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**The Perception of Employees on Psychological Contract and Its
Relation with Innovative Work Behavior**

Çalışanların Psikolojik Sözleşmeye İlişkin Algıları ve Yenilikçi İş
Davranışı ile İlişkisi

Yasemin Ülker

İstanbul Esenyurt Üniversitesi

Istanbul Esenyurt University

yaseminulker@esenyurt.edu.tr

Orcid ID: 0000-0003-2390-7142

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Çalışanların Psikolojik Sözleşmeye İlişkin Algıları ve Yenilikçi İş Davranışı ile İlişkisi

Öz

Psikolojik sözleşme terimi, kurumdaki çalışanlar ve işverenler arasındaki zımni beklenti, taahhüt ve sorumluluklar olarak adlandırılabilir, yenilikçi iş davranışı ise, ticari rol, grup veya kuruluştan yararlanmak için bilinçli olarak yeni fikirlerin yaratılması ve uygulanmasıdır. Bu çalışma psikolojik sözleşme algısını ve bunun farklı organizasyonel ortamlarda yenilikçi iş davranışı ile ilişkisini incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Nitel bir içerik analizi yöntemi ve kantitatif yapısal eşitlik modelleme yöntemi kullanılmıştır. Veriler anket kullanılarak ve ankete katılan 6 kişiden oluşan bir örnekleme ile toplanmıştır. Sonuçlar, çalışanlar psikolojik sözleşme kavramını bilmemelerine rağmen, örgütlerinde psikolojik bir sözleşmenin var olduğu konusunda hemfikir olduklarını belirtmişlerdir. Diğer taraftan, sonuçlar ilişkisel sözleşmenin yenilikçi iş davranışı üzerindeki olumlu etkisini desteklemiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Psikolojik Sözleşme, İşlemsel Sözleşme, İlişkisel Sözleşme; Yenilikçi İş Davranışı, Sözleşme.

The Perception of Employees on Psychological Contract and Its Relation with Innovative Work Behavior

Abstract

The term psychological contract could be referred to as tacit anticipation, pledges, and responsibilities between employees and employers in the organization whereas, innovative work behavior is the creation and implementation of new ideas consciously in order to benefit from a business role, group or organization. This study aims to investigate the perception of psychological contract and how it relates to innovative work behavior in diverse organizations. A qualitative method of content analysis and quantitative method of structural equation modelling were utilized. Data was collected through sampling of 122 employees using questionnaire and additional 6 who were interviewed. The results demonstrated that even though as a term psychological contract has not been known by respondents, they all agree about the presence of a psychological contract in their organization. On the other hand, positive impact of relational contract on innovative work behaviour was supported by results of this study.

Keywords: Psychological Contract, Transactional Contract, Innovative Work Behavior, Relational Contracts, Contract.



Introduction

Psychological contract and innovative work behavior, which are very crucial for organizational performance, have attracted attention from both organizations and recent literature. The primary goal of this study is to indicate how psychological contract is necessary for the employees; how it is perceived among them and its relation to innovative work behavior.

The study consists of three parts. It starts with a literature review comprising; meaning of psychological contract and its features, the expectations of both employees and employers, and innovative work behavior.

This is followed by the methodology in the second section. In order to reach aim of the study, an in-depth interview with six employees and a sample of 122 employees (using questionnaire) from different organizations were utilized. Content analysis including coding, category development, and constant comparisons were used to analyse the interviews while the survey was analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis, and a subsequent application of structural equation modeling.

The final part comprises findings of the study. Findings of confirmatory factor analysis supported the model validity. Results of the Structural Equation Modelling suggested that, transactional contract didn't affect innovative work behaviour while relational contract had a positive influence on innovative work behaviour.

1. Literature Review

1.1. Psychological Contracts

The term psychological contract was first introduced by Argyris (1960) but he however, did not mention the term. He developed a hypothesis which claimed that if supervisors respect and provide workers' norm and values such as, job security and paying wages on time, productivity of the workers will increase. Levinson et. al. (1962) mentioned the term first time as a non-written contract deemed as a mutual expectation between workers and the organization.

Rousseau (1990) described psychological contract as a contract that occurs when at least one party believes that the counterparty has a promise of the future, that makes a contribution to the other party and is expected to bring benefits in the future. In this definition, the focal point of the concept of the psychological contract was drawn from the dimension of relations to the dimension of the individual, and the studies conducted after that date mostly used this definition (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000).

The foundation of psychological contract is contingent on theories of the norm of reciprocity which is a social custom of feeling compelled to favour



somebody especially when the person has done something pleasant or good (Gouldner, 1960). Being reciprocal or mutual is critical for the existence of a psychological contract (Conway and Briner, 2005) as many organizational relationships have their bases on reciprocity, both for the employee and employer (Dabos and Rousseau, 2004).

Besides reciprocity norm, equity theory of Adam (1995) contributes to psychological contract concept. According to the theory, when people make comparison of their inputs and outputs with others (coworkers) and have a feeling of inequality, psychological contract breach may appear. In addition to equity theory, social exchange theory (Blau, 1964), which is essential to psychological contract, claims that, people shape their relations relying on a cost-benefit analysis. Social exchange theory is also crucial to figure out workplace behavior.

Many researchers have studied psychological contract on different issues. These include; organization commitment (Sturges, 2005), organizational citizenship behavior (Cihangiroğlu and Şahin, 2010), downsizing, restructuring, job loss (Cavanaugh and Raymond, 1999), performance of sales (Finch et al., 2015), organizational justice (Cihangiroğlu et al. 2015), organizational support that is perceived (Ballou, 2013), trust of organizations (Liu et al., 2013), organizational identification (Lu, Shen and Zhao, 2015), employee retention and job satisfaction (Ul-Haq et al., 2011), and work engagement (Rayton and Yalabik, 2014).

1.1.1. Features of Psychological Contract

Characteristics of psychological contract were proposed by Rousseau (1995). These included the following;

Table 1: Features of Psychological Contract

Volunteerism is essential in psychological contracts. Individuals participate in the contract with free will.
There is an individual faith in agreement.
Has an ever-changing structure.
There are various contractors (managers, employees, supervisors, etc.) in psychological contracts.
Disruption of the psychological contract, in other words, the failure to fulfill the promises leads to losses in organizations.
Psychological contracts reveal a mental model of an employment relationship which guides organizations in the future.

Wellin (2007) on the other hand stated the expectations of both employees and employers, and they are listed in Table 2.



Table 2: Expectations of both employees and employers

Expectations Of Employees From Their Organization Or Employers	Expectations Of The Organization Or Employers From Their Employees
Explaining employees' tasks and goals in the organization	Reaching or even exceeding the targets
Obtaining a physical area for the workers	Being flexible about working hours or responsibilities
Providing long-term employment	Continuous learning (Enhancing skills and knowledge)
Showing appreciation to the workers for their performance	Prone to teamwork
Creating synergy at the working environment	Create new ideas to increase performance
Being fair about their wages	Sharing knowledge with coworkers to reach maximum performance
Giving opportunity to the workers to lead others	Behave appropriately to enhance reputation of the organization
Creating an opportunity for workers' improvement	Try to solve problems
Being respectful for the balance of work and social life of the workers	Being loyal to the organization

1.2. Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

Innovative behavior is described as the application or adoption of an idea by an employee to products, processes, procedures, business unit, or organization (West and Farr, 1989). Made by employees; discovering new technologies, proposing new directions to reach the goals, implementing new working techniques and the quest to apply new ideas by protection of resources and researching new sources are examples of behaviours deemed innovative (Yuan and Woodman 2010).

Innovative behavior and creative behavior are close and related concepts. Creative behavior can be examined as a type of innovative behavior. This is because innovative behavior involves not only the creation of new ideas but also the adoption of new ideas produced by others for the organization or business unit (Woodman et al., 1993).

Innovative work behaviour is the deliberate formation, showcasing, and application of contemporary ideas to benefit from a business position, an



organisation or a society. The exploration of opportunities, production of ideas, the defense and implementation of these ideas form the process of innovative work behaviour. (Çapraz et al., 2014: 51-53). In other words, innovative work behaviour could be viewed as; developing new methods and technologies, proposition of current ways of realising goals, modification of working methods, as well as the formation and application of new methods and ideas (Sönmez, 2011: 5).

Sustainability has great importance in terms of the continuity of a firm, and companies must be innovative in order to achieve this. In order to keep up with the innovations in the rapidly changing world, innovation should be the bases. Company employees, who make up a large part of the company, must also be seen participating in behaviours at work that are perceived innovative in order to be able to take innovation as a basis (Ramamorthy, 2005).

1.3. Psychological Contract and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

Rousseau (1990) argues that fulfillment of obligations arising from the agreement may affect attitudes and behaviors in the workplace. In particular, fulfilling requirements of the psychological contract allows employees to participate in innovative work behavior.

Transactional contracts and relational contracts are categorized under psychological contracts by previous researchers (Millward & Hopkins, 1998; Rousseau, 1989, 1990). As it can be understood from the name, relational contracts deal with relations between others such as trust, loyalty, job security, and the likes which are normally long-term obligations. Transactional contracts on the other hand require limited engagement with others and as a contrast to relational contracts, these contracts are short-term and monetary based obligations (Morrison & Robinson, 1997; Rousseau, 1990). According to previous researches, effects of psychological contract types on innovative work behavior are changing. Thompson & Heron, (2003) found that transactional contracts was negatively related with innovative work behavior whereas, relational contracts related positively with innovative work behavior (Thompson & Heron, 2003, 2006; Rousseau, 1996)

2. Methodology and Data Collection

Both qualitative (in-depth interview) and quantitative (survey) analyses were used in this research. To analyse the in-depth interview, content analysis was more appropriate and thus, employed. For the quantitative analysis, two different scales were included in the survey. Psychological contract scale was modified from Raja *et al.* (2004) and Millward and



Hopkins (1998). Innovative work behavior scale was modified from De Jong and den Hartog (2010). For the survey analysis, structural equation modeling was utilized in reaching objectives of the study.

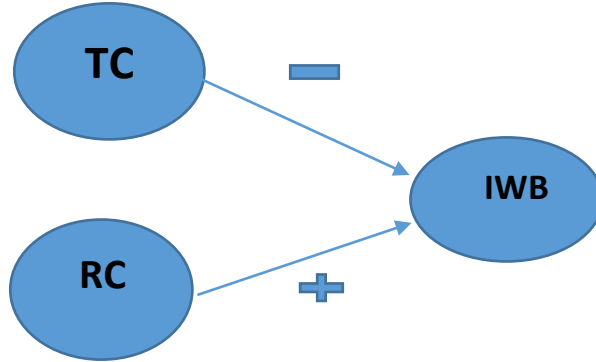
The interview questions were modified from McInnis, K. J. (2012). All interviews were done individually and conducted by one interviewer. The interviewer wanted to understand respondents' perception and how they comprehend their experiences. Through phone calls, the mutually agreeable time was determined for interviews. The participants were selected from different organizations to understand differences in how psychological contracts are demonstrated according to the job segmentation and organization environment. During the interview, in order not to miss any point, voices were recorded according to participants' permission. Interviews lasted from 18 to 25 minutes. Before the interview, respondents were asked some demographic (job title, tenure, industry, age) questions. The interview, which consisted of two parts, had questions which were open ended to encourage conversation. In Phase I, respondents were asked about their job selection process, legal contract, and job experiences. Phase II, started with asking for the meaning respondents ascribed to psychological contract. Then, it continued with employee/employer relationship, promises, continuity of psychological contract, psychological contract breach, and organizational commitment

In total, 15 questions were asked. When respondents felt any ambiguity, the interviewer did well to give detailed interpretations in order to make questions clearer. The interviews had some spontaneity in them which allowed to get respondents' answers more accurately.

2.1. Model of the Study

The research model is illustrated in figure 2. This study's dependent variables were Transactional contract (TC) and relational contracts (RC), which are kinds of psychological contract while independent variable of the research model was Innovative Work Behavior (IWB).



Figure 1: Research Model

2.2. Hypotheses

Hypotheses of the study which show the relations between variables are indicated below:

H₁: There is a negative relationship between transactional contracts and innovative work behavior.

H₂: There is a positive relationship between innovative work behavior and relational contracts.

2.3. Questionnaire Design

Questionnaire that was designed for this study was in two parts. The first part included five demographic questions, such as age, gender, education level, sector, and working experience.

Second part of the questionnaire was designed to test each variable. Nine statements inquired about both transactional and relational contracts while the other six represented innovative work behavior.

Apart from the first part, a 5 point Likert scale was applied in the questionnaire and was anchored with 1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neither agree nor disagree, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree.

In order to test the understandability of the questionnaires, a pilot study was conducted involving five academicians. The final form of the questionnaire was prepared according to feedbacks which were collected, from academicians

3. Research Findings

3.1. Interview Findings



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Research Question 1: What is the definition of psychological contract(PC) by workers? (McInnis, 2012)

Respondents who confirmed the existence of psychological contract were as well requested to further explain its essence. One aim of the research is to figure out whether employees understand the same term as PC researchers. To make a comparison of this term, the researcher looked forward to the terms *anticipation, pledges, and responsibilities* in the interview (McInnis, 2012).

On the contrary to explaining the association in terms of *anticipation, pledges, and responsibilities*, respondents usually explained the universal nature and characteristics of the relation.

More phrases used to explain the PC contained the Following: loyalty (all the respondents), respect (four respondents), commitment (three respondents), and trust (five respondents). Consequently, the overall features of the the relationship was being explained in common terms.

Research Question 2: Do workers comprehend the psychological contract (PC) to be unambiguous, inherent, or both? (McInnis, 2012)

Most of the respondents seemed to use "implicitness" of the relationship to understand if a term of PC is present.

Respondents also stated the following as being implicitly related to them: opportunities about promotion or training, flexible work hours (mostly), and the provision of a peaceful work atmosphere. Enthusiasm of respondents to do the following for their employers were also implicitly communicated: extra working hour and extra responsibilities.

Research Question 3: How is/are the relationship with opposite parties within the psychological contract? (McInnis, 2012)

It was inquired from respondents about which person or 'thing' depicted the second party in terms of psychological contract. Their answers were supervisor, department manager and the owner of the job.

Research Question 4: Do employees see psychological contract as a barter relationship that is shared? (McInnis, 2012)

Many of the respondents gave more importance to non-tangible items than tangible items. They expect to get appreciation and excellent communication. Only one respondent was exceptional, who claimed that the relationship does not have to be reciprocal. "I am a worker, I have to do what he wants, but he is a boss, he has much more responsibility."



The other five respondents felt that the relationship was mutual, formed on the inequality of power of giving/taking and giving more importance to intangible terms.

Research Question 5: What constitute possible psychological contract breach consequences? (McInnis, 2012)

Most of the respondents agreed that breach can cause a low degree of motivation, commitment, and loyalty. The one whose economic condition is good, wants to quit the job.

Research Question 6: Over time, do impressions of the psychological contract change? (McInnis, 2012)

Answers from respondents suggested that PC is changing and improving over time because their relationship changes and this changes of relationship is getting better. Mostly they used words like "better," "more relax" and "more flexible."

Table 3: Interview Findings-I

Assumption of the theory	Support	Illustration
Perception of the presence of PCs	Mostly Supported (83%)	YO: "I have not heard the term before, but actually whatever we do is mostly related to PC."
PCs are universally desired	Not supported (66%)	HS: it is not always right, it has more advantage for the employer, not for us".
Work behaviours are mostly influenced by PCs in comparison to legal contract	Supported (100%)	SC: "Most of my tasks come from PC because I have so many extra works and duties".
Definition of PCs are in terms of pledges, anticipation, and responsibilities	Supported (83%)	OY: "we have to obey what our employer says".
PC implicit terms are perceived	Moderately Supported (66%)	SC: "Our employer is not directly asking, he provokes us".
PCs and legal contracts are different	Supported (100%)	LV: "For me, PC is the most important thing at my work."
Perception of PCs is a shared barter relationship	Mostly Supported (83%)	LV: "If it wouldn't be mutual, I would quit the job immediately". SC: "We don't have a choice, we have to obey, and it is not mutual".
PCs are perceived as evolving over time	Supported (100%)	YO: " PC is improving and getting better". NK: "It is like raising a child"



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The summary of the interview is illustrated in Table 3. 83% of the respondents agreed upon the essence of a psychological contract in their organization, and with same percentages, psychological contracts are defined as promises, obligations, and expectations. Every respondent agreed that PC is evolving, PC and legal contracts are different, and PC is more influential on work behaviors comparison to legal agreements.

Table 4: Interview Findings-II

Phase 1	Tenure	PC present	PC& Legal difference	Most important	Implicit Term	Same as a legal employer
HS	1.5Y	Yes	Yes	Legal	No	No
YO	3Y	Yes	Yes	PC	Yes	No
OY	1Y	Yes	Yes	PC	Yes	No
LV	3Y	Yes	Yes	PC	Yes	No
SC	2Y	No	Yes	PC	No	No
NK	2.5Y	Yes	Yes	PC	Yes	No

The tenure of the respondents and their short answers are demonstrated in Table 4. All participants agree that the psychological contract is different from the legal agreement, and except two respondents, PC is an implicit term.

3.2. The Result of the Survey

In this section, basic descriptive statistics were applied to clarified the data to provide results of mean, standard deviation, and frequency. Then, the reliability test of Cronbach's alpha, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Structural Equation Modeling and validity tests were conducted.

Table 5: Reliability Analysis

Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha
Overall	0,920
Transactional Contract	0,880
Relational Contract	0,899
Innovative work Behavior	0,868

Cronbach's Alpha showing a value equal to 0,70 or above indicates that the scale is reliable. In this study, all the values are above 0,70, as shown in table 5 (including an overall reliability score of 0,920). As a result, the scales in this study are reliable.



Table 6: Frequency Table

Dimensions	Frequency	Dimensions	Frequency
Gender		Sector	
Female	77	Private University	56
Male	45	State University	66
Age		Education	
20-25	37	Associate's degree	36
26-35	74	Bachelor	40
36-45	11	MA/ Ph.D.	46

Table 6 shows the frequency values. One hundred and twenty-two of the questionnaires were received, and the majority of the survey was composed of 63% of women. In the age ranges, it was observed that 74% of the majority was in the '26-35' age range. On a sectoral basis, majority were public sector employees. At the educational level, majority held higher education degrees as target population was university employees.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Each Item

Dimensions N=122	Mean	Sd	Dimensions N=122	Mean	Sd
TC1	3,75	1,194	RC4	3,63	1,248
TC2	3,86	1,123	RC5	3,19	1,281
TC3	3,93	1,134	RC6	3,40	1,231
TC4	3,64	1,220	RC7	3,21	1,306
TC5	3,63	1,201	RC8	3,44	1,165
TC6	3,89	1,144	RC9	3,68	1,166
TC7	4,23	,898	IWB1	3,90	1,056
TC8	4,09	1,106	IWB2	3,93	1,081
TC9	4,10	,940	IWB3	4,30	,933
RC1	4,10	1,094	IWB4	3,84	1,109
RC2	4,04	1,024	IWB5	3,92	1,103
RC3	3,48	1,261	IWB6	3,67	1,249

The average mean value of Transactional contract (TC) is 3,90. The average mean value of relational contract (RC) is 3,57. The average mean value of innovative work behavior is 3,92.



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Table 8: Confirmatory Factor Analysis Results

Parameters			Standardized Estimates	t value (critical ratio)	P (significance level)
TC1	<--	TC	0,444		0,000
TC2	<--	TC	0,715	4,542	0,000
TC3	<--	TC	0,767	4,661	0,000
TC5	<--	TC	0,664	4,423	0,000
TC6	<--	TC	0,789	4,088	0,000
TC7	<--	TC	0,682	4,472	0,000
TC8	<--	TC	0,594	4,215	0,000
TC9	<--	TC	0,699	4,511	0,000
RC1	<--	RC	0,623		0,000
RC2	<--	RC	0,743	6,691	0,000
RC3	<--	RC	0,712	6,489	0,000
RC4	<--	RC	0,731	6,607	0,000
RC5	<--	RC	0,685	6,296	0,000
RC6	<--	RC	0,714	6,506	0,000
RC7	<--	RC	0,708	6,460	0,000
RC8	<--	RC	0,637	5,955	0,000
RC9	<--	RC	0,728	6,598	0,000
IWB1	<--	IWB	0,763		0,000
IWB3	<--	IWB	0,608	6,434	0,000
IWB4	<--	IWB	0,875	8,904	0,000
IWB5	<--	IWB	0,604	6,383	0,000

The question expressions can well represent all of the factor variables generated according to the results of the confirmatory factor analysis. All associations were significant at the 0.05 significance level (<0.05). 't' values, which also test the significance level of the link between observed and latent variables, are the critical ratio which should be higher than 1.96. (>1.96). In this respect, how accurate a model is created from the theoretical perspective is established.

Table 9: Construct Validity

Dimensions N=122	AVE	MSV
TC	0,4583285	TC-RC= 0,51
RC	0,4886134	TC-IWB= 0,25
IWB	0,5205685	RC-IWB= 0,42

Construct validity including convergent and discriminant validity scores are listed in table 9. Average variance extracted (AVE) scores, which represents



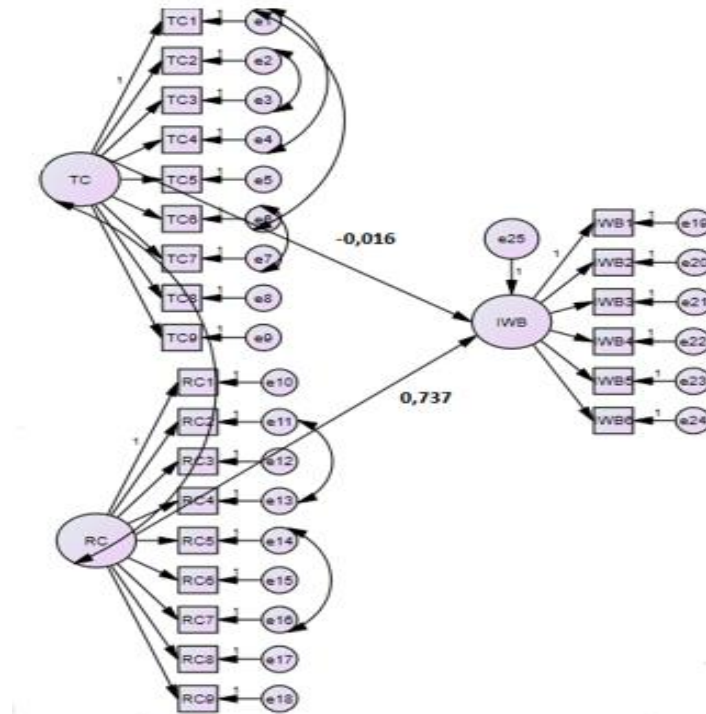
convergent validity, should be higher than 0,50. The scores above are very close to the ideal values. On the other hand, MSV values support the discriminant validity, and are supposed to be lower than AVE scores.

Table 10: Model Fit Indices of CFA

Model Fit Indices	Scores	Criteria
CMIN/df	1,651	Ideal Fit
P value	0,000	Ideal Fit
GFI	0,892	Very close to fit
RMSEA	0,073	Acceptable fit
CFI	0,911	Acceptable fit
RMR	0,095	Acceptable fit

The model fit values of CFA are shown in table 10. Most of the fit indices are good enough for this analysis. Ideal model fit values are as follows; CMIN/df value: $X^2/sd \leq 2$; $0.95 \leq GFI \leq 1.00$; $0 < RMSEA < 0.05$; $0.97 \leq CFI \leq 1.00$. Acceptable model fit values; $2 < x^2/sd \leq 5$; $0.90 \leq GFI < 0.95$; $0.05 \leq RMSEA \leq 0.10$; $0.95 \leq CFI < 0.97$ (Doğan, 2015). However, no specific consensus has been reached as to which threshold to take.

Figure 2: The Structural Equation Model on Amos



After applying CFA, structural equation modeling which is used to test proposed model and demonstrate relationship between variables has been tested and it is demonstrated in figure 2. Relational contracts have a positive impact on innovative work behavior with a high correlation, whereas transactional contract was found not to affect innovative work behavior. The results supported first hypothesis while the second hypothesis is rejected and was not found to be consistent with the literature.

Conclusion

Psychological contracts have a dynamic structure that varies from individual to individual. If the expectations of the employees are met by the enterprise, the employees try to reach their targets and they change in direct proportion with the performance expectations. However, the fact that the psychological contract has a changeable structure makes it necessary for the parties to have open and continuous interaction with each other in order to meet the changes in expectations.

Within the scope of the transactional and relational contract that constitutes the general types of psychological contract, organizations must meet the expectations of the employees based on the tasks performed by them and develop good relations with the employees. In contrast, those who work; In addition to fulfilling its operational responsibilities towards the organization, it should make extra contributions to the organization by developing relational characteristics with the managers and employees of the organization. As a result of this, internal harmony is ensured between the working and employer parties and organizational integrity is established.

Psychological contracts, which express the obligations that the organization and its working party must mutually fulfill, and which generally occur depending on the perceptions of the employee; It increases the trust in the organization in terms of employees and the employee's commitment to the organization. Therefore; violation of psychological contracts decreases employee confidence in the organization and causes the employee to move away from the organization. Similarly, if the employee violates the psychological agreement; the employer side does not meet the expectations and requirements of the employee, and even various pressures (mobbing, etc.) are applied to the employee to move away from the organization, and the organization is clearly damaged.

This study inquired into the relation existing between psychological contract and innovative work behavior. Relational and Transactional contracts make up the two major types of psychological contract both of whose individual



influences on innovative work behaviour were tested. The integrated model having provided a good fit with the data, the study found that relational contract had a positive influence on innovative work behavior, whereas transactional contract had no influence on innovative work behavior. This study has indicated the essence of reviewing relations within distinct literature examining the causes of IWBs of employees. The study proposes that, future studies should focus on linkages among employees of other professional backgrounds and blue-collar employees as this research focused on employees from universities.

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