, it is based on the assumption on the part of employees that these elements deprive the employees of their interests (Wilkerson et al. 2008: 2274).

Cynicism can be defined as a mindset characterized by hopelessness and disillusionment and is also associated with repulsion and denigration. Emotions such as honesty, justice and sincerity have been sacrificed for the sake of individual interests (James, 2005: 1).

Cynicism is defined as "not liking the others and not trusting the others" (Brandes et al., 2008: 235)

According to Dean et al, (1998), organizational cynicism is a negative attitude on the part of individuals towards the organization for which they work. It contains three dimensions. (1) a belief that the organization lacks integrity, (2) negative affect towards the organization and (3) tendencies to disparaging and critical behaviors toward the organization that are consistent with these beliefs and affect (Naus, 2007: 25)

There are various dimensions of organizational cynicism. Dean et al. (1998) classified it as cognitive, affective and behavioral.

Cognitive Dimension; It is believed that the organization lacks honesty (Dean, 1998:348). This belief appears with negative emotions such as fury, scorn and denunciation. In this respect, cynicism is a tendency towards lack of belief in the good and sincerity of actions and human motives. Cynical employees believe that their organizations "betray" them due to a lack of principles such as justice, honesty and sincerity (Özgener et al, 2008: 56).

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Affective Dimension; It is a dimension that involves employees' strong negative feelings towards the organization like insult, indignation and embarrassment (Abraham, 2000: 269). Behavioral Dimension; It involves verbal and non-verbal cynical behaviors. While employees' strong statements, criticisms and predictions regarding the fact that their organization lacks honesty cover verbal cynical behaviors, some non-verbal behaviors (employees' meaningful looks at each other, their derisive laughter) may involve cynical attitudes (Dean, 1998; 346).

The most obvious of the cynical attitudes towards the organization involves strong critical discourses targeting the organization. Although these discourses may be in different forms, their clearest manifestation expresses the belief that the organization lacks honesty and sincerity and includes sarcastic humor used in parallel with that of the Greek Cynics (Kutaniş and Çetinel, 2010: 189).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Cynicism has been studied extensively from a psychological perspective. From an organizational point of view, Niederhoffer in his 1967 study was the first to analyze and measure cynicism in police officers. Another set of researchers deduced that cynicism might affect organizations and their members through the "break down [of] authority". However, it was during the 1990s when both practitioners and academicians started paying some attention to cynicism within organizations. During this time, organizational cynicism studies were considered in the first stage of scientific research. There were many studies which focused on the systematic examination of organizational cynicism as a construct that directly influences attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors.

Some factors that influence cynicism are handling stress, feud with organizational anticipations, inadequate social foundation and acknowledgement, not having a voice in the decision-making process, disproportionate distribution of power, and inadequate communication (Reichers, Wanous, & Austin, 1997).

Organizational cynicism is expressed as negative attitudes to the organization of the individual (Dean et al., 1998). As to Ajzen (2001), the attitude represents a short evaluation of the psychological objects determined by special dimensions like good- bad, useful-harmful, likable-unlikable (Kalağan, 2009). These attitudes are constituted by the mainframe of this research; "cognitive items" include knowledge about attitude object, "affective items" represent the belief of lack of honesty and negative emotional reactions, observable all behaviors especially critical and pejorative behaviors against attitude item (Dean et al., 1998). Cynicism can be seen as a person being negative and pessimistic about others. Employees who are cynical can influence the whole organization and hamstring the organization from arriving at its goals. Employees who are cynical have the belief that their confederates are selfish and self-centred (Barefoot, Dodge, Peterson, Dahlstrom, & Williams, 1989).

According to Dean, Brandes, &Dharwadkar (1998), organizational cynicism is seen as one expressing a negative demeanour towards the organization they work for and it incorporates three measures: (1) a belief that the organization has no integrity; (2) negative affect toward the organization; and (3) tendencies of derogative and detracting behaviours toward the organization that are uniform with these beliefs and affect.

According to Dean, Brandes, &Dharwadkar (1998), the first measure of cynicism is Cognitive cynicism (belief), the second measure is Affective cynicism (affect), and the final measure is Behavioural cynicism (behaviour). The first measure which is cognitive cynicism is the employees' belief that the organizations they work for is not being honest with them, are unfair in their practices, and are not straightforward with them. Employees may therefore associate themselves with dissenting attitudes such as deception, fabrication, conspiracy, and manipulation.

Organizational cynicism is the belief that an organization is not honest which causes hard-hitting reputation and critical behaviours when it is combined with a strong negative emotional response (Abraham, 2000)

Psychological contract viewed by Rousseau (1989) as reciprocal obligations set between employee and employer is sometimes disrupted or damaged at certain occasions. Employer's failure or omission in promises and obligations within the scope of the psychological contract gives harm to psychological contract (Buyukyilmaz and Cakmak, 2014: 584). When it is considered that at least one of the obligations that arise as a result of promises made explicitly or implied allusively by employee is not fulfilled, or even fulfillment of these obligations is delayed, employees perceive that psychological contract is breached (Kiefer and Briner, 2006:204). When an imbalance felt by employees between what they sacrifice for their work and promises made to them by employer arise, employees think that this contract imagined in their mind is breached (Aslan and Boylu, 2014: 36).

Differences noticed by employees with their expectations from their organization and the benefits supplied by the organization to them are viewed as breach of psychological contract. However, breach status differs subject to the benefits fundamental reason of the breach. For instance, employees attach more importance to benefits which could have more direct impact on their lives; and finally, the breach that arise is perceived more laud and clear. Moreover, since benefits are concrete and tangible things which allow that they could be discussed and assessed rationally, negative respective actions of organization could easily be recognized by employees. Therefore, unconformity perceived by employees with the awarding practices of their organization increases their perception of breach further with respect to other circumstances (Turnley and Feldman, 1999: 369).

Psychological contract breach is an abstract concept made up of perceptions of employees owing to its subjective nature. However, there could be an evident breach at some occasions. For instance, if the person authorized for recruitment process declares to employees that they will be promoted at the end of the third year even though this was not included in the job contract, and if this promotion is not given to them at the end of the period, then, there is an explicit status of breach. Employee broke the word given at the beginning. In some occasions, information provided during recruitment process could be ambiguous. Using ambiguous expressions such as "Employees could gain promotions in the first three years without any hindrance" could be understood as a promise to be promoted in their first three years during recruitment process. If this promised promotion does not take place, employee would then feel the breach. However, the breach felt at this point is result of the controversy between employee and employer. Controversy emerges when there are different understanding between employee and employer concerning a promise made in terms of whether there is an obligation, or content

of a promise made. In both cases, the difference between what is understood by employees on the basis of what was told to them and what was realized would result in perception of contract breach (Robinson and Morrison, 2000: 526-528).

One of the most important differences between obligation and expectation concepts, which arise in employees' minds and which could not be differentiated clearly, is the potential consequences that may arise when they are not fulfilled. Guest (1998) reported that reactions of employees against the unsatisfied expectations would be reflected on organizational consequences more severely and detrimental. Indeed, Robinson (1996) reported the similar supporting result which indicates that contract breach causes unsatisfied expectations. However, unsatisfied expectations will not bring consequences of contract breach about on its own (Shapiro and Kessler, 2000: 905-906).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY
3.1. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY
This study aims to investigate the influence of psychological contract breach on organizational cynicism as perceived by teachers and if there is a correlation between their perception about Psychological contract breach and perception about organizational cynicism. Answers were sought for the following questions through the study designed using survey model:

1.   To examine the level of the psychological contract breach as perceived by college teachers.

2.   To analyze the level of the organizational cynicism as perceived by college teachers.

3.   To test the correlation between the psychological contract breach and Organizational cynicism as perceived by college teachers.

3.2. SCOPE OF THE STUDY
 The main purpose of the study is to know the influence of Psychological contract breach on Organizational cynicism.

This study is fully based on employee's views.

This study is fully meant for obtaining the correct opinion of the employees.

3.3. RESEARCH DESIGN
    The formidable problem that follows the task of defining the research problem is preparation of the design of the research project popularly known as the "Research design". It constitutes the blue print for the collection measurement and analyze of data. Descriptive research design, which are concerned with describing the characteristics of particular individual or of a group. This design concerned with specific predictions, with narration of facts and pre-planned design for analysis. It is structured or well throughout instruments for collection of data.

    In this study, descriptive research design has been used to minimize bias and maximize reliability of the evidence collected.

3.4. SAMPLING METHOD
         Simple random sampling is the simplest form of Random sampling. In this type each population element has a known and an equal chance of selection. This is an objective approach where any bias is eliminated and thus giving a chance to each population elements of being

selected. The simple random sampling is used to facilitate the sample selection process in the organization.

Data Collection Instruments

College teachers' organizational cynicism on their institution is measured by a thirteen-item "Organizational Cynicism Scale", which was designed by Brandes, Dharwadkar and Dean (1999).There are three dimensions of Organizational cynicism namely cognitive, affective and behavioral. A five-item scale developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000) was employed to assess Psychological contract breach (PCB).

3.5. SAMPLE SIZE

The sample size is the number of respondents in the field. The sample size of the study is 100.

3.6. METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The researcher has collected the data from the respondents by the way of following primary and secondary data collection methods. They are as follows.

3.6.1. PRIMARY DATA

Information obtained from the original source by researchers is called primary data. Primary data can be gathered slowly at a high cost. But it offers much greater accuracy and reliability. Primary data are those, which are collected a fresh and for the first time and this happen to original in character primary data can be collected by three basis methods viz. surveys, observations, experiments. Survey technique is used for this research study.

3.6.1.1. Survey Technique

Survey research is a systematic gathering of data from respondents through questionnaires. The purpose of survey research is to facilitate understanding or enable predict some of behavior of population being surveyed.

3.6.1.2. Questionnaire

The questionnaire technique is intended to secure one or more items of information from a sample of respondents or informants representative of a large group. The information is recorded on a form known questionnaire which consist the five point likert scale.

3.6.2. SECONDARY DATA

Secondary data means data that already collected by someone else. It is easily available for processing, the secondary source on information is based on the various details retrieved from journals, magazines, websites, and various place of libraries.

3.7. ANALYTICAL TOOLS USED FOR RESEARCH

After collection of the primary data from the respondents the researcher should analyze all the data by using the percentage analysis and Correlation analysis which shows the exact perception of the respondents towards the organizational cynicism.

3.8. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

☐ The sample size is only 100 respondents due to time and cost constraints.

☐ The study has conducted by based on the employee's psychological aspect.

☐ The information collected through questionnaires from the respondents they may not feel free to express themselves.
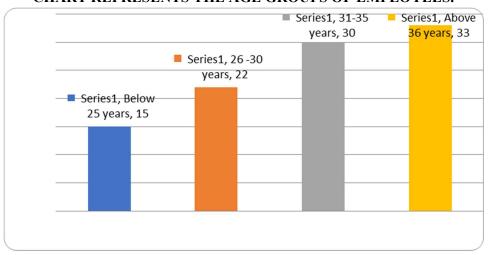
DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
TABLE: 1
TABLE REPRESENTS THE AGE GROUPS OF EMPLOYEES.

CATEGORY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Below 25 years	15	15
26 -30 years	22	22
31-35 years	30	30
Above 36 years	33	33
Total	**100**	**100**

Source: primary data (2022)

CHART: 1
CHART REPRESENTS THE AGE GROUPS OF EMPLOYEES.

INTERPRETATION

The above table reveals that, 15% of the respondents are having below 25 years, 22% of the respondents are having 26-30 years, 30% of the respondents are having 31-35 years and 33% of the respondents are having above 36 years of old in their respective age groups.

Table 2.Correlation table for the opinion of respondents about Psychological Contract Breach and Organizational Cynicism.

Descriptive Statistics

Factor	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Psychological Contract Breach	10.5000	2.01259	**100**
Organizational Cynicism	27.6900	6.36387	**100**

Correlation

Factor		Leadership	Job satisfaction
Psychological Contract Breach	Pearson Correlation	1	.298**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.003
	N	100	100
Organizational Cynicism	Pearson Correlation	.298**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	
	N	100	100

Source: primary data (2020) **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Interpretation:

H0: There is no significant difference between the Psychological Contract Breach and Organizational Cynicism of the re¬spondent.

Ha: There is a significant difference between the Psychological Contract Breach and Organizational Cynicism of the re¬spondent.

The above table shows the comparison of psychological contract breach and Organizational Cynicism. The identified mean value for the psychological contract breach is 10.5000. The mean value for the Organizational Cynicism is 27.6900 which is higher than Psychological Contract Breach. The correlation P-value 0.003 is less than 0.05, so that the null hypothesis is rejected at 1% level of significant. Hence it has been concluded that there is a significant relationship between Psychological Contract Breach and Organizational Cynicism.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study analyses the level of perceived Psychological contract breach and perceived organization cynicism of College teachers and whether a correlation exists between perceived psychological contract breach and perceived organizational cynicism. As it appears from the study, we found that there is a positive relationship between perceived psychological contract breach and organizational cynicism. Hence it is inferred that psychological contract violations leads to organizational cynicism which in turn will directly influence the performance of the teachers and also creates turnover intention among the teachers. Hence this has assumed greater significance and the employers should adhere to the promises which they had assured to their employees.

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