

# Exploring Fresh Insights in Psychological Contract Research: Unveiling Perspectives From the Global South

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## ABSTRACT

Extant literature in the psychological contract field has addressed the ramifications of psychological contract breach, much of the evidence is drawn from the West. Perspectives from the Global South are not represented in proportion. The emergence of China and India, etc. to global players signals the criticality of examining the psychological contract in socio-cultural spheres outside the West. The article's contribution is clarifying culture and contexts as critical in theorizing modern inclusive psychological contract, transcending the West. It is found that culture is a key determinant of the form and functioning of the psychological contract in the Global South where allegiance, kinship, social networks impact on the perception and acceptance of employment relations and working conditions, etc. This means that, in many developing country contexts (despite perceived exploitation of workers by global players), there is limited association between psychological contract breach and employee turnover or organizational performance because the 'divine' helps manage post-psychological breach.

## KEYWORDS

Global South, Individual Performance, Organisational Performance, Psychological Contract, Retention

## INTRODUCTION

This paper examines the evolution of psychological contract (PC) research and the missing link of the developing world, also referred to in this article as Global South. Whilst psychological contract can be viewed as highly context-specific (Aldossari and Robertson, 2016), the extant literature on psychological contract has predominantly focused on adopting main cause-effects approach in investigating the psychological contract-outcome relationship and so doing various individual and situational variables have been largely ignored (Agarwal and Bhargava, 2013). There has been some research on culture in PCs – e.g. the work of David Thomas (2010) on 'psychological contract across cultures – and the book of Schalk and Rousseau (2000) on 'Psychological contracts in employment: cross-national perspectives', but the emphasis on the search for causality in much previous research has not enabled a closer look at some other qualitative factors such as culture in the examination of the psychological contract. Therefore, this paper's contribution is to delve into such qualitative

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parameters particularly in the developing world where limited research on psychological contract has been conducted.

The psychological contract, unlike expectations, entails a belief in what the employer is obliged to provide, based on perceived promises of reciprocal exchange (Robinson and Rousseau, 1994). In approaching the psychological contract, one needs to consider whether this is about the promise that is believed to be made to the other party in an exchanged relationship or whether the psychological contract is about an obligation that one party in the relationship thought that they have towards the other party. When employees join organisations a formal and written employment contract is often made. The terms of that contract elucidate what both parties (the employees and their employing organisations) will receive in return for the fulfilment of their obligations. For example, the organisation offers pay, training, respect and promotion, etc. in return for employees' offer of flexibility, effort, creativity and skills. However, when some obligations are not documented, these form the content of the psychological contract. The psychological contract, thus, is much broader than legal employment contracts where employee can only consciously think of a few elements of the contract (Kotter, 1973). Most perspectives on the psychological contract recognise its subjective nature and legitimised 'in the eye of the beholder' (Rousseau and McLean Parks, 1993).

In the psychological contract process one party attempts to interpret and understand the psychological standpoint of the other party. Such interpretations will remain subjective and incomplete (Conway and Briner, 2005), especially when the cultural context and the cultural backgrounds of participants to the psychological contract are considered. As most psychological contract researchers so far emanate from the developed world, this origin is likely to influence the way PC is conceptualized. This then calls for fresh input into the understanding of PC, particularly with globalisation and its ensuing complexities. According to Welch (2003), psychological contracts have resurfaced as an explanatory determinant of employee reactions and workplace relationships which are connected to the somewhat universal changes that now define 21<sup>st</sup> century organisations.

Although the research context (e.g. Business and labour conditions, workplace characteristic or individuals) and sector (e.g. private sector) might be similar for the researchers, the result in relation to the understanding of the psychological contract is likely to be different because the psychological contract might be conceptualized differently in the developing world given the persistence of significant cultural differences (Thomas, 2003) despite the advances of globalisation. To further clarify this issue, it is important for research to apprehend what the psychological contract in various sociocultural contexts. Defining psychological contract is becoming more and more elusive despite many papers published in this area; this is owing to the complexity of socioeconomic, cultural and political contexts, etc. as well as the unpredictability of contemporary workplaces and relations.

Acknowledging the point that western-centered papers are engrossed in limited dimensions while conceptualizing psychological contract, this paper focuses on a fresh exploration of psychological contract research and the missing link of the developing world and global south. This study seeks to answer the question: to what extent capturing developing world perspectives on the psychological contract could offer new insights, enrich our understanding of the phenomenon and assist organisations in a globalising business environment? A key contribution of the paper is to substantiate the argument for pronounced psychological contract research in the Global South, which should extend our understanding of the how the psychological contract is manifested in an era of globalisation, or cultural entanglement.

## **THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT**

Rousseau (1989) introduced a paradigm shift by incorporating the concept of 'promise' in explaining psychological contract from previously used concept of 'expectation'. Her research focused on involving individual perceptions (idiosyncratic) rather than previously believed involvement of two interconnected parties. Guest (1998) explained 'the psychological contract' through the lens of human

resource management. For example, Guest and Conway (2002) consistently and firmly argued that Human resources practitioners and managers are increasingly utilizing psychological contract in the workplace to manage their employment relationship. Further to this argument, Guest (2004) placed the emphasis on putting greater weight to context and to the state of the psychological contract incorporating fairness, trust and the deal delivery claiming these at the heart of the employment relationship. Conway and Briner (2005) differentiate Rousseau's conceptualization of the psychological contract from that of previous researchers and in so doing they considered the concept to be an employee's subjective understanding of promissory-based reciprocal exchanges between him or herself and the organisation. Among recent researchers Wellin (2016) discussed different types of deals, their process and simplify the difference between organisational deal and personal deal where 'personal deal' refers to employees' individual obligations to their employer and similarly 'organisational deal' refers to the employer's obligations to their employees. Regarding psychological contract, the author discussed how psychological contract can be viewed as a personal deal and thereby he argued that psychological contract is about the obligations of the parties (employee and the employer) into the relationships concerning the keeping of each party's deal. Considering the origin and the historical development of the concept will help to shape and formulate the research concepts in a meaningful way.

The first aspect was concerned with defining psychological contract as a construct. The psychological contract research direction has taken many turns since its inception. Like many other research on a specified area, first cohort of researchers (e.g. Herriot, Manning and Kidd, 1997; Rousseau and McLean Parks, 1993; Rousseau, 1998 and other years) within the psychological contract domain had concentrated on how the concept 'the psychological contract' unfolds. However, research has not sufficiently covered post-PC violation models, though this appears in recent works of eminent authors such as Tomprou, Rousseau and Hansen (2013).

The second aspect was concerned with determining the parties into the contract. Researchers (e.g. Tekleab and Taylor, 2003; Suazo and Stone-Romero, 2011; Lapalme, et al., 2011; Harney and Jordan, 2008; Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000) focused on determining 'who is upholding the psychological contract?' in the workplace relationship. For example, whether it is the employee or the employer or both? Researchers on this category have also focused on determining the parties to the contract. In other words, they were divided in setting their perspectives. Another significant sub-category within these types of research was to investigate 'who the employee has their psychological contract with?' For example, on the one hand employee's psychological contract may exist with their employing organisation. On the other hand, this contract can be with their line manager or supervisor. It has also come into research attention that individual's psychological contract can be very different from various professional groups' psychological contract (Sia, 2013; George, 2009).

The third was concerned with the significance of the psychological contrast for individuals and groups. This aspect of researchers focused on the significance of the 'psychological contract' construct (e.g. Guest, 2004). While doing this, the researchers in this category were divided into two clear sub-groups. One sub-group focused on the benefits that psychological contract brings to the organisation when it is upheld and nurtured appropriately (e.g. Bal et al., 2013; Liu, et al., 2012; Turnley, 2003). The other sub-group focused on the consequences of the psychological contract for the organisation when it is breached (e.g. Abu-Doleh and Hammau, 2015; Agarwal, 2013; Restubog, 2008; Si, 2008; Kickul, 2004; Turnley, 2004).

The literature underlines that the importance of the psychological contract is manifested when it is breached (Zhao et al., 2007). It is the most important construct in the psychological contract theory in terms of employment relationship outcomes (Conway, et al., 2011). Rousseau (1989) presented similar views as she claimed that the psychological contract is better understood when it is violated. In an organisational context, Restubog et al., (2007) found that breach was related to a wide range of behavioural outcomes including those that are beneficial to the organisation (e.g. employees' in role performance and organisational citizenship behaviour) as well as deviant behaviour (e.g. behaviour damaging to organisational functioning). However, in psychological contract literature, contract breach

is even studied separately from contract fulfilment as they are two distinct components. Breach and fulfilment therefore do not reside along a single continuum (Rousseau and Tijoriwala, 1998).

Notably, most of the western centered research on the psychological contract at work were conducted amongst white collar (e.g. MBA degree holders or studying towards their MBA degree) employees or professional groups. To the best of the authors' knowledge very limited (e.g. Tekleab et al., 2019) research has been conducted on so-called blue-collar employees and no significant research was identified amongst garments factory workers in the developing countries who have less or no formal education. Therefore, there are methodological challenges for future psychological contract researchers in terms of research design and general data collection.

The fourth aspect considered the factors influencing and shaping people's psychological contract. Here researchers had focused on the several factors that influence and shape the psychological contract in people within the organisations. These factors determine employees' psychological contract and the reasons for its breaches. Likewise, in some cases they also explain the process in which the psychological contract breaches take place. For example, people's age (Bal, 2011 and 2013), sex (Blomme, 2010), tenure (Agarwal, 2013; Bal, 2013; Conway, 2012), personal beliefs (Abu-Doleh and Hammau, 2015), cultural orientation (Thomas, 2003), educational level (Agarwal, 2013) previous experience of contract violations (Ng, 2012), individual values (Cohen, 2012) etc. play a significant role in the psychological contracting process. few major claims in these categories of research includes 'older workers react less intensively in reaction to their psychological contract breach', 'work-life balance is related to women's turnover intentions', 'individual values help to elucidate the attitudes and employee behaviours', etc.

The fifth aspect of psychological contract looked at the psychological contract construct through the lens of the other theories. Researchers of this perspective were keen to explore the psychological contract construct through the lens of the other commensurate theories. For example: Social exchange theory (Ng and Feldman, 2015; Suazo, 2011; Bal, 2010; Dulac, 2008; Johnson, 2003) where psychological contract was an exchange process between the employee and the employer, organisational justice theory (Jones and Skarlicki, 2012) where psychological contract was employees' response to unfair treatment by their employer as well as the way employees' respond to both fair and unfair outcome distribution, Attribution theory (Peng, et al., 2016; Ahmed, 2009) whereby it was investigated whether the reasons for an organisational situation (psychological contract breach) was internal or external to the organisation, Sense making theory (Parzefall and Marjo-Riitta, 2011) where psychological contract was employee' sense making of their environment through an ongoing process of conversation, Signaling theory (Suazo, 2009) whereby it is argued that organisations create psychological contract amongst employees by generating weak signals. While doing these explorations, the researchers in these categories also investigated the consequences of psychological contract among various work or professional groups, industrial sectors and geographic locations.

The sixth aspect dealt with the consequences of psychological contract breach on organisational performance. Here psychological contract researchers examined the performance issue within the organisation in the case of psychological contract breach or fulfillment. These researchers were divided into two main categories. One group, was concerned with determining the impact of psychological contract in the financial performance (Huselid, 1995) of the organisation while the other group focused on the non-financial performance (Xiaoqing, 2012; Turnley, 2003; Becker, 1996; Delaney, 1996; Agarwal, 2013; Bal, 2013; Bashir, 2013; Epitropaki, 2013; McDermott, 2013; Shih, 2013) of the organisation both at individual and group level (e.g. various indices of organisational outcomes such as Organisational citizenship behavior, commitment and retention).

## **LIMITATIONS OF WESTERN-CENTERED LITERATURE**

As argued, much of the existing psychological contract literature comes from the West, based on empirical research in the US, UK and Western European context. These empirical research

investigations (Kraak et al., 2017; Stormbroek and Blomme, 2017; Paille et al., 2016; Suartha and Riana, 2016; Guchait et al., 2015); Maycock and Amasi, 2015; Manxhari, 2015; Liu et al., 2012) establish links between psychological contract breach and employees' retention intention. While some studies (Umar and Ringim, 2015; Clinton and Guest, 2014; Turnley et al., 2003; Robinson, 1996, Robinson and Rousseau, 1994) provide a positive association between these two constructs, other recent studies (Suartha and Riana, 2016; Manxhari, 2015; Liu et al., 2012; Conway, Guest and Liefoghe, 2005) found no association amongst them. As these investigations are rooted in Western industrial contexts, it is not clear whether employees from less industrially advanced countries will exhibit similar behaviors.

Even though psychological contract has been proven to have an association with employee retention, this relationship can still be influenced by various factors that can determine the relationship and, in some cases, explain this relationship. For example, leader member exchange theory argued that high LMX relationship may help shape employee attributions in favour of the organisation (Lu et al., 2015). Culture also plays a vital role in this relationship (Arshad, 2016). According to Mai et al., (2016), perceived organisational support can explain the effects of turnover intentions and psychological contract orientations. Similarly, a plethora of empirical research (Zagenczyk, 2015; Eptropaki, (2013) Alfes, et al., 2012; Bal, et al. (2013) Haggard, 2012; Cassar and Briner, 2011; Blomme, et al., 2010; Ho, 2005; Turnley et al., 2003) has provided links between psychological contract breach and organisational performance in general and particularly on employees' individual performance outcomes in a western context. Likewise, in a non-western context literature (Li, et al., 2016; Agarwal and Bhargava, 2013; Wang et al., 2013; Cohen, 2012; Liu et. al., 2012; Krishnan, 2011; Chang and Hsu, 2009; Restubog et al., 2008; Steven et al., 2008) also tapped into this breach-performance relationship. However, studies in non-western contexts predominantly focused on the dominance of cultural factors (such as, traditions, collectivist society, power distance and individual values) in this relationship whereas studies in a western context predominantly focused on demographic (age, gender, ethnicity etc.) and other external (e.g. global financial crisis) and internal (e.g. perceived organisational support, leader member exchange, mentoring) institutional factors. These studies contended that psychological contract breach results in a wide array of negative outcomes for the employees within an organisation. This negative outcome entails reduced job satisfaction and reduced trust in the organisation in one hand and on the other hand it increases cynicism about organisational life in general and increased turnover intention. Notably, the reasons for employees' turnover intention are not universal. The reason that is causing employees to quit the organisation in one country or industry might not be the same reason for quitting in another country or industry context. There are some institutional and cultural factors that can potentially explain these differences. In other words, reasons for employees leaving the organisation cannot guarantee employees' staying in the organisation if those reasons are eliminated. The extant literature on psychological contract supports this view. According to Steven et al., (2008), fulfilment of the psychological contract will not necessarily result in loyalty even though breach of the psychological contract may lead to employees' disappointment and a resultant willingness to leave the organisation. The conclusion of this analysis is that the universality of the psychological contract is questionable and its suggested linkages with employee turnover and organisational performance in other sociocultural contexts can be challenged.

The theoretical frameworks used for explaining the relationship between psychological contract breach and organisational performance failed to provide a holistic structure that outlines exact mechanism through which psychological contract affect the various indices of organisational performance at an individual level such as individual performance and retention (Clinton and Guest, 2014). On the other hand, the majority of research investigations reporting the consequences of the psychological contract breach were conducted in a western context where employees' loyalty may be a norm. Likewise, most previous research was also conducted in an individualistic cultural context where people are generally individualistic and the power distance is low (Agarwal and Bhargava, 2013). Therefore, their findings may not have a similar implication in a non-western context where

employees are traditionally loyal to their employing organisations, they are generally collectivistic, and the power distance is generally high. This view has also been supported by a recent study by Zagenczyk (2015) whereby it is claimed that employees with high power distance orientations are less likely to leave the organisations as a response to their psychological contract breach which is quite the opposite view of the western conception where power distance is low and people are more likely to leave the organisations because of the psychological contract breach.

While some researchers focused on certain demographic aspects (for example, Bal et al., 2013 on age; Blomme et al., 2010 on gender; Dadi, 2009 on ethnicity) and discussed their importance to understand the psychological contract, the others emphasized on the external societal factors such as collective society (Steven, et al., 2008), traditional society (Liu et. al., 2012) and power distance (Wang et al., 2013) to understand the same. Existing empirical research demonstrates that the impact of psychological contract breach (PCB) in the context of the Western countries is quite evident. For example, Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler (2000) tried to relate PCB with organisational commitment in the UK. Whereas Robinson (1996) relates it with employee's trust in the US context. Rousseau (1994) found contract breach is significant for job satisfaction in the US too. Similarly, Pate et al. (2003) found it pertinent with employee attitude (but not behaviour) in the UK. However, limited significant research has been conducted in the context of developing countries. For example, Chang, (2009) conducted investigative research on psychological contract of temporary employees in Taiwan that suggests management practices need to focus on the improvement of the welfare of workers. On the other hand, Lo (2003) adopted an integrative approach to explore the impact of the psychological contract breach in a Chinese context suggesting psychological contract breach is related to turnover intentions, psychological withdrawal behaviour and civic virtue.

## **GLOBALISATION, CULTURE AND CASE FOR AN AXIOMATIC DEVELOPING WORLD RESEARCH**

While most previous research on psychological contract has been conducted in the western context where cultures are typically individualistic and low in power distance (Agarwal and Bhargava, 2013), the current paper has been extended to cover cultures of high power distance and provided the backgrounds by drawing on the scarce of research in the developing country. There are a few reasons for this. Firstly, in developing country cultural contexts employee loyalty is paramount and the power distance is very significant in the workplace and in society at large. An investigation into the consequences of the psychological contract after it is breached at an individual level is worth pursuing. Secondly, the situational context in the developing world where there is limited influence of the trade unions, unemployment rate is very high and working conditions are unsatisfactory, an investigation into the nature of the psychological contract and its breaches could yield interesting results. Thirdly, based on the review of the psychological contract literature in developing countries, this study can posit that to date no substantial research work has been undertaken on significant low skill industry sectors such as the garments sector where most of the employees are women and operate in poor working conditions. There is certainly an aspect of caution when speaking of the global South which encapsulates a diversity of cultures. However, the theorization of the notion of Global South accounts for constancies (Gupta, Hanges and Dorfman, 2002; Baker and Le Tendre, 2005) that can allow us to advocate to possibilities of similarities in the exemplification of the psychological contract, e.g. generally a common history or experience of colonization and imperialism, poverty, cultural proximity (with the dominance of collectivism), etc. Finally, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, no significant psychological contract research has been done in the developing world with a very few exceptions (e.g. Mahmood, 2004; Abdullah, et al., 2010 and Ahmed, 2011). The importance of developing and maintaining the psychological contract has been ignored in collectivist societies (as described by Mahmood, 2004 and Abdullah, et al., 2010) where researchers and policy planners have not yet paid sufficient attention to this area. Thus, the issue's dynamics remain poorly understood.

Furthermore, the need to extend psychological contact research beyond the Western-centric view was confirmed in a recent meta-analysis of Topa et al., (2022) while Khuda and Hack-Polay (2018), Baruch (2016) highlight a scarcity of literature in blue-collar contexts. Hence, due to the lack of psychological contract research in the manufacturing (particularly in the blue-collar sector) sector, this study could not perform a typical systematic literature review involving using specific search terms or keywords and delve into specific meta databases (e.g. Web of science). This is because the current paper intends to capture as many research findings as possible that were carried out in the blue-collar sector and the developing country. While selecting the papers for review, this paper also did not use a typical literature search framework like PICO (a method of putting together a search strategy that allows for a more evidence-based approach to literature searching). However, while carrying out the literature review and in selecting papers CASP (Critical Appraisal Skill Programme, 2023) technique was applied to fundamentally being mindful of three key areas (of that technique) such as whether the results were valid, what the results were and whether those results will help locally (i.e., in the study context).

On a more important note, this paper used the extant literature that was focused on employee perspectives. This is because the extant literature has consistently failed to focus much on the managerial perspectives of the psychological contract in the developing country context. Incorporating an organisational or managerial perspective to understand the psychological contract dynamics would have been valuable for this paper. However, this would impede this paper and invalidate the other noteworthy results made up in it.

## **CONTENT, DYNAMICS AND EVALUATIONS OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

The globalisation of business and labour mobility has brought about the necessity to engage with various perspectives with regards to attraction, employee engagement and retention (Jaumotte and Tytell, 2007). This stretches beyond the sphere of a single cultural, political, ideological block. In other terms, given the unprecedented interconnectedness of social scenarios, it is axiomatic to engage with traditionally little researched, thus understood, organisational psychology matters, with regards to the psychological contract or non-monetary aspects of work that help to retain people's loyalty. This shows the culture-boundedness of contemporary organisational processes (Madueke and Emerole, 2017), which modern workplaces cannot afford to ignore since employee relations and the very productivity organisations long for rests on such parameters. For example, Giese and Thiel (2015), examining the psychological contract between Chinese and Ghanaian workers in Africa, found significant difference about how the psychological contract is perceived among the two ethnic groups; the strategies for managing psychological contract breach were also significantly different and profoundly affected employee relations and productivity. Culture (largely) but also economics and political orientations are possible explanatory factors for the differences in the psychological contract (Giese and Thiel, 2015). While there is no specific word to term psychological contract in the Global South, cultural attributes can help us to construct a description of the notion of the psychological contract. For example, the 'Guanxi'-based culture shows the strengths of social and cultural ties are paramount in the Chinese context, thus violating this culture norm could trigger psychological contract breach amongst the Chinese employees (Liu et. al., 2012; Steven et al., 2008). Likewise, issues may arise when there is a breach of trust or perceived shift of allegiance or when some members divert from their collective responsibilities. For example, Indians are socialized through strong family ties and extended family relationships, and they are likely to develop stronger affiliative tendencies at work as well (Budhwar, P.S. and Khatri, 2001). Thus, reiterating the need for investigating the psychological contract using the contextual (e.g. cultural) lens. Thus, it is paramount to further probe the psychological contract of those people from the Global South what are now forming a substantial part of the global workforce (White, Smith, Currie, 2011).

For instance, in the Bangladeshi context, the unemployment rate is low (4.4%), according to (UNDP, 2020), yet about six in every ten-working age population (aged 15 and older) are poor. Labour practices in the Bangladeshi Ready-Made Garments (RMG sector) are not contemporary as many RMG factories do not offer appointment letters to the workers even though they operate under a formal business system. This approach to employing workers renders the job tenure uncertain and temporary in nature. Working conditions are also in question as it is quite common to see that female RMG workers are being harassed in Bangladesh (Begum et al., 2010). Improved workplace conditions and respect for workers' rights, including their right to form trade unions, are essential for the RMG sector in Bangladesh (Human Right Watch, 2015). Abdullah (2009) argued that working conditions and job satisfaction are two primary determinants to influence productivity in the RMG sector. Yet, despite these apparent breaches to the psychological contract, workers in the garment sector in Bangladesh appear to stay with a company if they can work. Such attitudes could be credited to cultural practices of allegiance (Khuda and Hack-Polay, 2018, Seddon, 1987; Muriithia and Crawford, 2003) and the mode of recruitment which is through connections within tight social networks. Likewise, in the Chinese and Hongkong context organizational change and the history of contract breach was found to be related to PCB (Lo and Aryee, 2003). While in the Chinese context, Bing et al., (2019) found that employees' work status (i.e. whether they are working full or part time) determine their perceived PCB, in Taiwanese context, Shih et al. (2013) found employees individual differences determine their perceived PCB. Additionally, in Pakistani context, Ifzal et al., (2019) argued that lack of ethical leadership style can engender psychological contract breach. This level of analysis demonstrates that the content, dynamics and evaluations of the psychological contract is constructed and constrained by the cultural, geographic and economic context.

These examples are typical of the cultural context of many developing nations where collectivism means that a more informal and conciliatory approach to resolving issues and conflicts is adopted. Such an approach exemplifies the extent to which developing world working practices offer different organisational dynamics which are likely to typify a different set of psychological contract and approaches to its investigation. Our perspective is well supported by Pedersen (2001:1) who opined that "not only can different behaviors have the same meaning, but the same behavior can also have different meanings; therefore, it is important to interpret each behavior in its cultural context". These multidimensional factors in the developing world have not always been captured in the literature on psychological contract, thus commanding serious critical investigation given the global context of our contemporary world. Recent data collected by Khuda and Hack-Polay (2018), suggests that the role of the divine (religion) in managing the psychological contract breach in Bangladesh and the Muslim world. Bangladeshi workers in the garment sector, for instance will draw on God as a mediator if the employers have not kept their promises. In that perspective, psychological contract breach does not necessarily lead to mass exodus or turnover from the company as workers believe that God will establish justice for them, the weak. This type of responses to psychological contract breach signposts researchers to a different dimension and understanding of the psychological contract that research has not unveiled before. Such an endeavor begs urgency because global discontent with socio-economic outlook is increasing according to International Labour Organisation, ILO, (2017). Such discontent is not only associated with poor economic data, including unemployment and low wages, but also due to cultural misunderstanding linked to increased global migration, with more and more people migrating permanently to new countries.

Cross cultural theory has suggested that culture affects people's psychological attachment and their loyalties that they usually make (Clugston, et al., 2000). In developing countries (such as in India and Pakistan) with high power distance according to Hofstede (1980), people are dependent on their superiors. This normative attitude has the potential to be reflected in employees' desire to stay with the organisation based on a sense of duty, allegiance or obligations. This typical mindset of a developing country workforce has also got the potential to challenge our understanding of the

type of commitment this study observed in the developed world where people are calculative and exchanged based in nature.

According to ILO (2017), women in South Asia are more reliant on their male counterpart for the main breadwinner of the household and at the same time when they are in employment, they are more likely to be vulnerable. This typical developing country status quo could challenge our understanding of the psychological contract as a construct. This is because PC could be perceived differently in this part of the globe than its western counterpart where working in a vulnerable situation is less likely to occur. Likewise, it would also be interesting to see how social kinship which many would agree exist in the developing countries due to its social form (such as collectivist society) tell us a different story about PC formation than what we know forms our already understood Western countries that is predominantly individualistic. Therefore, ideological and potentially new socially oriented forms of psychological contract require revisiting to investigate the way organisations form PCs with their employees.

In the developing country context, while researchers were examining the cultural phenomena, they were prone to look at the organisational culture where many would agree this as a set of shared beliefs, values and assumptions which interact with the people, structure and systems of the organisation to produce behavioural norms. For instance, in a Pakistani context Bashir and Nasir (2011) investigated perceive organisational politics and organisational cynicism to address the cultural element as the negotiator of the psychological contract creation. Likewise, Wang and Hsieh (2014) were using the 'ethical organisational climate' while addressing the workplace culture. Authors who were HR focused on their approach were using 'procedural justice' experienced at workplace (Peng et al. 2016), sensitivity towards equity (Restubog et al., 2007) while addressing the cultural element. Our study also identified that few literatures (e.g. Abu-Doleh and Hammau, 2015) have used individual values, beliefs or personality characteristics while addressing the role of culture in developing psychosocial contract as a construct. However, there is currently a scarcity of literature that will intend to focus on the national (or ethnic) culture and examine its relevance for the psychological contract construct. The good news is very recently literature has started to address this issue. For example, Aldossari and Robertson (2016) examined the role of 'Wasta' (defined as, a strong orientation towards collectivism/reliance on network relationships) to highlight the alleged cultural norm in Saudi Arabia and examined its mitigating influences on peoples' psychological contract at work. Hence, capturing developing world perspectives in line with these cultural variables on the psychological contract could offer new insights, enrich our understanding of the phenomenon, and assist organisations in a globalising business environment.

## CONCLUSION

This conceptual paper has examined the other side of the coin by focusing on the developing country context. It questions the assumption that the western conceptualization of the psychological contract, the reason for its breaches and outcomes of those breaches are universal. Many studies, including Clinton and Guest (2014) seminal work highlight the institutional context in which the psychological contract is situated but they do not explicitly point to culture as a key construct. Zagenczyk (2015) study is one that comes closer to considering the plausibility of the impact of culture on the psychological contract and the perceptions of its breach. By claiming that employees in high power distance contexts are less likely to leave the organisations, the author starts to hint at a possibility that weight of culture in the unfolding of the psychological contract. This study therefore advances that Western conceptions could be different in developing countries. To the best of the author's knowledge, to date, no substantial work on the effect of gender on psychological contract has been identified within the tripartite relationship amongst psychological contract breach, individual performance and employee retention. This is also the limitation of our paper in the sense that it has derived the impact of culture on the psychological contract from the limited specific literature. propose that

future studies provide a substantial body of empirical evidence to confirm the weight of culture in the psychological contract. Such studies will tremendously assist organisations who are increasingly tapping into business opportunities in the developing and help them to address employment relation issues. This paper therefore is a call to capture through research the diversity of culturally distant contexts, looking at cultural variables through more vigorous empirical investigations. With the surge of business in the developing world and the penetration of global corporations in those cultural spheres and understanding of such phenomena is likely to steer preparedness, employee motivation and performance. Widening the psychological research agenda requires capture of some significant parameters answering questions such as: How do certain types of PCs (e.g. ideological PCs) contribute to more meaningful work arrangements for employees and societies? Do ideological and potentially new socially oriented forms of PCs lead to revisiting the way organisations form PCs with their employees? Are these new forms inextricably linked to the merging of cultures? This study believes that it is through an enhanced research agenda in the so far neglected developing world that a more balanced picture of the psychological contract could be reached. The Global South perspective could give us a greater understanding of modern workplaces and how to form a new psychological contract because masses from the developing world are now a dominant part of the globalised workforce.

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