

# Perceived Effects of Psychological Contract Breach on Job Involvement and Organizational Citizenship Behavior among Academic Employees in A TVET Institution

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**Abstract:** *The aim of this paper is to establish how academic employees in technical, vocational education and training (TVET) College perceive the effects of psychological contract breach (PCB) in relations to job involvement and citizenship behaviour. Quantitative exploratory research design and a survey instrument were used to collect 170 samples from academic employees in a TVET College to share their perceptions of PCB. The findings confirm a significant (P-value .006) relationship between PCB and job involvement. There is a strong indication that PCB has an effect on job involvement. The findings also revealed that there is a relationship between PCB and organisational citizenship behaviour. However, it is not significant since the (P-value was .119) in the regression analysis. These results are a consequence of academics not feeling a significant PCB, which might have explained better the relationship between PCB and organisational citizenship behaviour. Significantly, the paper established TVET College academics has a stable employer-employee relationship since there is minimal PCB.*

**Keywords:** Psychological Contract Breach, Organizational Citizenship Behavior, Job Involvement, Academics, TVET College

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Higher Education in South Africa has worked tirelessly to transform higher education institutions with an aim to enable them to provide quality and relevant education. The transformation initiatives have been concentrated largely on technical, vocational, education and training (TVET) colleges due to its strategic role as outlined in the White Paper on Higher Education, (2013) which is to train and equip young people with the skills that will maximise their employability in the labour market. Ogude, Nel and Oosthuizen (2005) opines that if the TVET transformation is done earnestly, TVET colleges would most likely respond effectively and efficiently to global challenges. Buthelezi (2018) notes that chief among the changes that have taken place during the transformation of the TVET sector was the employment of staff, particularly academic employees.

Initially, the TVET sector had two types of academic employees, while other the Department of Higher Education and Training employed certain academics; the TVET college council employed others. The department has since re-integrated all employees who were employed by the council into mainstream employment in its personnel. Buthelezi (2018) argues that the lack of capable human resources to facilitate policy implementation has affected the lecturers negatively. This gives credence for an investigation that would seek to establish the extent to which TVET lecturers have been affected by the changes within their work environment. In every higher education institution, academic employees are the main drivers of its core business which is teaching and learning.

In order to achieve quality education, academics' work performance should be stable and consistent, and this depends largely on the manner in which academic perceive the effects of PCB in their work environment. The psychological contract plays a vital role in terms of employee perceptions of the organisation as well as job performance. Furthermore, previous studies have found that psychological contract affects workers' attitude, behaviour and work commitment in the workplace, especially when breached (Bal & Vink, 2011). Basically, a study of psychological contract creates an opportunity to predict employee behaviour, this could, in turn, helps managers to effectively and efficiently plan and manage employee perceptions (Agarwal & Bhargava, 2013). This paper investigates the extent to which TVET academic employees perceive the effects of PCB on their job involvement and organisational citizenship behaviour.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 TVET Sector transformation

The advent of democracy resulted in many changes in South Africa higher education transformation. Due to the legacy of the apartheid system in education, establishing policies and legislation to transform the higher education environment was inevitable. Singh (2011) states that the closure of some colleges, the clustering of Further Education and Training Colleges, and merging of universities with others are just examples of the transformation that has been in the higher education. Despite the success in some transformation endeavours in the higher education, there is a consensus that suggests that the TVET College sector is still not meeting the needs of the community and society

(Strydom, Mentz & Kuh, 2010). There could a plethora of issues that affect the TVET college sector from meeting its obligations and this paper focuses on academic employees who are also the main source for the functioning of the college sector.

The core function of any higher education institution is usually driven by academics. The inability of the TVET sector to meet its obligation might be attributed to the lecturers' poor performance, however, it is also essential to establish the nature of their work environment as well. Achieving quality education requires that the academics' performance is stable and consistent, and this depends on the manner in which academic respond when there are suspicions of PCB in the work environment. For academics to produce quality output, the TVET College as an employer should not be seen to have breached the psychological contract which are the beliefs usually held by individuals concerning terms of the employment agreement (Kraft, 2008). The circumstances surrounding the TVET sector transformation might have affected the manner in which academics perceive their work environment and perhaps changed the manner to which they exert themselves in the workplace.

The effects of higher education transformation on employees have been reported by various researchers, for example, van den Berg, Manias and Burger (2008) investigated the influence of job-related factors on work engagement of staff at the University of the Free State. Their study reported that the university staff experienced certain job-related stressors such as workload, poor remuneration, increased home-work interference and insufficient physical resources. The study concluded that academic employees in the university experienced certain work-related challenges as a consequence of organisational changes in the university.

Wyngaard and Kapp (2004) focused on colleges of education in the Western Cape Province where mergers were implemented between various colleges. The study established that there were mixed feelings from the college employees regarding the implementation of college merges. However, more significantly was the discovery that merges had a predominantly negative impact on staff morale. The impact of merge contributed to staff developing negative attitudes, staff resignation, feeling of uncertainty, lowering of loyalty and accountability. Pienaar and Bester (2009) cited that changes in higher education have made an impact on high-stress levels on academics in various ways. These factors are viewed by these researchers as obstacles to the careers of academics and might have severe career damage on academics. Hassan (2011) notes that few academics have not been affected by the impact of educational transformation within the higher education landscape.

## 2.2 Psychological contract breach

Literature suggests that the first person to coin the concept 'psychological contract' is Argyris (1960), the rationale for this concept was based on the writing of

Bernard (1938) and March and Simon (1958). The essence in conceptualising of psychological contract is the relationship between the employer and employee expectations of their relationship. The employment relationship is premised on values, aspirations, obligations, and expectations that function over and above the formal contract (Argyris, 1960). Prior to psychological contract conception, Bernard (1938) wrote a theory of equilibrium on the prism that employee constant contribution relies on the sufficiency of appraisals from the organisation. In this theory lies the idea of reciprocal exchange which is fundamental to the employee-employer relationship (Coyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008). In elaborating this theory March and Simon (1958) make some contribution to the psychological contract. In their writing, they argue that for employees to be satisfied, the disparity between enticement from the employer and the contributions expected in return should be marginal.

In their contribution, March and Simon (1958) indicate that from the worker's viewpoint, the contributions by the employees has to be adequate in order to produce incentive from the organisation, in return, the organisations' incentive needs to be enticing to a point where it draws employee's contribution. Coyle-Shapiro and Pazerfall (2008) argue that the contributions of March and Simon (1958) are neglected much often in psychological contract literature, nevertheless, the obvious mutual exchange bears an incredible similarity with the central beliefs of the psychological contract. This form of contract is not written wherein the employer and employee reach agreements. Argyris (1960) state that instead it is a contract emerging from unspoken words between an employee and immediate supervisor. This author further state that the employer-employee relationship could help develop in such a way that employees would exchange higher productivity and lower grievances in return for acceptable salary and job security (Argyris, 1960). The assumption behind Argyris assertion was that employees are likely to excel in the organisation if it does not interfere much with the employee group norms. In return, the employees respond by positively respecting the right of the organisation to progress.

Essentially the premise of psychological contract existence is on the promises, there is evidence which suggests that even such promises are in two ways. Ejimonyeabala (2014) explored the literature in relation to PCB and revealed that employees make promises to the employers and vice versa. Among the promises that are sought by employers from the employees is loyalty, volunteering, give sufficient notice after accepting another offer, willingness to be transferred and relocate, refrain from supporting organisations competing with one's employer, work additional hours, and remain in the employment for a minimum period. On the other hand, the promises sought by employees include job security, promotion, social support, performance-based salary, professional development and reasonable salary. The promises involved in the creation of psychological contract can thus be divided into the two

elements namely transactional and relational since it has been argued before that the psychological contract has these two elements anyway (Shen, 2010).

According to Shen (2010), the transactional elements focus more on monetary exchanges for example salary, working hours, employment time frame. The relational elements are less about monetary items instead they focus on job security, career development, interpersonal relations, autonomy, and support. The number of sub-elements that are involved in the psychological contract makes it complicated and these elements depend on the nature of the work environment as well as the organisations. Due to the complexity and dynamic nature of the psychological contract. The modification of the general concept of psychological contract is necessary when applied to a particular sector to reflect its characteristics.

In the work environment, it is improbable for employers to jot down all the benefits and actions that the employer would fulfil when an employee has performed the prescribed duties consequently the psychological contract exists. The irony in this contract is that it is unwritten and thus it is subjective to how the individual perceives the employer. In this regard, Antonaki and Trivellas (2014) indicate that it is in the nature of social exchange for people to search constantly for reasonable and mutual treatment interactions. Upon establishing unfair treatment, people are likely to get even by engaging on counter negative attitudes and behaviours as a retaliating for the perceived unfairness. This could be aligned with a biblical verse which refers to this exchange as “eye for an eye”. Since this would take place at the expense of the organisational performance, thus it is essential for researchers to investigate employees’ perceptions about their psychological contract. In relation to social exchange and citizenship behaviour, Liu, Huang, Huang and Chen (2013) opines that employees especially those who show organisational citizen behaviour, they do so because employment to them is seen from the social exchange relationship perspective. Therefore, when employees perceive the PCB, they will restrain their organizational citizenship behaviours and reduce their contributions to the organization. Organisations in general need extra contributions from the employees such as extra hours at work, taking extra responsibilities in order to support the objectives of the organisation.

A psychological contract breach occurs when reciprocity has been broken by one party who fails to honour the repayment of dues payable to the other party, then the other party would view this a breach of psychological contract and imbalanced in obligations (Payne, Culbertson, Lopez, Boswell & Barger, 2015). Thus it can be assumed that a breach in the psychological contract is often caused by the imbalance between the employees’ expectation and employer’s fulfilment of the obligation. Payne et al., (2015) concur and further state there are other factors that lead to the imbalance in the employment relationship such as lack of fulfilment and the misunderstanding regarding the

obligations. A common misconception about PCB has been the assumption that only employees experience it. Employers may experience it from employees as Ejimonyeabala (2014) found that it is a two-way concept. Perceived breach lies in cognitive awareness while violation refers to “emotional and affective state” resulting from one party’s interpretation that the other has been unable to fulfil the psychological contract.

More research discusses the psychological contract mainly from the employees’ point of view thus neglecting the employers’ perspective. This has been evident even in the psychological conceptual definition (Rousseau, 1989, Agarwal & Bhargava, 2013). Though this research has no intention to venture into that discussion yet, it is necessary to note that there are two parties in a psychological contract namely the employee as well as the employer and when there is a perceived failure to honour one’s obligations, the views of two parties should be considered to provide a balanced view. The employees’ responses to PCB varies from attitudinal to behavioural (Ballou, 2013). Furthermore, these reactions may translate into different job outcomes that affect the overall wellness of the organization. Sharif, Wahab and Sarip (2017) argue that PCB is responsible for bad behavioural actions towards the employers. In this regard, the manner in which people react to an unfulfilled psychological contract might result in harmful workplace outcomes. PCB can result to an emotional reaction, Savarimuthu and Rachael (2017), indicate that the anticipated emotional response include anger, disappointment that could further lead to decreased job performance, withdrawal and possibly quit the job. The most unfortunate part about psychological contract breaches is that they occur regularly and have been normalised in workplaces (Robinson, 1996).

### 2.3 Organisational citizenship behaviour

Citizenship behaviour is one of the top researched behavioural job outcomes resulting from PCB (Hess & Jepsen, 2009). Organisational citizenship behaviour is known as that discretionary and that self-imposed obligation to go beyond the formal role requirements (Mohanty & Rath, 2012). Organisational citizenship behaviour depends on the willingness of employees, in that way the behaviour in this context is likely to be stimulated by how the employee perceives the organisation and its management. This behaviour could play an important part in the academic environment by encouraging academics to use their discretion when responding to the needs of the students particularly those needs which are outside the conventional scope of employment (Cavanagh, Fisher, Francis & Gapp, 2012). However, Jafri (2012) notes that the breach of psychological contract affects employee organizational citizenship behaviour and this will result in the withdrawal of discretionary contribution. Fields (2002) categorises organisational citizenship behaviour as follows:

- **Altruism** – is the discretionary behaviour that is coordinated at helping other individuals with assignments pertinent to the organisation, for

example, an employee may take a portion of the workloads from other truant employees.

- **Conscientiousness** – is the discretionary behaviour where an employee goes beyond the job requirements of the organisation, for example, employees may decide not to take extra breaks and to respect the code of conduct consistently.
- **Sportsmanship** – is that discretionary behaviour depicting the keenness of an employee to tolerate circumstances that not ideal and not complain excessively.
- **Courtesy** – is the behaviour aimed to prevent the occurrence of work-related events, this may include being considerate of the impact of one’s actions on other employees.
- **Civic virtue** – is an employee’s discretional behaviour where an employee demonstrates that he/she is interested in matters relating to the organisation and strive to keep up with the organisations’ development.

#### 2.4 Job involvement

Another behaviour reaction that employees are likely to display when they are treated properly is job involvement. Job involvement is the degree to which individuals contribute to the job (Lawrence & Kacmar, 2012). Ueda (2012) indicate that usually, job involved employees grow an organisational personality of doing more for the organisation. Ueda continues and highlights that high job involved individuals generally appear as satisfied with their jobs, they also display positive moods in the workplace and are always committed to the organisation, careers as well as their profession. In addition, these individuals believe that their personal and organisational goals are aligned. In support, Chen and Chiu (2009) also opined that employees who show the greater behaviour of job involvement are also likely to extend their self-respect through effective job performance display of organisational commendable behaviours. In terms of the relationship between the perceived PCB and job involvement, the study by Min, Zhang, Restubog and Huang (2012) found that in a fulfilled psychological contract, both employer and employee have honoured their responsibilities. Meeting the psychological needs and employee’s expectations boost, their sense of identity towards their work and further increase their job involvement. However, inversely, failing to fulfil the psychological contract, employee’s personal needs and expectations are not sufficiently met, consequently, employees will neglect their work and further reduce their job involvement.

#### 2.5 Research hypothesis

Employees whose psychological contracts have been breached respond in a number of ways. Psychological contracts may be breached because of differences of opinion with a superior, frustrations about assignments or tasks, and irritations because of the behaviour of co-workers (Pate, Martin & McGoldrick, 2003). It could also be breached by unfulfilled promises which are often made to employees during the job entry level. The way in which employees deal with the circumstances which are perceived as a breach of the psychological contract has an important impact on how they view their organisation. Therefore, establishing the link between PCB and job involvement as reactionary behaviour as well as citizenship behaviour among academic employees at a TVET College is considered as paramount. Given that, academics occupy a central role in producing skilled personnel for the country and their psychological contract perceptions would enable TVET College to improve the work environment. The study makes the following hypotheses:

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between psychological contract breach and citizenship behaviour.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between psychological contract breach and job involvement.

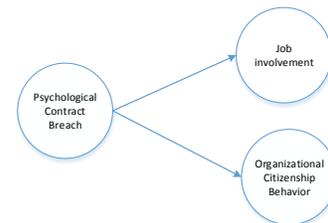


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

An exploratory research design that is quantitative in nature was used to share the participant perceptions about their work environment and the extent to which psychological contract has been breached. A survey instrument was used in this study to gather the data. The population for the study consisted of the academic employees from a TVET College in. the rationale behind selecting these individuals was that they have experienced transformational changes within their occupational arrangement. The structural employment relationship was the base from which this paper would understand academic perceptions towards PCB and its impact on job involvement and organisational citizenship behaviour. Among the 220 questionnaires, which were distributed, 170 were returned which indicates 77.2% response rate. The data analysis was done using computer statistical package namely (SPSS). Cronbach Alpha coefficients established the internal consistency and resultant reliability of the instruments used to collect data.

**3.1 Research Questionnaire**

The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first Section A was based on obtaining the biographical information, namely gender, employment type, post level, years in a current position, years with the current employer and years in lecturing. Other sections were as follows:

- Section B – Psychological Contract Breach was measured by drawing on the work of Robinson and Morrison (2000). These statements were measured on a five-point Likert scale. Generally, measures of breach focus on whether an employee thinks that his/her employer has honoured his side of the contract (Conway & Briner, 2005).
- Section – Citizenship Behaviour (Podsakoff, Mackenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). This instrument utilises 24 items describing the five dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour namely altruism, conscientiousness
- This measure uses 24 items to describe the five dimensions of organisational citizenship behaviour. These include altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy, and civic virtue.
- Section D – Job Involvement (this variable was measured by ten items, which were taken from Kanungo’s Job Involvement Questionnaire Kanungo, 1982).

**Test of reliability**

**Table. 1.1: Cronbach coefficient Alphas (N=170)**

Measure	Cronbach’s alpha
Psychological contract breach	.72
Organisational Citizenship Behaviour	.70
Job Involvement	.84

The Cronbach’s alpha is a coefficient of reliability commonly used as a measure of reliability for a sample of respondents. The reliability of the summated scores calculated in the present study was determined by calculating Cronbach’s coefficient alphas for all sections in the questionnaire. Cronbach coefficient alphas above the threshold value of 0.7 which, according to Nunally (1978), is sufficient proof of the reliability of the applicable scale scores.

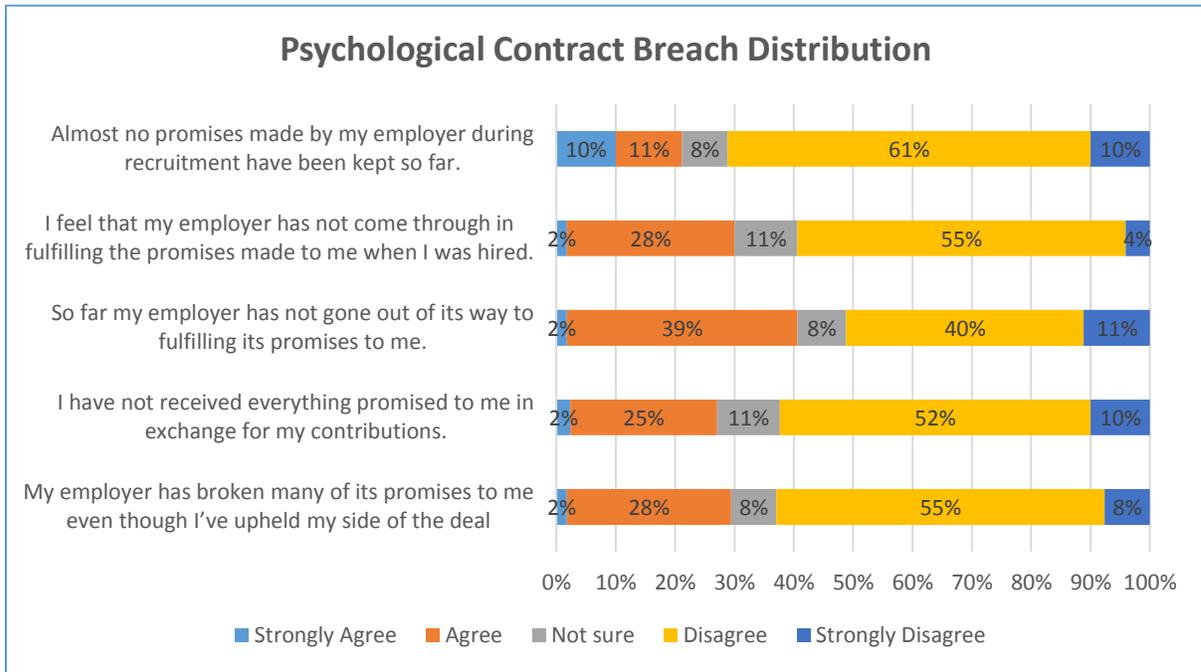
**Respondents’ demographic**

The gender distribution reflects a normal trend where females are a majority with (59%) whereas the males are (41%). The employment type distribution shows that about (89%) of the academic employees at uMfolozi TVET College are permanently employed and this variable also used in the data analysis as it is tested against the PCB. The majority (88%) of the academics, especially those who participated in the study are lecturers. It was established during the data collection that senior lecturers positions are mainly playing a supervisory role. The period that most (51%) of the academics have spent in the current positions is between 1-5 years which indicate that more academics have recently joined the academic fraternity. Whereas, about (42%) of the academics have been in the current position for a period of 6-10 years. There seems to be a rotation phenomenon of employees at uMfolozi TVET, the distribution of frequencies on the period that academics have been spent with the current employer is evenly spread. This suggests that some of the academics began to work for the college in different occupations. Most (54%) of the academics have been lecturing.

**Findings**

**Psychological Contract Breach**

With regards to PCB, figure 1.1 shows a summary of the items and responses related to the breach. Respondents for most of the items seem to favour the employer except that on item three respondents are evenly balanced. In item three, about 41% of the respondents feel that their employer has not gone out of its way to fulfilling its promises to them, the other 51% disagree with this statement. The overall reading into figure 4.1 below is that there has been a fairly balanced psychological contract between the respondents and their employer. This indicates that the employer has been fulfilling most of its obligation to its employees. While there seems to be a stable psychological contract between the respondents and the employer, some of the respondents did indicate that the employer has broken some promises.



**Figure 2: Psychological Contract Breach (n=170)**

To summarise this section, it is clear that the psychological contract has been reported by fewer respondents. It is interesting to note that the majority of the respondents felt that promises that were made to them during the recruitment have been fulfilled by the employer. The only key aspect which seemed to be a notable concern for the respondents was that the employer is not going out of its way to fulfilling its promises. These results affirm the literature in that employees have certain promises which they expect their employers to fulfil in the course employment period. Agarwal and Bhargava (2013) affirm that it is the nature of the psychological contract that employees may feel entitled to receive based on the promises that have been conveyed by the employer. The literature further reveals that promises are usually made by employers during the interview period where the recruiters portray the employer in positive and favourable terms (Rousseau, 1989). In the social exchange theory, the results of this study support this theory in terms of employees being aware of the promises that were made to them. In that light, the Social Exchange Theory indicates that the relationship of reciprocation will ensue (Cyle-Shapiro & Parzefall, 2008).

**Table 1.2: Chi-square analysis**

Minimum was achieved
Chi-square = 11.007
Degrees of freedom = 1
Probability level = .001

**Table 1.3: Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)**

	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.
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			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
DV1	<---	IDV	.037	.024	1.558	.119
DV2	<---	IDV	.140	.051	2.733	.006

In table 1.4. (IDV denotes Independent variable, which is PCB; DV1 denotes dependent variable 1, in this case, its Organisational Citizenship behaviour; DV2 denotes dependent variable 2 which is job involvement). It can be observed from the above table that there is a relationship between the independent variable and dependent variable.

**H<sub>1</sub>: There is a positive relationship between psychological contract breach and organisational citizenship behaviour**

The results shown in Table 1.4 reveal that there is a relationship between PCB and organisational citizenship behaviour. However, it is not significant since the *P*-value is .119 in the regression analysis. Therefore, the hypothesis one is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted that: There is a relationship between PCB and organisational citizenship behaviour. These results are a consequence of academics not feeling a significant PCB which could have had a different impact between PCB and organisational citizenship behaviour had it been breached significantly. Perhaps in the event, academic employees report PCB in their respective work environment, the withdrawal of organisational citizenship behaviour could be expected. Thus, it can be concluded that a stable psychological contract would lead to employees engaging on citizenship behaviour unlike when the psychological contract is seen to have been breached as previous research has reported.

**H<sub>2</sub>: There is a positive relationship between psychological contract breach and job involvement**

Hypothesis two is supported. A relationship was established as it is shown in table 1.4, that P-values are less than 0.05 suggests that there is a relationship between PCB and job involvement. Furthermore, the results in table 1.4 show that there is a significant relationship between PCB and job involvement, with P-value at .006. Therefore it can be concluded that there is a positive relationship between PCB and job involvement. This results of this particular variables add to the existing literature since it has become evident that psychological contract is a dynamic phenomenon as other researchers have found a negative correlation between psychological contract and job involvement (Chang & Lin, 2014). The current results found a positive correlation. Notable is the majority of the respondents in the current study who reported a stable psychological contract.

Whereas a study by Chang and Lin (2014) found a negative correlation between psychological contract and job involvement. The negative relationship was attributed to the changes which companies face from time to time such as mergers and especially when employees feel when the psychological contract was breached in the process. Contrary to the current study, though TVET colleges have been going through strategic transformation academic employees still perceive their psychological contract as stable since the college has committed to most of its promises. In the midst of changes, some TVET colleges were able to protect the employment relationship with its academic personnel hence employees feel indebted to reciprocate by being involved in their job. The stability of a relationship can thus be attributed to the fairness of the employer. In this case, it can be assumed that an undesirable relationship between psychological contract and job involvement is likely to exist when the breach is alleged to have occurred.

The results further revealed that (61%) of the respondents reported that they have received almost everything promised to them by the employer. The results also showed that (41%) felt that the employer has not gone out of its way to honour the promises made to them, this number is significant indeed. There is an indication that while the employer strives to appease its employees by honouring the promises, there is a considerable number of people who are not entirely convinced by the actions of the employer. Min *et al.*, (2012) reported that honouring obligations lead to a fulfilled psychological contract, this refers to both parties namely the employer and employee and this ultimately results in a stable employment relationship. The opposite of honouring obligations and breakdown of exchange relationship regarding repaying dues owed to the other part; result in the breached psychological contract (Payne *et al.*, 2015). The study by Payne and his colleagues affirms the assumption that unfulfilled promises trigger PCB.

#### **4. DISCUSSIONS**

The results of the study affirm the positive relationship between PCB and job involvement. Therefore, the assumption is that the perceived PCB is likely to have an

effect on job involvement among academic employees in a TVET College. The effect of PCB on job involvement is such that when the expectations of both the employer and employee are met, employees would identify with the organisation meanwhile the employer refrain from breaching the psychological contract. Ueda (2012) state that usually, the job involved employees develop an organisational personality to do more for the organisation. Unlike when there is a PCB where employees become withdrawn to the point of contemplating on leaving the organisation. Min *et al.*, (2012) affirms that a breached psychological contract result to work isolation and to employee reducing their job involvement and this might have severe consequences on organisational performance.

Since the psychological contract is premised on reciprocity practice and that a stable relationship was reported in this study, it is conceivable for academics to respond positively towards the employer. However, upon experiencing an imbalance in the employment relationship academics might retaliate and further adopt negative attitudes and behaviours as a way of reciprocating experienced unfairness. Reciprocating benefits strengthens trustworthiness and in turn enable the conferring of benefits and discharging of obligations over the long term.

The results of the study indicate that there is a relationship between PCB and citizenship behaviour, however not significant. In the case of this study, it can be assumed that PCB is likely not to have an effect on citizenship behaviour of academic employees at a TVET College. Since academic employees at a TVET College have not experienced constant psychological contract breach. Liu *et al.*, (2013) opines that employees especially those who show organisational citizen behaviour do so because employment to them is seen from the social exchange relationship perspective. Therefore, when the psychological contract is perceived to have been breached, employees will restrain their organizational citizenship behaviours and reduce their contributions to the organization. In the study, the results show that more employees engage in various forms of citizenship behaviour in terms of altruism, conscientiousness, sportsmanship, courtesy and civic virtue.

The majority of respondents indicated that they will help other employees who have work-related problems (93%). For conscientiousness, the majority of the sample does not take extra breaks at work (92%) and believe in giving an honest day's work for an honest day's pay (93%). The results indicated that respondents seem to engage in discretionary behaviour that goes further than the minimum role requirements of the organisation. With regards to courtesy, the results indicated that employees are courteous and try to prevent possible conflict escalation and interpersonal conflict at work. Most respondents (82%) indicated that they are mindful of how their behaviour affects other employees' jobs, actively take steps to prevent problems for other employees (100%), and try to avoid

creating problems for co-workers (100%). In terms of civic, the results showed that employees engage in civic activities (95%) of the respondents indicated that they read and keep up with the organisation's announcements and memos. Furthermore (57%) also indicated that they attend functions even those which they are not required to attend.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study indicated that the respondents at uMfolozi TVET College have a stable employer-employee relationship in that there is minimal PCB. In that light the following recommendations are made:

- TVET College should develop an annual review of the employment relationship to assess the feelings of academic employees in relation to the psychological contract.
- The promises that are made implicitly to employees during recruitment should be fulfilled for the sake of encouraging employees to make extra contributions to their jobs. It was evident in this study that academics, in particular, pay attention to the promises.
- In order to foster healthy relationships with employees, the TVET college should ensure that:
  - Provide enough disclosure about where employees stand with the organisation (keep the communication open),
  - Provide empathy so that employees can connect emotionally with the organisation;
  - Provide recognition and admiration for employees' skills and personal qualities.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The success of any organisation is in the way it treats its employees and the way in which the employees feel comfortable to make significant contributions even beyond the scope of employment. Although the higher institutions such as TVET colleges have gone through a major transformation, the colleges as an employer in the case of uMfolozi TVET College has not breached the psychological contract of academics. The academics reported that the college has kept its promises that were made to the employees, even though few of the academic reported some that the promises made to them were not kept. It is important for the college to stay abreast about the issues that affect academics in the work environment.

In this study, a psychological contract is seen as a central unwritten document which determines the stability of the employer-employee relationship. It is so, due to its nature from which when it is perceived to be breached one party in the employment relationship particularly the employees can engage in destructive behaviours. There is sufficient evidence on the factors that trigger the psychological contract, and those factors include among others the promises which are often made to employees. The promises

may not necessarily be explicit, however in one way or the other during the recruitment process employers tend to make promises. It is such promises, which employees hold employers on and the failure of the employer to honour the obligation may result in attitudinal and behavioural reactions. Part of the reactions is less job involvement and employees who are not committed to citizenship behaviour. Although such behaviour is voluntary in nature, a perceived psychological contract would lead to employees' withdrawal and organisational performance would also be adversely affected.

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