

Conceptual Framework of Personal & Organizational Attributes and Psychological Contract

Dr. Syed Nadimul Haque,

Associate Professor,
Department of Management,
Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, India.

ABSTRACT

An attribute or the characteristics of a person consist of many traits, which play an important role particularly at the initial stage of their career when they want to build a rapport with the employer and carry forward a long-lasting relationship. The organization puts its effort to welcome employees. It is an effort to create a perception in the minds of a prospective employee that the organization is ready wholeheartedly to accept them, naturally, it gives immense pleasure to the employee and they look forward to the association with this type of organizations. The psychological contract is the mutual exchange of expectation and obligation by the two parties that is between employer and employee. It is an unwritten contract which is a kind of understanding between the parties concerned. There are many job-related issues which an employer expects from the employee and vice versa. The expectation of both the parties from one another is their psychological contract. An employer before hiring employee expects certain behavior and performance. After a certain period of hiring their performance has been assessed, then actual realization comes whether the expectation is met or unmet. Similarly, employees before joining the organization have a certain expectation from their prospective employer, after spending a considerable period they realize whether their expectation being met or unmet. The research found that the personal & organizational attributes and psychological contract play a major role to play in the employment conditions and association with the employer.

Keywords: Personal Attributes, Organizational Attributes, Psychological Contract etc.

INTRODUCTION:

As soon as people become employable they have a question in their mind and they always look forward to a satisfactory answer. The variety of question visualized by individuals varies from person to person. Generally, employees look forward to a pleasant and healthy environment, where they can be work without the pressure of their supervisors. Expectation of good environment as well as, opportunity for growth and development, healthy relation with their supervisors and peer group, fair evaluation and an appraisal system in the organization, fair system for redressal of grievances, recognition for innovation as well as creation of new ideas, emotional support given by the employer, an opportunity for participation in its management activities, getting job security and an opportunity to develop their creative insights and potentials..Employers also have various expectations from their prospective employees and they always look to those employees who are good for them. Selection of prospective employee is a tough challenge for the employers as they have to select the right persons for the right job at the right time. Employer's perspective of selecting future employees depends upon the nature of the job profile, but there are commonly expected traits sought by the organization e.g., employee sincerity, punctuality, development of new skills and updating of old ones, working hard and ready to provide extra hours as and when required, uphold company's reputation, show their loyalty to the organization, and follow the HR policies and practices of the employer, ready to show their ability to work in a team, ready to tolerate and avoid conflict,

display work-related values and ethics, show commitment for healthy industrial relations. Managers and other personnel expectation/s becomes the key to take the employer-employee relationship to the next level. Managers expect something from the employee before hiring them, and they realize it, whether their expectations are fulfilled or not. This would generally decide future action/s. Similarly, the expectation of non-managerial employee before joining the organization and its realization generally decides their stay in the organization.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES (PA):

In the workplace demonstration of professionalism is very important so it puts pressure on the employee to create a positive image in the eye of the employer and others. The employer also perceives that his employee will deliver as per their expectation but in case of non-fulfillment from both sides, it leads to a negative outcome (Robinson, 1994). The employees work-related attributes changes and they start showing mistrust, laid-back attitude etc. (Zhao, 2007). Employee attribute like internality holds an important position in work situation. The value system, creativity, potentials, ability, attitude all need proper encouragement and guidance from the employer. In another research, it was found that dedication and trustworthiness in young employees were more as compared to old ones, in case of breach of psychological contract, on the part of the employer (BAL, 2008). In behavioral science, there are various theories which talk about human personality. The trait theory as the name used to measure behavioral pattern, value system and the sentiments of the individual (Saul, 2003). It implies that attribute or traits exist differently in different individuals. Employees are different in their (Internality) locus of control, value & ethics, creativity, insights, and potentials etc. In the history of personality trait, one of the commendable behavioral scientist" Gordon Allport", suggested that traits are actually an important factor which changes behavior and attitude. According to him, every person is having different types of value system i.e. theoretical value, economic value, aesthetic value, social value, political value, and religious value. At the start of 1940 various techniques were used to find out sources of traits of human personality (Cattell, 1978) the finding suggests that the personality traits can be categorized into primary and secondary level in terms of hierarchy (Cattel, 1957) this category consist of 16 traits at primary level and 5 personality dimensions at secondary level. According to researcher human personality consists of various needs. Individuals also differ in their personality, in the sense, no two persons are same, therefore disposition of these needs varies from person to person (Murray, 1938), according to the author the needs can be categorized into primary or physiological and secondary or psychological. The study suggests that depending upon the urge to meet specific needs human behavior changes.

LOCUS OF CONTROL(LOC) (INTERNALITY):

In Locus of control, the word Locus is a derived from Latin word meaning location or site or spot so locus of control (LOC) means controlling the spot or location for the self or the outside forces. (B. Rotter, 1954), thus it becomes one of the most important personal attributes. The employees having a strong internal locus of control, in the event of success or failure always ready to take credit or blame to self on the other hand employees with strong external locus of control in an adverse situation always ready to attribute it to external factors which are beyond their control. The researchers found that individual personality has many dimensions i.e. neuroticism, self-efficacy, self-esteem and locus of control. (Judge, Locke, & Durham, 1997).The quality of the employee to adjust themselves and become accustomed as soon as possible in the work culture is often respected and encouraged by the employer. Employee's ability to work in a team can be attributed to his attitude to adjust to a team and extend helping hands to other members. Employer expectation from employees goes up many folds when they hire a workforce of having such ability. Taking the work of Rotter further, another researcher defined the locus of control as a comprehensive expectation that individual will control internal reinforcement more than external reinforcement (Lefcourt, 1976). This suggests that employers should control the behavior, which is embedded in their personality and repeat such behavior and positive thinking. Reinforcement of internal traits is very much required in the workplace. Learning positive work attribute and behavior and reinforcing it often shows strong internality. According to Rotter (1975), Internality and externality are one-dimensional and doesn't depend on the outcome of each other. The individuals having a strong internal locus of control, in case of success give credit to their own abilities and efforts (April & Peters, 2012). The persons having an external locus of control belief that whatever happens (positive or negative outcomes), is because of an external factor which is beyond their control (Jacob-Lawson, Waddel, & Webb, 2011). The researchers further pointed out that there is a relation between the

internal and external locus of control and the level of motivation. Some people are high achievers but some are not. The researcher suggests that the persons having high achievement needs tend to have more control on internal locus of control, on the other hand, people having an external locus of control become dependent on happening around them and often suffers stress (Benassi, Sweeney, & Dufour, 1988). Adding further to internality and externality subject, it was suggested that difference of locus of control can be understood from the point of view that whether they attribute to steady or unsteady causes (Weiner, 1974).

VALUE AND ETHICS (VE):

The term ethics which are also known as moral values are derived from the ancient Greek word ethikos, which is derived from the word ethos meaning habit, “custom”. A branch of philosophy which is known as axiology comprises the sub-branches of ethics and aesthetics, each concerned with values. Personal value are at the core of one’s personality and tells, what is good or bad, what is right or wrong, what is desirable or undesirable, thus it has an impact on the outcome of an individual (Rokeach, 1973). Work culture demands a positive ethical value for completion of assigned job as every job is having a set of the ethical norm for its completion (Lipset, 1990). According to the Internet encyclopedia, three areas where study of ethics can be focused on are to find out theoretical explanation and impact on the action taken (Meta-Ethics) second to understand practical meaning and assessing the impact of action taken(normative-ethics) and the third one is about what action one should take on a particular situation (applied ethics) (Ethics")Instrumental value like courage, confidence etc., help people in solving their problems but there are other values also present and embedded in our personality like religious, moral, social etc., in case we hold this value firmly and become stubborn then it leads to the conflicting situation stressful environment in the organization (Maiese, 2003) The research study suggest that over the period of time the graduate students are giving more importance to their wellbeing rather than extending their support to the needy people (Santrock, 2007) This finding suggest that newly graduated students looking for a job may not extend their hands to their colleague and others, as with the passage of time their value may affect attitude and belief.

CREATIVE INSIGHTS AND POTENTIALS (CINP):

The word creative denotes the ability of a person to construct ideas that are both innovative and able to be adjusted for use in diverse conditions. After research for so many years, it is concluded by many of the researchers that creativity is the most important human tool to produce original products. (Mumford, 2003) An insight is an ability to understand the problem and quickly come out with the best possible solution. In psychology, insight occurs when a solution to a problem presents itself quickly and without warning (Robinson-Riegler) (Amabile, 1998), Suggested that creativity at working place can be increased when there is an increase in proficiency in a particular area, imaginative thinking, and self-inspiration. The researcher found various parameters for measuring creativity (Leal, 2013) the researchers have argued that creativity in this era of globalization, where there is cut-throat competition, become indispensable. With the enhancement of technology the creative potential to match that increase become essential (Robinson & Azzam, 2009) The researcher further suggested that career-builders should identify the elements of motivation in the prospective employee and develop course contents accordingly as to ignite creativity amongst them (Nickerson, 1999).Researchers suggested various theories of insights to solve the problem, one such theory talks about the solution to the problem can be two-fold, either it can be rational or spontaneous (Smith, Bushouse, & Lord, 2009). Identify the problem and concentrate on the facts and relevant information only, explore the options previously having and come out with the best solution to the problem. (Kohler, 1999)

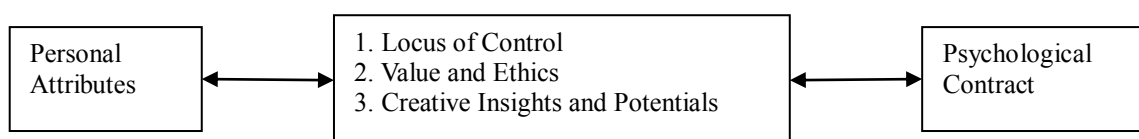


Figure 1: Personal Attributes and Psychological Contract

ORGANIZATIONAL ATTRIBUTES (OA):

The feature of an organization can be understood from the different perspective as the approach of an organization is interdisciplinary, there is a contribution from various other fields i.e. sociology psychology,

science, art, anthropology etc. (Douma & Schreuder, 2013) The research studies suggest that an organization can be understood from different perspective i.e. functional, institutional and process related (Wikipedia). The Research suggests that at the initial stage of hiring many of the applicants doesn't have enough information about the nature of the job and the type of organization they are looking to work with (Barber, 1998) (Turban, 2001) Various researches in the recent past suggest that there is sufficient evidence, indicating that the organization's image plays a crucial role at the early stage of hiring. Prospective candidates give credence to the organization having certain positive attributes (Turban, Forret, & Hendrickson, 1998). Earlier researches have suggested that the perception of the prospective applicant about the organization as an employer depends upon various organizational attributes such as size, location, firm's ability to pay opportunity for training and development etc. (Cable & Graham, 2000), Other research studies also have suggested that the traits of the organization influence the perception of the prospective candidate, to some the organization is modish and to some it is influential. The satisfaction to the prospective candidates comes only when they feel projection effect. Although there is no concrete evidence accessible. (Slaughter, Zickar, Mohr, & Steinbrenner D, 2001) In the current study the concept of the organizational attribute is derived from the instrument symbolic framework used in marketing literature (Katz, 1960) (Keller, Conceptualizing, Measuring and Managing customer-based brand equity., 1993) (Keller, 1998) (Locander & Spivey, 1978) (Shavitt, 1990) One of the earlier studies of literature suggests that brand image is the combination of products functional characteristic and the product symbolic meaning (Gardner, 1955) this finding suggests that the basis of any brand image build depends on the customers association with instrumental functions of the product and symbolic meaning of that brand. The organizational attribute can be divided into Instrumental and/or symbolic. According to Instrumental-symbolic framework (Flip & Scott, 2003), Instrumental attributes are the functions of organization which is tangible and can be associated with the organization quantitatively and symbolic attributes are the function which is Intangible and can be associated with organization qualitatively. The functions of the instrumental objective are to attract employers in the initial stage of their employment, naturally to attract employee the size, reputation, the pay offered by the company the job security etc becomes instrumental. The company uses various sources to lure the workforces e.g. magazine, a trade journal, website, third party etc. Symbolic attributes are the perception about the organization in the minds of a prospective employee through symbolic attribute they get an indication about the organization and its nature. The recent research study has neglected that the symbolic attribute has any impact on the organization image as an employer. However instrument-symbolic framework has much impact particularly at the time of recruitment when employee selects organization as a prospective employer (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003) the result of marketing research (Aaker, 1997) showed that symbolic used of brand could be represented by five broad factors: Sincerity, Excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness.

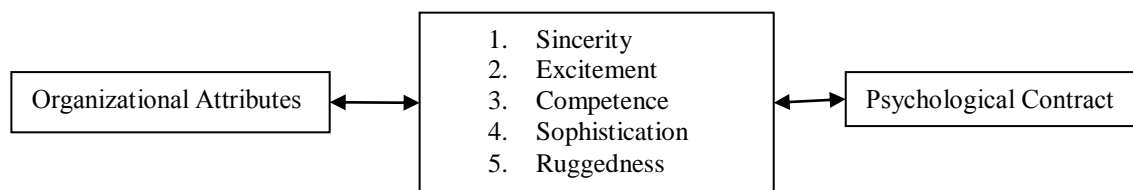


Figure 2: Organizational attributes and Psychological contract

PAYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT (PC):

The definition of Psychological contract first time probably emerged in the 1960s by the work of behavioral scientists Chris Argyris and Edgar Schein. Argyris used the term 'psychological work contract' to express the unspoken affiliation between the employees and their foreman. Taking the work of Argyris, Schein stated the concept of a psychological contract that the individual employee has a lot of expectation from the organization and the organization has a lot of expectation of him, (Schein, 1965). The earlier researchers argued that the relationship between the two contracting parties, concerning mutual expectation and obligation is the essence of the psychological contract. One of the researchers found that psychological contract can be understood from the point of leader and subordinate relationship and the appropriate style of leadership which affect the relationship between them (Barnard, 1938) Taking the lead from Barnard another scholar, developed a model which emphasized that in an employment relationship, there must be something written or unwritten as an agreement, the employee's decision to take part in any employment activity need some kind of consideration (March 1958). Therefore offer given by the employer to the employee either written or otherwise plays important role in the employment relationship. (Blau P., 1964) Contribution in the area of the psychological contract was in the form

of giving more emphasis to a social interface rather than relation based on financial swap over. His argument was based on the logic that the social exchange based relationship is long-term as compared to the other one. For the last many years PC has been considered as a community swap over which is generally on the basis of a system of mutual exchange (Goulder, 1960)

Researcher advocated that people staying in social groups generally exchange many obligations with one another, so there should be a balance of hope and perception between the parties concerned (Shore & Barksdale, 1998) for the healthy work culture and environment. In the research study, it is also established that when employees feel that they are supported by the employer in financial and non-financial terms they become motivated and try to give maximum from their end (Meyer & Allen, 1997), over the years researchers have been studying psychological contract from a different point of views. In some case, they study employer perspective, in some employee and in some cases both the employer and employee perspective (Coyle-Shapiro & Kessler, 2002) The studies of PC literature suggest that new generation of employees doesn't believe in conventional long-term employment relationship (e.g. Anderson and Schalk, 1998; Shore et al.2004) rather they are more concerned with immediate outcomes in the form of job satisfaction. (E.g. Turnley and Feldman, 1999), in-role performance (e.g. Dabos and Rousseau, 2004), organizational citizenship behaviors (e.g. Hui et al., 2004), organizational commitment and turnover intentions (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; Zhao et al., 2007). Research studies suggest that before joining the organization employees has some expectation from the employer which unwrap after they start working in the organization and which further realized in different phases of their stay in the organization. (De Vos, 2009), thus employee can assess their met or unmet expectation and can also assess their future expectation from a prospective employer. This assessment and expectation have recently been termed as an anticipatory psychological contract where employee anticipates and estimate psychological contract from the prospective employer. (De Hauw S. V., 2010) The study of earlier research suggests that PC from employee perspective means what they can do for the employer, and what they expect from them, thus this research study suggest that employee participation in organizational matters depends upon, what they will get from an employer. (McLean Parks, 1998) Various research studies in the field of psychological contract emphasizes that the PC is having several different aims, qualities, or aspects which is projected by different researchers, however two areas of PC namely transactional and relational was a common concern for all the researchers (DeCuyper, 2006), transactional pc is characterized by temporary, economic obligations that needs least involvement of contracting parties, whereas relational components characterized by wide, enduring obligations, which is based on commitment, trust loyalty and security (Cavanaugh, 1999) (Morrison, 1997) , the research finding over the period of time discuss the shift psychological contract from being relational to the more transactional PC. (Cooper, 1999) (Depson, 1998) (Singh, 1998) In the employment relation incentive or stimulus offered by the employer has a definite role, and the employee participation in the organization activity depends upon the type of inducement offered by their respective employer (Lee, 2011) Rousseau's (2000) included a balanced PC in addition to transactional and relational pc. The researchers have been argued that the balanced pc is more relational as it does not focus on economic exchange rather it discusses organic growth, advancement in career and it also promotes the culture of Business partnership (De Cuyper N. D., 2006). In the balanced psychological contract, the employer intends to make employee employable by providing training shows employees are cared for by their employers. (Chambel, 2011) Every individual is different and the personalities traits also vary from person to person, the perception of the individual employee about being cared for by their respective employer also vary accordingly. The perception of employee helps them in interpreting the psychological contract. (Suazo, 2010), the researcher (Conway, 2009) also argued that the personality difference plays important role in perceiving the nature of the psychological contract. A research study has shown that psychological contract help managers understand their relationship with employees; they realize the facts associated with the psychological contract as it gets older. They able to understand, the impact of mutual expectation and obligation on Transactional and relational pc (Conway N. B., 2005) The earlier study also suggests that to retain the employee in the organization strategic decision needs to be taken by the employers. Amongst the various initiatives taken by employers, the behavioral pattern is shown by them and the type of psychological contract they develop with employee plays a crucial role in developing a bond between the contracting parties. (McFarlane, 1994); (Middlemiss, 2011); (Parzefall, 2011).The research findings also suggest that employee's perception about the organization, as "contractual employer" doesn't go well with them, therefore employer should pay attention to it, and doesn't bestow image of contractual employee. The behavioral pattern and the action taken by managers has a definite impact on an employee's dedication and loyalty, therefore it was argued by western researchers and practitioners that along with PC the behavioral pattern and concern for employees are important from an organizational perspective.

(Birasnav, 2011)

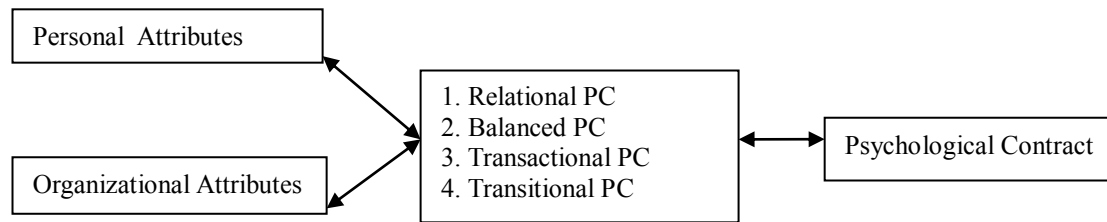


Figure 3: Personal, Organizational attributes and psychological contract

CONCLUSION:

The study infers that various work-related attributes are essential to understanding from an employer point of view because they are essential constructs of the psychological contract, if not carefully handled then it can be breached. The researcher argued the relevance of PC concerning the behavior of employees in the organization; they found that both employer and employees have a multitude of expectations from each other which keeps on changing from time to time. It was suggested that the psychological contract needs, regular consideration and also contracts need to be re-negotiated. Employees who are hired by the employer, feel motivated when they are given training, (as per their job requirement) job security and other benefits. It was found that job security provided by the employer; fair promotion policy and practices help them in retaining employees and also increases employee's dedication and trustworthiness. In the employment relationship, individual expectations are generally influenced by their needs and work-related attitudes, whereas management policies and practices influence the organization's expectations.

FUTURE SCOPE:

This study was focused on the conceptual knowledge about personal & organizational attributes and the psychological contract. After an intensive review of the literature, it can be concluded that there are few core research questions which can be answered in future:

RQ1: How do personal attributes influences Psychological contract?

RQ2: How do organizational attributes influences Psychological contract?

RQ3: How do personal and organizational attributes influence each other?

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