

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH AND ENGAGEMENT OF ACADEMICS IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between psychological contract breaches and the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The specific objectives were to investigate the influence of transactional, relational, and balanced psychological contract breaches on the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study also examined whether the psychological contract breach experience among academics in public universities differs from the experience of academics in private universities. To achieve these objectives, a cross-sectional survey research design was adopted. This was done by using a structured questionnaire to collect data from 348 academics from public and private tertiary institutions in Edo State, Nigeria. The data collected from sampled academics were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study are that transactional, relational, and balanced psychological contract breaches at both group and individual levels have a significant negative influence on the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Moreover, no significant difference in the level of psychological contract breach between academics in private and public tertiary institutions in Edo State was observed. Considering these findings, the study recommends that the government and management of tertiary institutions should fulfil the transactional and relational obligations or agreements they enter with academics. This can be done by releasing the earn allowance promise to academics, increasing their basic salary, training them in their current job, and providing them research grants. It can also be done by being committed to the long-term emotional well-being of academics, supporting them to develop externally marketable skills, and meeting new and challenging performance requirements that align with industrial standards.

Keywords: Transactional psychological contract, Relational psychological contract, Balanced psychological contract, Engagement, Tertiary institutions.

JEL Classification: C12, C93, L33, M12.

1. INTRODUCTION

Employees are the greatest competitive advantage in tertiary institutions in Nigeria like in any other country. The attitude and behavior of these employees are core checklists against which the performance of higher institutions in the country is evaluated. Kahn (1990) opined that by harnessing employees to work roles; in engagement, employees employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances. The engagement of employees is defined as a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, Salanova, Gonzalez-Roma & Bakker, 2002). Engaged employees experience a high level of energy and mental resilience when performing a job which is the direct opposite of exhaustion, strain, and burnout. They are also actively and highly involved in the job with great enthusiasm that goes beyond having a merely satisfactory experience at work. They are happily engrossed with and psychologically committed to their jobs to the extent that they find it difficult to detach themselves from work. They fully invest time, brain, power energy, and emotion into work with a high amount of discretionary effort to heighten performance. These characteristics of engaged employees make them a source of competitive advantage, especially in a knowledge-driven organization.

Bhatnagar (2013) observed that employees who are partially disengaged are not hostile or disruptive but are merely unconcerned with important organizational activities. While actively disengaged employees damage an organization through frequent absenteeism, lateness to work, gossip as well as engaging in non-work-related conversations, which meet and promote a variety of personal needs and interests to the detriment of organizational wellbeing. These consequences of employee engagement to organizational wellbeing have called and attracted the attention of many researchers on the mechanisms through which actively disengaged and partially disengaged employees can be brought down to the lowest minimum while improving engagement gaps (Hess & Jepsen, 2009). In response to this call, some studies have focused on how human resource management practices account for employee engagement (Dai & Qin, 2016; Ugwu, 2016). Of these human resource practices, the psychological contract appears to be the heart, given that it involves the promises obligations by employers to provide employees with compensation, training, opportunities for career advancement, and a friendly environment among other human resources support and practices in return for the effort the employees committed into job and wellbeing of the organizations. Hess and Jepsen (2009) specifically concur that psychological contract is the implicit relationship existing between an organization and its employee, which outlines what (rights, duties, responsibilities, and obligations) each should expect to give to and receive from each other, in the course of their relationship. It is evaluated based on the content of what the employer promises and is obligated to do for employees.

However, evidence emerged that increase in global competition, the dynamic of global economics coupled with disruptive technologies have changed the nature of employment relationship/psychological contract over the last decade as

employees no longer experience the full benefits accruing to the relational and transactional exchange relationship with employers they were once getting (Ahmad & Zafar, 2018). This nature of the employment relationship is particularly worrisome in higher institutions in Nigeria, where promises obligation in transactional and relationship contracts from the employer is either reneged, deliberately broken, disrupted, or partially fulfilled. The breach of psychological contract among academic staff though has elicited anger, resentment, bitterness, outrage, distrust, and a state of uncertainty among academic staff with the increase in strikes and lawsuits, which have cost both the institutions and government a lot of disruptions and financial strain.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Most tertiary institutions in Nigeria are facing challenges in producing employable graduates and developing the quality human capital needed to reposition the ailing Nigerian economy (Francis, 2015). These challenges have over the years been attributed to poor working academic environments ranging from poor remuneration, quality of the library, use of digital teaching boards, quality of research grant, earned allowance, and career development to staffing which has resulted in increasing workloads, stress and burnout among lecturers in the country's institutions (Akinmayowa & Kadiri, 2014).

While the poor working academic environments occasioned by inadequate funding of the university are the content through which psychological contracts are evoked among academics (Shen, 2010). Few studies have empirically addressed the intensity of psychological contract experience among academics in Nigeria (Iyayi, 2018). Iyayi (2018) examined the experience of psychological contract breach and violation among academics but failed to examine how psychological contract breach experience influences the engagement of academic staff, which is central in explaining the behavioral and attitudinal response to perceived psychological contract breach in the context of the academic environment.

Moreover, the norm of reciprocity in social exchange theory suggests individuals reciprocate frequent breaches in promise obligations and expectations (psychological contract breach) with decreased loyalty, frequent absenteeism, role alienation (neglect behaviors), and exit from the organization but are obligated to reciprocate higher fulfillment of the psychological contract with positive behavioral attitude (work engagement). But the extent to which employees reciprocate breach of psychological contract with a decrease in work engagement has only been confirmed and validated by very few studies (Bal, De-Cooman & Mol, 2013; Chambel Lorente, Carvalho & Martinez, 2019; Naidoo, Abarantyne & Rugimbana, 2019) across the globe. These few studies except the study of Naidoo et al (2019) also neglected the influence of psychological contracts on work engagement among academics.

Also, Rousseau (1995) grouped the content of psychological contract into transactional, relational, and balanced contracts but the extent to which transactional contract is less experienced, developed, and breached than relational contracts in the

context of the academic environment has only been investigated by Shen (2010) to the best of researchers' knowledge. Shen (2010) focused on and found that psychological contract among academics in Austria is more transactional than relational. He, however, neglected how a breach of transactional contracts and relational contracts have different or similar effects on the engagement of academics. Moreover, few studies have investigated whether academics in Nigeria experience transactional contract breaches than relational contracts and how the breach differ among academics in the private and public sectors (Iyayi, 2018).

Furthermore, extant studies (Akinbode, 2017; Ugwu & Ogwuche, 2013) in Nigeria have responded to the call on the influence of psychological contract breaches on employees' behavioral attitudes. These extant studies however focus on the influence of psychological contract breach and violation on employees turnover intention (Umar & Ringim, 2015; Oyekunle & Agu 2017), deviant behaviors (Balogun, Esan, Ezeugwu & Orifa, 2017; Akinbode, 2017) job involvement (Akinbobola & Zamani, 2018) with little focused on employees' engagement except the work of Ugwu & Ogwuche (2013) which examined the influence of psychological contract breach on employees' engagement within the context of the banking industry in Nigeria, thus neglecting tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Therefore, the objective of this study is to examine the relationship between psychological contract breaches and the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CONCEPT OF EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Employee engagement is a multidimensional concept that is related to but different from employee work spirituality, commitment, citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, and performance (Amah, 2018). Kahn (1990) defined employee work engagement as the degree to which employees are cognitively, emotionally, and physically connected to their work roles. Cognitive work engagement according to Kahn (1990) is the degree to which employees think and invest their brainpower into role performance. Emotional work engagement involves the degree to which employees are enthusiastic to perform the role assigned to them. Physical engagement is the extent to which they exercise vigor or energy while undertaking their roles.

May, Gilson, and Harter (2004) opined that employee engagement is a distinct concept that involves how employees think, feel, and react to role performance. It is a unique construct consisting of cognitive (thought), emotional (fully engross and enthusiastic about the job) and behavioral (going the extra mile or discretionary effort) demonstrated by employees while carrying out duties in an organization. They further indicated that employees' engagement can be broken down into the experience of three psychological conditions, which include meaningfulness of work, psychological safety, and psychological availability. The meaningfulness of work is the employees' feeling of a sense of return on investments

of self-in-role performances. Psychological safety is the feeling that work environments are safe, and support experimentation and trying new things without fear of negative consequences even when one fails. Psychological availability is making bodily (emotions, thought and behavior) present or available when occupying and performing a role.

Schaufeli et al (2006:3) defined engagement as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption". The Vigor dimension of engagement involves the level of energy, persistence, and resilience of employees while working (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006). It is a high level of positive energy at work and a willingness to invest efforts even in the face of difficulties. It is the eagerness to endow effort in their work, to be persistent and calm in a time of difficulties, hence consisting of interlocked feelings of emotional energy, vitality, physical strength, and cognitive spirit (mental resilience) experienced among employees in the workplace (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006).

The dedication dimension of engagement is a strong level of involvement in one's work. It is the experience of meaningfulness in job performance. This is occasioned by a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge for employees derived from the role assigned (Schaufeli et al., 2006). It is the feeling that the job performance inspires, challenges, and provides the incumbent with a sense of significance and enthusiasm.

The absorption dimension of engagement is the extent to which employees pay attention to their job, are joyfully engrossed in performing work, and are fully immersed in the job to the extent of finding it difficult to detach themselves from the job performance (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006).

2.2. CONCEPT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT (PC)

The psychological contract (PC) conceived by Argris in the 1960s but popularized by Rosseau in the 1980s has gained wide interest among industrial and psychology scholars in recent years. Rousseau (1989:123) defined a psychological contract (PC) as an "individual's belief regarding the terms and conditions of a reciprocal exchange agreement between that focal person and another party". Moreover, some studies (Herriot, Manning & Kidd, 2002; Turnley, Bolino, & Lester, 2003) opined that promises-based obligation is fundamental in understanding the psychological contract. They defined a psychological contract as promise obligations and can be evaluated based on the promise or agreement employers enter with employees. They opined that promise obligations may include employers communicating to employees with full assurance that they will be provided with adequate compensation, training, recognition, and promotion based on their efforts (skills, time, and knowledge) invested into work as specified in their job description. The psychological contract can be developed based on the expectations between employers and employees, which may not be stated in contracts, job publications, or promises by the employers or communicated to employees (Conway & Briner, 2005; Chambel, Lorente, Carvalho & Martinez, 2019). The expectations are not necessarily implicit and explicitly promise-based obligations (Schreuder, Schalk & De-Jong,

2017). Naidoo, Abarantyne, and Rugimbana (2019) concurred that the expectations of employees from employers can be shaped or developed through previous experience in similar positions outside the organization, equity sensitivity, and socialization.

2.2.1 CONTENTS AND DIMENSIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACTS

Rousseau (1995) groups the items of the content of a psychological contract based on what the employer promised and is obligated to do for employees into; transactional, relational, and balanced contracts, which have come to be recognized or referred to as dimensions, forms, and typology of the psychological contract. Each of the dimensions is explained below.

Transactional Psychological Contract

Transactional psychological contracts imply employer-employees exchange based on monetary value (Schreuder, Schalk, & De-Jong, 2017). This form of contract spells out precise responsibilities that involved monetary exchanges or financial compensation (Xanthi-Evangelia, & Panagiotis, 2014). It is primarily focused on economic exchange for putting efforts into work, taking higher/increased responsibility, and demonstrating exceptional performance (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016). It is characterized by performance-based pay, which includes financial rewards promised and offered to employees for teaching courses and taking on extra and high responsibilities (Shen, 2010).

The transactional psychological contract focuses on short-term financial relationships involving specific exchanges such as pay for performance characterized by clearly specified roles and responsibilities, which typically defined those employees who work for a specific wage for a period as agreed on by the employer without the obligation of employers to commit and develop skills of the employees (Rayton, Zeynep, & Yalabik, 2014).

The transactional psychological contract is often used to describe temporary, casual, or contract employees (Chambel, Lorente, Carvalho & Martinez, 2019). This is because most contract employees are compensated financially only in return for putting enough effort into a job they do for the organization. Employers expected employees to fulfill the minimal and narrowly specified requirements to receive those economic rewards.

Alan (2017) observed that transactional contract among academics is the experience of exchange of financial reward for the time and efforts they invested in teaching. It occurs when academics are subjected to perform only a fixed set of duties and to execute that which is required by the employer while organizations offer specific economic conditions as a primary incentive for performing certain tasks within a specific time frame (Alan, 2017). Such academic financial inducement/reward is contingent mainly on the number of courses allocated to him/her rather than the commitment and loyalty displayed by the academic in

defending and protecting the image, property, and operations of the organization (Sewpersad, Ruggunan, Adam & Krishna, 2019).

Relational Psychological Contracts

Relational psychological contracts are promises and agreements in employer and employee relationships that are subjective, unspecific, broader, open-ended, and involve a longer-term relationship that is characterized by trust, respect, loyalty, and commitment (Rousseau, 1990). Such a contract has not time-bound but is built on the utmost trust, and implicit emotional attachment is open-ended, involves socio-emotional, and embraces long-term employment.

Moreover, Maja (2015) observed that the content of the relational psychological contract is based on an open-ended relationship where trust, security of employment, and loyalty are the focus of the exchange. The content of the relational psychological contract is characterized by ongoing long-term extensive training and career development and exchange of other range of intrinsic job benefits (Schreuder, et al. 2017). The exchange in the relational contract is dynamic, socio-emotional, and typically involves promotion from within, mentoring and socialization of employees, intensive training, career development, and association with company values and goals in return for loyalty and commitment of employees (Xanthi-Evangelia & Panagiotis, 2014). They include fair promotion, consultation, recognition of contributions, providing funding for research, and pay equity (Erkutlu & Chafra, 2016). The most fulfilled elements are the provision of adequate training, reasonable workload, the provision of resources to do work, and the provision of adequate time for research from an academic perspective (Shen, 2010).

Furthermore, Coyle-Shapiro and Parzefal (2008) distinguished transactional and relational contracts based on their focus, period, stability, scope, and tangibility. They specifically stated that transactional contracts consist of highly tangible exchanges that are economic in focus; the terms and conditions remain static over the finite period of the relationship and the scope of the contract is narrow while relational contracts, on the other hand, are based on a longer-term relationship where a broader range of benefits and opportunities are provided in exchange for a deeper and more extensive commitment to the organization. According to them, the relational contracts tend to be more unstructured, uncertain, and open-ended and rely on a higher level of trust, broader and involving longer-term relationships where employers are obligated to offer employees with pleasant working experience, adequate resources, a high degree of flexibility, made them part of a team, provide them with opportunities to learn new skills, grow or advance in a career as well as provide them with the flexibility in workload decisions, offer them fair pay, opportunity to craft their jobs and experience work-life balance.

Rousseau (1995) further distinguished between transactional from relational contracts by categorizing high pay, rapid advancement and merit pay as the content of transactional contracts while relational include career growth, support for employees and family well-being, employment security, and long-term investment for employees' personal development.

Balanced Psychological Contract

The balanced psychological contract has emerged recently in the psychological contract literature as a hybrid of relational and transactional contracts (Persson & Wasieleski, 2015).

The balanced psychological contract combines the open-ended period and mutual concern of relational agreement with the performance, demand, and renegotiation of transactional contracts (Wangithi & Muceke, 2012). The balanced psychological contract refers to a dynamic and open-ended employment relationship preconditioned on the business success of the employer organization and the employee's opportunities to develop skill sets and opportunities for career advancement based on skills and performance. That is, both employees and organizations contribute to each other's development.

Bankins (2012) opined that balanced psychological contracts are constituted by three dimensions. First, offering support for meeting increasing and changeable performance requirements. Secondly, emerging in employee development activities and offering career development within the organization. Finally, support for developing externally marketable job skills.

Moreover, Sewpersad, Ruggunan, Adam, and Krishna (2019) also indicated that a balanced psychological contract in the academic context occurs when academics expected not only appropriate remuneration and rewarding job from school management but also good workplace relations, empowerment, and related work environment that is characterized with open consultation, open communication, security of employment, safety, appropriate support and opportunities for career growth and development of staff.

2.3 PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT FULFILLMENT

Psychological contract fulfillment occurs when employees perceive that their employer has fulfilled promised obligations (Rousseau, 1995). It is met promised and expected obligations (Chi & Chen, 2007). These expected obligations from employers include but are not limited to the implementation of fair promotion, professional autonomy, fair workload, job security, and adequate staffing to meet day-to-day challenges in the delivery of quality education (Iyayi, 2018; Chahar, 2019). They also include not only fair pay and grant for training but also equipped office space and teaching facilities including equipped laboratories, a library, and research/innovation centers. This suggested that perceived psychological contract fulfillment is meeting and delivery of the content of balanced PC, relational PC, and transactional PC (Hamilton & Kathryn, 2012).

The consequences of fulfilling psychological contracts have been documented in the literature on the theory of norm of reciprocity in social exchange, which posits that employees are obligated to respond to the fulfillment of contracts through positive attitudes and behavior (Ahmad, & Zafar, 2018). It suggests that an increase in employers' commitment to the well-being of employees and fulfilment of the obligations promised to them results in employees becoming more involved in

organizational activities/tasks and less likely to leave the organization. This aligned with empirical literature suggesting that employees who perceived fulfillment of transactional, relational, and balanced obligations reciprocate with more work energy and dedication (Chambel & Oliveira-Cruz, 2010; Parzefall & Hakanen 2010). They observed that fulfillment of the psychological contract is key to managing the quality relationships between employee and employer since it often leads to trust, loyalty, readiness to commit to change, accept change in the organization and demonstrate in-role and extra-role performance (Conway & Coyle-Shapiro, 2012).

2.4. PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH

A psychological contract breach is a subjective experience of the failure of employers to fulfill their promised obligations to the employees. It occurs when the employer failed, is unwilling, or unable to fulfill the promised obligation (Rayton, *et al.* 2014).

Some studies have suggested that the concept of psychological contract breach is related to but distinct from psychological contract violation (Eckerd, Hill, Boyer, Donohue & Ward, 2013; Xanthi-Evangelia & Panagiotis, 2014; Maja 2015.). According to them, a psychological contract breach is more of cognitive appraisal and awareness that the organization has failed to meet its promises while the violation is the affective state or emotional aspect of failure in a psychological contract or promise unfulfilled (that the organization has failed to meet its promises). Moreover, Arshad (2016) concurs that psychological contract violation represents an emotional experience that may, under some circumstances, result from the perceived breach. The emotional situations often include disappointment, anger, resentment, bitterness, indignation, or some outrage (Kerstin, Nele, Claudia, & Hans, 2010). Considering this, Jabeen, Behery, and Elanain (2015) observed that employees can experience a breach and at the same time does not experience the negative emotions that normally go with feelings of violation.

More studies further believed that the transition from a perceived breach to a violation may be gradual in some cases but quite abrupt in others. They also noted that a perceived contract breach will not necessarily lead to an intense emotional reaction i.e. contract violation unless the employee attaches meaning to the perceived breach. This is evident in the workplace like a tertiary institution where earned allowance and research grants are promised but not accessible or fulfilled thus constituting a breach of what was promised. The breach of the earn allowance promised can only result in violation only when the affected employees experience negative emotions like rage, which has led to protests and strikes. Thus, a perceived breach turns into a violation when the affected employees experience negative emotions.

Both breach and violation occur due to the non-fulfillment of the psychological contract in the context of this study. They occur when there is a negative gap between what employers promised and what employers delivered to employees. The response of employees experiencing a breach of contract can be severe and ultimately cause detrimental workplace outcomes. Breaches can lead to

a violation, and the emotional response includes negative emotional states like anger, frustration, disappointment, betrayal, and fall of trust, all of which can lead to job alienation, increase absenteeism, protest, strike, emotional exhaustion, tardiness, early exit from the organization and lawsuits, which in turn may increase costs to the organization and harm effective academic calendar and operations of the tertiary institutions.

In the context of the academic environment in Nigeria specifically, breaches and violations of psychological contracts appear to be highly intense because of the dwindling funding for universities occasioned by the economic crisis, inflation, corruption, and mismanagement of national resources that have over the years made employers unable to fulfill its promised obligations (Oyekunle & Agu, 2017). The dwindling funding for universities reflects the deplorable working environment such as inadequate and unequipped office space, outdated laboratory and research facilities in addition to poor remunerations and earned allowances which at times inaccessible in the light of heavy workloads and pressure to deliver quality teaching (Marlier, 2014, Iyayi, 2018). These work conditions faced by most lecturers constituted a breach of psychological contracts (Musungu, 2013). The breach appears profound considering the increased course loads, and pressure for lecturers to publish papers and supervise students without getting a commensurate reward for these efforts (Marlier, 2014).

Indeed, while the intensity of breach of psychological contract among academics has over the years stimulated different industrial actions and engagement in voice behavior (referred to as taking reasonable initiative in a belief that conditions can be improved, offering open discussions, and providing solutions), these actions including strikes have done more harm than good given that most strikes embarked by academic staff have only led to meager fulfillment of promised obligations while at the same time heavily disrupted academic programs/calendar resulting in loss of academic hours, causing untold brain drain and frustration on the part of students who experiences the strike. Fundamentally, the strikes have over time led to the loss of public confidence in the public university. This is exemplified by some individuals declining to send their children to public universities in Nigeria.

2.5. EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Hamilton and Kathryn (2012) examined the influence of relational, transactional, and balanced psychological contracts on employees' intention to leave the current organization and how careerism mediates the influence. They sampled 202 health professionals (AHPs) in India and employed SEM in testing the data collected. They found that relational, transactional, and balanced psychological contract fulfillment significantly and positively influence intention to turnover. They found careerists have a higher turnover intention as well as score higher in transactional psychological contracts unlike less careerist oriented employees who score higher in a relational psychological contract and lower turnover intention. They, however, demonstrated that careerism does not mediate the influence of perceived contract fulfillment on turnover intention. Bal, De-Cooman, and Mol

(2013) examined the influence of psychological contracts on work engagement and turnover intention. They employed longitudinal data by collecting data from 240 overtime and used SEM to test the data. They found that psychological contract fulfilment influence work engagement positively but negatively influence turnover intentions among employees with low tenure. Ugwu and Ogwuche (2013) examined the influence of perceived psychological contract breach and perceived organizational support on work engagement using 218 cross-sectional surveyed employees in 11 commercial banks in Makurdi, North-Central region, Nigeria. The collected data were analyzed using hierarchical regression. They found that perceived psychological contract breach has a positive influence on employee work engagement. Moreover, perceived organizational support significantly and positively influences employee work engagement.

Furthermore, Rayton, Zeynep, and Yalabik (2014) examined the interrelationship between psychological contract breach, work engagement, and job satisfaction using SEM to analyze data collected from 191 employees in Pakistan. They found that psychological contract breach is occasioned by a sense of loss in resources, which in turn negatively influences employees' work engagement through the mediating effect of job satisfaction. Similarly, Xanthi-Evangelia and Panagiotis (2014) examined the direct influence of psychological contract breaches on organizational commitment and how this influence is mediated by job satisfaction among bankers in Greece. The psychological contract breach was evaluated based on how the employer fulfills or unfilled the following aspect of the job, which include benefits, pay, advancement opportunities, the work itself, resource support, and a good employment relationship. Analyzing data collected from 262 bankers through SEM, Xanthi-Evangelia and Panagiotis (2014) found psychological contract breach significantly and negatively influences organizational commitment and this influence is lower among employees experiencing a high level of job satisfaction.

Additionally, Jabeen, Behery, and Elanain (2015) explored how psychological contracts influence organizational commitment. They collected data from 254 employees in the United Arab Emirates. They employed multiple regression analysis in testing the data. They found psychological contracts (transactional and relational) influence organizational commitment positively within the context of the UAE. Umar and Ringim (2015) examined the influence of psychological contracts (transactional, rational, and balanced psychological contracts) on employee turnover intention in private sector organizations in Nigeria. They collected data from 280 sampled employees in private organizations. They found that transactional psychological contracts, and relational and balance psychological contracts dimensions were significantly related to turnover intention to leave the private organizations.

Malik and Khalid (2016) investigate the influence of psychological contract breaches on employees' turnover intention and how work engagement mediates the relationship. They surveyed 302 bankers in Lahore, Pakistan. They used regression to test the data collected from the bankers. They found that psychological contract breach negatively and significantly influences work engagement. They also showed

that work engagement which in turn influences turnover intention negatively and had a partial mediating effect on the positive influence of psychological contract breach on turnover intention.

Akinbode (2017) sampled 514 full and part-time employees of some twelve front-line SMEs in Lagos to study the influence of psychological contract violations and employees' behavioral and attitudinal outcomes. They used a t-test, multiple linear regression analysis, and multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) in the test of data. They found that high experience of psychological contract violations across workgroups, organizational types, as well as job cadre. In return, they found that employees also reciprocated the breach and violation of their psychological contract through fraudulent self-enrichment tendencies, theft, and deception, cutting corners and diversion of resources, sabotage and dishonest behaviors and impropriety/sharp corrupt practices, and high-level effort withholding behaviors. Balogun, Esan, Ezeugwu, and Orifa (2017) examined the influence of psychological contract breach (PCB) on workplace deviance and this influence is mediated by job satisfaction among 195 police personnel selected from a State Police Command headquarters in Ondo State, Nigeria. Hierarchical multiple regression was used in testing the data collected. They found that PCB positively influences workplace deviance and is negatively related to job satisfaction. They also found that job satisfaction mediated the relationship between PCB and workplace deviance suggesting that fulfillment of a psychological contract of police increases their satisfaction with work, and in turn lessens their deviant behavior of collecting bribes.

Akinbobola and Zamani (2018) examined the influence of psychological contract breaches and perceived organizational support on job involvement. They collected data from 233 employees in public and private organizations in Abuja and used multiple regression and t-tests in testing the data. They found that perceived organizational support significantly influences job involvement positively while psychological contract breach does not affect job involvement though it has a negative sign. They also found that employees in the public organizations had significantly higher job involvement levels than employees in private organization. Also, Iyayi (2018) examined the psychological contract breach experience among 297 academics in universities in Benin City, Edo State. He also examined the reactions to the breach of contract. Using content analysis as a method of analysis, Iyayi (2018) found the experience of psychological contract breaches in training/development and the working environment among the respondents. He also revealed that "self-help" was the most frequent strategy adopted by the respondent in addressing the breach in these areas of the psychological contract. Ahmad and Zafar (2018) examined the influence of psychological contract fulfillment on OCB and how perceived support from organization mediate the influence. They surveyed 418 and 105 employees and their supervisors' respectively in a hotel in Pakistan. They employed SEM to confirm their hypotheses that psychological contract fulfillment including OCB positively and perceived support from the organization strongly mediates the influence.

Naidoo, Abarantyne, and Rugimbana (2019) determined the elements of the academic employee's psychological contract impact on employee engagement using data collected from 400 academic staff members in South Africa. They found that most academic staff developed a positive transactional and relational psychological contract and the fulfillment of these psychological contracts impact their work engagement. Chambel, Lorente, Carvalho, and Martinez (2019) profile psychological contracts and how they differ between permanent and temporary employees, and the influence they have on work engagement. They surveyed 2,867 employees. Using Anova and regression, they found that the fulfillment of the content of the relational, transactional, and balanced psychological contracts influences employee engagement while the unfulfillment of psychological contracts does not. They also showed that permanent staff experience a higher level of the relational and balanced psychological contract as well as work engagement than temporary staff who showed a higher level of transactional PC. Sewpersad, Ruggunan, Adam, and Krishna (2019) explored the new managerial practices that account for psychological contracts among lecturers at the University of Technology. They surveyed 15 academics using interviews, they found shifts like the employment relationship, self-monitoring through performance management systems, and the construction of students as clients are the new managerial practices influencing psychological contracts. These new managerialism policies influence psychological contract formation but the outcomes for psychological contracts are more complex than simple binary distinctions. Chahar (2019) examined the influence of psychological contracts on organizational citizenship behavior using data collected from 221 employees working in India. Findings from the analysis of the data using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) suggested psychological contracts significantly influence organizational citizenship behavior. They found that relational and transactional psychological contract breaches influence consciousness, civic virtue, courtesy, and altruism OCB. The results also suggest a breach of psychological contract result in a violation, which increase negative and neglect behaviors (job alienation, increase absenteeism, protest, strike, tardiness, disengagement, and exit from a job and the organization.

2.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This paper builds on the social exchange theory proposed by Blau, in 1964, from which psychological contract theory by Rousseau (1989) emerged. The social exchange theory posits that there are two possible contracts in an exchange relationship: an explicit (written) contract and an implicit (unwritten) contract (Blau, 1964). The implicit contract in the social exchange defines a psychological contract (Rousseau, 1989). It posits that promise obligations expected from employers are usually not documented but perceived by individual employees. Central to this aspect of social exchange theory is the norm of reciprocity theory developed by Gouldner (1960) that employees are obligated to return employer fulfillment of their promise obligations but the nature and extent of this future obligation cannot be bargained and are left to the discretion of the obligated party.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design given that the data needed on variables (dimensions of psychological contract breach and employee engagement) will be collected from the sample respondents at only a specific point in time. The population of the study comprises all academic staff of tertiary institutions in Edo State, Nigeria. Among the tertiary institution in Edo State, the study, however, focused on the University of Benin, Ambrose Ali University, Benson Idahosa University, and Igbinedion University. The choice of focusing on these four tertiary institutions hinges on ownership; two government-owned universities and two private individuals owned universities. Also, these four universities have been established over a long period compared to others in the state. The population of the academic staff of these four universities is shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: The Population of Academic Staff in Each of the Selected Nigerian Universities

Tertiary Institutions	Number of Staff
University of Benin, Benin City	2215
Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	1231
Igbinedion University, Okada	488
Benson Idahosa University, Benin, Benin City	391
Total	4325

Source: Academic Planning (2021)

3.1 SAMPLING AND SAMPLING TECHNIQUE

The sample size required for this study was determined using Yamani's propounded formula for selecting a sample size from a finite population. Using Yamane (1967)'s formula.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2} \dots \dots \dots (3.1)$$

Where; e = 0.05, 1 = constant, and N = population

$$n = \frac{4325}{1 + 4325(0.05)^2} = 366 \dots \dots \dots (3.2)$$

The value of this sample size will be distributed proportionately to the four universities based on the proportion of the staff strength of each of the tertiary institutions using Kumar (1976) proportional allocation formula proposed as

$$n_h = \frac{Nh}{N} \times n \dots \dots \dots (3.3)$$

Where n_h = sample size for stratum h; Nh = population size for stratum h; N = total population. This is demonstrated in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Administration of Questionnaire

S/N	Tertiary Institutions	No. of Staff	Proportionate Sampling
1	University of Benin, Benin City	2215	$n_h = \frac{2215}{4325} * 366 = 188$
2	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	1231	$n_h = \frac{1231}{4325} * 366 = 104$
3	Igbinedion University, Okada	488	$n_h = \frac{488}{4325} * 366 = 41$
4	Benson Idahosa University, Benin, Benin City	391	$n_h = \frac{391}{4325} * 366 = 33$
	Total	4325	366

Source: Researchers' computation (2021)

3.3. ADMINISTRATION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

The fieldwork, which is the administration of the copies of the questionnaire, was done using multi-stage, purposive and convenient sampling techniques. In the first stage, the study divided each of the institutions into faculty and thereafter department. The faculty consisted of faculty of arts, education, science, social science, management, engineering, pharmacy, dentistry, the school of medicine, and the library although these vary in nomenclature from university to university. The faculty was divided into departments, where academic arms including professors, senior lecturers, and junior lecturers were stratified in each department.

The last stage was the selection and physical administration of hard copies of the questionnaire to the selected respondents. This was done during or after meetings, classes, and seminars and launched through research assistants, who were employed and trained primarily for the purpose. The researcher also joined them in the administration of the copies of the questionnaire.

The total number of questionnaires administered to employees in the four organizations was five hundred (500). The number of copies of the questionnaire was increased above the sampled employees to cater to low responses and losses due to the inaccurate filling of the questionnaire. Unfortunately, only three hundred and eighty-six (386) were retrieved. Of these copies of the questionnaire retrieved, three hundred and forty (348) were valid and found usable, which represents 95.08% of the total sample size of this study. The total number of employees surveyed and whose responses were valid and used in each of the universities is depicted in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Response Rate

S/N	Tertiary Institutions	No. of Staff	Proportionate Sampling
1	University of Benin, Benin City	2215	176
2	Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma	1231	99
3	Igbinedion University, Okada	488	42
4	Benson Idahosa University, Benin, Benin City	391	31

Total	4325	348
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Source: Researchers' Computation (2021)

3.4 MODEL SPECIFICATION

The model specified in this study followed the model of Hamilton and Kathryn (2012) which hypothesizes that turnover intention is a function of transactional, relational, and balance contract breach. In this regard, the study formulates the following mathematical models with the general form of the model specified:

$$EME = f(PCB) \dots\dots\dots (3.4)$$

Disintegrating *PCB* into its components (transactional, relational and balance contract breach); the study further develops a robust model as specified below:

$$EME = \beta_0 + \beta_1TPCB + \beta_2RPCB + \beta_3BPCB + U_t \dots\dots\dots (3.5)$$

Where:

- EME = Employee engagement
- PCB = Psychological contract breach
- TPCB = Transactional psychological contract breach
- RPCB = Relational psychological contract breach
- BPCB = Balance contract psychological contract breach
- U_t = Error term
- β₀, β₁, β₂, β₃ = the parameters of the model

The apriori expectations of the study are β₁, β₂, β₃ > 0. This means that employee engagement which is the dependent variable of this study is positively related to each of the dimensions (transactional, relational and balanced) of psychological contract breach.

Regression analysis was used to test for a relationship between each of the dimensions of psychological contract and employee engagement. We also adopted the T-test to compare whether the experience of psychological contract breach differs between academics in the public and private tertiary institutions in Edo State. All tests will be done at a 5% level of significance using SPSS version 20.

3.5 OPERATIONAL MEASUREMENT OF THE VARIABLES

Psychological contracts decomposed into transactional, relational, and balance obligations from employers will be operationalized from the employee perspective following the psychological contract inventory developed by Rousseau (1990) but validated by Cable (2008). The employee engagement will be operationalized using items on three subs-scale (vigor, dedication, and absorption) of work engagement developed by Schaufeli, Salanova, and Bakker (2006). The measuring scale for engagement will be a five-point Likert-based scale ranging from 1- strongly disagreed, 2- disagreed, 3- neutral, 4-agreed to 5-strongly agreed. This scale will be adopted from the most widely used instrument for measuring

engagement developed by Schaufeli *et al.* (2006) which consisted of 17 items measuring the core aspects of engagement (vigor, dedication, and absorption) (Schaufeli, *et al.* 2006).

Table 3.3: Operational Measurement of Variables

S/N	Variable/ Dimensions	The operational definition of variable	The instrument developed by:	Measurement
1	Employee engagement	This operationally includes feelings of vigor (high energy and mental resilience), derived sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride and being happily engrossed in one's work, whereby time passes (flies) quickly and there are difficulties with detaching oneself from work.	Schaufeli <i>et al.</i> (2006) on Five points Likert scale	Likert Scale
2	Transactional Contract Breach	This is operationally defined as employees' belief that their employer promised and perform the actual promise of offering specific compensation to the employee in exchange for performing specific duties or assignments.	Rousseau (1990)	Likert Scale
3	Relational Contract Breach	This is operationally defined as employees' belief of having an open-ended relationship with employer bounded by trust, the security of employment, loyalty, ongoing long-term extensive training, career development and other range of intrinsic job benefits.	Rousseau (1990)	Likert Scale
4	Balanced Contract Breach	This is operationally defined as employees' belief that their employer lives up to all their promises by fulfilling them.	Rousseau (1990)	Likert Scale

Source: Authors' construction (2021).

3.6. RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

A pilot study was conducted by administering a sample questionnaire to 25 staff of different cadres in the tertiary institution in Benin City to assess the validity and reliability of the research instruments to be used in collecting the required data. The questionnaire was reviewed to remove the errors and deficiencies identified during the pilot study. Cronbach's coefficient alpha was used to assess reliability by

calculating the internal consistency of each scale. The reliability of the items is shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Reliability of the Questionnaire

S/N	Questionnaire Items	Cronbach's Alpha Value
1	Employee Engagement	0.870
2	Transactional Contract Breach	0.722
3	Relational Contract Breach	0.802
4	Balance Contract Breach	0.891

Source: Authors' Fieldwork (2021)

4. DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

Table 4.1 shows the level of employee engagement in tertiary institutions in Edo State. It also shows the constructs (vigor, dedication, and absorption) of employee engagement, which were used in determining the overall level of engagement. Each construct of engagement was calculated by using mean and standard deviation. The results are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Employee Engagement

S/N	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std Dev
Vigor								
46	At my job, I feel strong and vigorous	156 (44.9%)	96 (27.6%)	96 (27.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	1.83	0.835
47	When I get up in the morning, I feel like going to work	0 (0%)	72 (20.7%)	204 (58.7%)	72 (20.7%)	0 (0%)	3.00	0.644
48	I can continue working for very long periods	12 (3.5%)	60 (17.3%)	108 (31.1%)	144 (41.4%)	24 (6.9%)	3.31	0.952
49	At work, I am mentally very resilient	228 (65.6%)	48 (13.8%)	60 (17.3%)	12 (3.5%)	0 (0%)	1.59	0.893
50	At work, I always persevere, even when things do not go well	180 (51.8%)	60 (17.3%)	36 (10.4%)	24 (6.9%)	48 (13.8%)	2.14	0.458
The mean and standard deviation for Vigor							2.374	0.7564

Dedication								
51	I find the work that I do full of meaning and purpose	36 (10.4%)	72 (20.7%)	72 (20.7%)	144 (41.4%)	24 (6.9%)	3.14	0.138
52	I am enthusiastic about my job	60 (17.3%)	72 (20.7%)	144 (41.4%)	48 (13.8%)	24 (6.9%)	2.72	0.113
53	My job inspires me	132 (38%)	84 (24.2%)	96 (27.6%)	0 (0%)	36 (10.4%)	2.21	0.244
54	I am proud of the work I do	36 (10.4%)	36 (10.4%)	84 (24.2%)	108 (31.1%)	84 (24.2%)	3.48	0.251
55	I find my job challenging	48 (13.8%)	84 (24.2%)	120 (34.5%)	36 (10.4%)	60 (17.3%)	2.93	0.259
The mean and standard deviation for dedication							2.896	0.201
Absorption								
56	Time flies when I am working	60 (17.3%)	96 (27.6%)	84 (24.2%)	96 (27.6%)	12 (3.5%)	2.72	0.143
57	When I am working, I forget everything else around me	48 (13.8%)	72 (20.7%)	120 (34.5%)	72 (20.7%)	36 (10.4%)	2.93	0.174
58	When I am working intensely, I feel happy	36 (10.4%)	60 (17.3%)	60 (17.3%)	108 (31.1%)	84 (24.2%)	3.41	0.302
59	It is difficult to detach myself from my job once I am in on it	36 (10.4%)	72 (20.7%)	48 (13.8%)	72 (20.7%)	120 (34.5%)	3.48	0.407
60	I am immersed in my work	0 (0%)	131 (37.8%)	168 (48.5%)	48 (13.9%)	0 (0%)	2.76	0.678
61	I get carried away when I am working and do not realize that time had passed	37 (10.7%)	48 (13.8%)	95 (27.3%)	144 (41.4%)	24 (6.9%)	3.20	0.103
The mean and standard deviation for absorption							3.083	0.301
Overall mean and standard deviation for employee engagement							2.784	0.419

Source: Researchers' Field Work (2021)

In table 4.1 the results show that the mean score for vigor ($X = 2.374$; $SD = 0.7564$) is the lowest-rated dimension of employee engagement, followed by dedication ($X = 2.896$; $SD = 0.201$) while absorption ($X = 3.083$; $SD = 0.301$) is the highest-rated dimension of engagement. The overall mean score for employee engagement is 2.784 with a standard deviation of 0.419. This result also implies that the level of employee engagement in tertiary institutions in Edo State is low.

4.2 DIMENSIONS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH/FULFILLMENT

The descriptive analysis of the psychological contract breach addressed from the lens of transactional, relational, and balance psychological contract breach is presented in Table 4.2. These constructs of psychological contract breach were described using mean and standard deviation.

Table 4.2: Descriptive Analysis of Dimensions of Psychological Contract Breach/Fulfillment

S/ N	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remark
Transactional Psychological Contract Breach/fulfilment									
7	My job is a job only as long as this employer needs me	216 (62.1%)	60 (17.3%)	48 (13.8%)	12 (3.5%)	12 (3.5%)	1.69	0.055	Fulfilled Psychological contract
8	My employer makes no commitments to retain me in the future	240 (69%)	36 (10.4%)	48 (13.8%)	0 (0%)	24 (6.9%)	1.66	0.155	Fulfilled Psychological contract
9	My job is a short-term employment	324 (93.2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	24 (6.9%)	1.28	0.015	Fulfilled Psychological contract
10	My job gives me limited involvement in the organization	228 (65.6%)	48 (13.8%)	60 (17.3%)	12 (3.5%)	0 (0%)	1.59	0.893	Fulfilled Psychological contract
11	My employer trained me only for my current job	180 (51.8%)	60 (17.3%)	36 (10.4%)	24 (6.9%)	48 (13.8%)	2.14	0.458	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
12	My job is limited to specific, well-defined responsibilities	180 (51.8%)	48 (13.8%)	12 (3.5%)	36 (10.4%)	72 (20.7%)	2.34	0.648	Fulfilled Psychological contract
Relational Psychological Contract Breach/fulfilment									

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S/N	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remark
13	My employer supports me to attain the highest possible level of performance	12 (3.5%)	60 (17.3%)	60 (17.3%)	108 (31.1%)	108 (31.1%)	3.69	0.179	Fulfilled Psychological contract
14	My employer helps me to respond to ever greater industrial standards	60 (17.3%)	96 (27.6%)	84 (24.2%)	96 (27.6%)	12 (3.5%)	2.72	0.143	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
15	My employer supports me in meeting increasingly higher personal goals	48 (13.8%)	72 (20.7%)	120 (34.5%)	72 (20.7%)	36 (10.4%)	2.93	0.174	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
16	My employer enables me to adjust to new, challenging performance requirements	48 (13.8%)	84 (24.2%)	96 (27.6%)	72 (20.7%)	48 (13.8%)	2.97	0.247	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
17	My employer gives me opportunities for career development within his firm	36 (10.4%)	60 (17.3%)	84 (24.2%)	84 (24.2%)	84 (24.2%)	3.34	0.296	Fulfilled Psychological contract
18	My employer gives me room for developmental opportunities with his firm	36 (10.4%)	84 (24.2%)	72 (20.7%)	84 (24.2%)	72 (20.7%)	3.21	0.299	Fulfilled Psychological contract
19	My employer offers me opportunities for personal advancement within the firm	36 (10.4%)	60 (17.3%)	60 (17.3%)	108 (31.1%)	84 (24.2%)	3.41	0.302	Fulfilled Psychological contract
20	My employer offers me opportunities for promotion	36 (10.4%)	72 (20.7%)	48 (13.8%)	72 (20.7%)	120 (34.5%)	3.48	0.407	Fulfilled Psychological contract
21	My employer helps me develop externally marketable skills	48 (14.3%)	72 (21.5%)	84 (25%)	108 (32.2%)	24 (7.2%)	2.96	0.181	Unfulfilled Psychological contract

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S/ N	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remark
22	My employer offers me job assignments that enhance my external marketability	12 (3.5%)	120 (34.5%)	96 (27.6%)	108 (31.1%)	12 (3.5%)	2.97	0.966	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
23	My employer allows potential job opportunities outside the firm	48 (13.8%)	48 (13.8%)	132 (38%)	84 (24.2%)	36 (10.4%)	3.03	0.161	Fulfilled Psychological contract
24	My employer allows contacts that create employment opportunities elsewhere	36 (10.4%)	24 (6.9%)	180 (51.8%)	48 (13.8%)	60 (17.3%)	3.21	0.127	Fulfilled Psychological contract
25	My employer secured my employment	12 (3.5%)	24 (6.9%)	48 (13.8%)	48 (13.8%)	216 (62.1%)	4.24	0.136	Fulfilled Psychological contract
26	My employer provides me with wages and benefits I can count on	60 (17.3%)	36 (10.4%)	156 (44.9%)	96 (27.6%)	0 (0%)	2.83	0.021	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
27	My employment is steady here in this organization	24 (6.9%)	12 (3.5%)	24 (6.9%)	36 (10.4%)	252 (72.5%)	4.38	0.188	Fulfilled Psychological contract
28	My employer provides a stable benefit for my families	36 (10.4%)	84 (24.2%)	144 (41.4%)	72 (20.7%)	12 (3.5%)	2.83	0.986	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
29	My employer shows concern for my welfare	24 (6.9%)	96 (27.6%)	180 (51.8%)	24 (6.9%)	24 (6.9%)	2.79	0.925	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
30	My employer responds to my concerns and well-being	24 (6.9%)	96 (27.6%)	156 (44.9%)	48 (13.8%)	24 (6.9%)	2.86	0.974	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
31	My employer makes decision with my interests in mind	24 (6.9%)	96 (27.6%)	180 (51.8%)	48 (13.8%)	0 (0%)	2.72	0.784	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
32	My employer shows concern for my long-term well-being	60 (17.3%)	72 (20.7%)	144 (41.4%)	48 (13.8%)	24 (6.9%)	2.72	0.113	Unfulfilled Psychological contract

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S/N	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remark
33	My employer withholds information from me	132 (38%)	84 (24.2%)	96 (27.6%)	0 (0%)	36 (10.4%)	2.21	0.244	Fulfilled Psychological contract
34	My employer acts as if he does not trust its employees	144 (41.4%)	72 (20.7%)	108 (31.1%)	12 (3.5%)	12 (3.5%)	2.07	0.082	Fulfilled Psychological contract
35	My employer introduces changes without involving employees	132 (38%)	84 (24.2%)	72 (20.7%)	36 (10.4%)	24 (6.9%)	2.24	0.252	Fulfilled Psychological contract
36	My employer shares important information with the workers	36 (10.4%)	36 (10.4%)	96 (27.6%)	60 (17.3%)	120 (34.5%)	3.55	0.330	Fulfilled Psychological contract
37	It is difficult to predict future direction of his relationship with me	72 (20.7%)	96 (27.6%)	144 (41.4%)	12 (3.5%)	24 (6.9%)	2.48	0.072	Fulfilled Psychological contract
38	I feel an uncertain future regarding his relationship with me	156 (44.9%)	72 (20.7%)	84 (24.2%)	24 (6.9%)	12 (3.5%)	2.03	0.131	Fulfilled Psychological contract
39	I am uncertain regarding his commitments to employees	48 (13.8%)	132 (38%)	120 (34.5%)	24 (6.9%)	24 (6.9%)	2.55	0.038	Fulfilled Psychological contract
40	Employer demand more from me while giving me less in return	36 (10.4%)	36 (10.4%)	84 (24.2%)	108 (31.1%)	84 (24.2%)	3.48	0.251	Unfulfilled Psychological contract
41	I fear decreased benefits in the next few years from my employer	48 (13.8%)	84 (24.2%)	120 (34.5%)	36 (10.4%)	60 (17.3%)	2.93	0.259	Fulfilled Psychological contract
42	I worry about stagnant or reduced wages the longer I work here	60 (17.3%)	72 (20.7%)	72 (20.7%)	12 (3.5%)	132 (38%)	3.24	0.548	Unfulfilled Psychological contract

S/ N	Statements	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not Sure	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean	Std. Dev.	Remark
43	I expect more and more work for less pay from my employer	48 (13.8%)	36 (10.4%)	96 (27.6%)	72 (20.7%)	96 (27.6%)	3.38	0.352	Unfulfilled psychological contract
Balanced Psychological Contract Breach/fulfilment									
44	My employer fulfills its commitments to me	36 (10.4%)	48 (13.8%)	96 (27.6%)	144 (41.4%)	24 (6.9%)	3.21	0.096	Fulfilled Psychological contract
45	In general, employer live up to their promises	36 (10.4%)	72 (20.7%)	72 (20.7%)	144 (41.4%)	24 (6.9%)	3.14	0.138	Fulfilled Psychological contract

Source: Researchers' Field Work (2021).

4.2.1 TRANSACTIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH/FULFILLMENT

The results in Table 4.2 show that only the statement that "employer trained me only for my current job" is unfulfilled among the questions raised on transactional psychological contracts. The mean score on each of the statements raised on transactional psychological contracts showed that the relationship between academics/employees and employer goes beyond transactional.

4.2.2 RELATIONAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH/FULFILLMENT

The mean scores from Table 4.2 on questions/statements raised relational psychological contracts to indicate that the employer has fulfilled some of the aspects of relational psychological contracts but failed to fulfill many areas of relational psychological contracts. The areas of relational psychological contract unfulfilled or breached were "supporting academics respond to ever greater industrial standards, meeting increasingly higher personal goals, and adjusting to new, challenging performance requirements". They also include "supporting academics develop externally marketable skills, providing them with wages and benefits they can count on, as well as providing them with stable benefits for their families". The mean scores further indicate that "employers show less concern about long-term well-being or personal welfare of academics while demanding more from them". They revealed that employers gave academics less in return for greater job responsibilities, academics now expected more and more work for less pay as well as worry about stagnated wages they will receive from their current employer.

4.2.3 BALANCED PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH/FULFILLMENT

From the mean scores on two questions/statements raised on balance psychological contract, it is believed among the academics that their employers have

fulfilled their commitments to the as well as lived up to their promise in general. This suggests that overall psychological contracts among academics have not been breached.

4.3 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The result of regression analysis is showed in table 4.3.

Table 4.3. *Regression Analysis*

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.028908	0.055303	0.522714	0.6015
BPCB	-0.096623	0.009340	-10.34540	0.0000
RPCB	-0.699209	0.020963	-33.35475	0.0000
TPCB	-0.204201	0.012668	-16.12000	0.0000
R-squared	0.888606	Mean dependent var		2.797474
Adjusted R-squared	0.887634	S.D. dependent var		0.511874
S.E. of regression	0.171585	Akaike info criterion		-0.676045
Sum squared resid	10.12788	Schwarz criterion		-0.631767
Log-likelihood	121.6319	Hannan-Quinn criterion.		-0.658417
F-statistic	914.7108	Durbin-Watson stat		1.821011
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

Source: Extracted from E-view 8.0 (Authors' Computation, 2021)

The R-squared value of 0.888 is the strength of the regression model. It indicates the goodness of fit of the model. It suggested that the combined elements (transactional, relational, and balanced psychological contract breach) in the regression model predict and explained 88.8% of the systematic variation in the engagement of academics in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria even after the model has been adjusted for the degree of freedom. This indicates that the model is good and effective for policy making toward addressing, sustaining, and improving the level of engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

The F-statistic of 914.708 at a p-value of .00000 which is less than a 5% critical value was observed. It implies the existence of a significant linear relationship between psychological contract breaches and the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. Moreover, P-Values (Sig) of 0.00000 which is less than 5% critical value (level of significance) was observed for each of the dimensions (BPCB, RPCB, and TPCB) of psychological contract breach in the model. These results imply that transactional, relational, and balanced psychological contract breach individually has a negative significant influence on the engagement of academics in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The t-values for each element of psychological contract breach further suggested that relational psychological contract breach (RPCB) had a greater negative significant influence on the engagement of academics followed by transactional psychological contract breach. The Durbin Watson-statistic value of 1.821011 in the regression model indicates no

presence of serial correlation in the model, hence, the results in the model may be considered authentic, valid, and reliable for decision makings.

4.4 DIFFERENCES IN THE PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH EXPERIENCE AMONG ACADEMICS IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES IN EDO STATE

Independent Samples Test was employed in testing if significant differences exist in the level of psychological contract breach between private and public university academics. The results are shown in Table 4.4

Table 4.4: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
TPCB	Equal variances assumed	.211	.646	.318	346	.751	.033	.103	-.170	.235
	Equal variances not assumed			.311	110.313	.756	.033	.105	-.175	.241
RPCB	Equal variances assumed	.137	.712	-.044	346	.965	-.003	.068	-.136	.129
	Equal variances not assumed			-.044	114.386	.965	-.003	.067	-.136	.129
BPCB	Equal variances assumed	.069	.793	-.631	346	.528	-.090	.143	-.370	.190
	Equal variances not assumed			-.640	115.266	.524	-.090	.141	-.368	.189
EME	Equal variances assumed	.001	.980	-.014	346	.989	-.0009	.068	-.134	.132
	Equal variances not assumed			-.014	112.986	.989	-.0009	.068	-.135	.133

Source: Researchers' Field Work (2021).

P-Values (Sig) of 0.000 which is less than 5% critical value (level of significance) were observed for each of the dimensions (BPCB, RPCB, and TPCB) of psychological contract breach. These results imply that there is no significant difference in the level of transactional, relational, and balanced psychological contract breach experiences between academics in private and public tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The results also showed no significant difference in the level of academics' engagement in private and public tertiary institutions in Edo State.

4.6. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings derived from this study and their policy implications are discussed. The finding from the study revealed that each of the transactional, relational, and balanced psychological contract breaches significantly and negatively influence the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This finding is consistent with our apriori expectations.

This study revealed that transactional psychological contract breach has a negative influence on the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This finding confirms the position of Chambel, Lorente, Carvalho, and Martinez (2019) that the unfulfillment of the content of relational, transactional, and balanced psychological contracts harms employee engagement. It also collaborated with the position of Naidoo, Abarantyne, and Rugimbana (2019) that most academic staff developed a positive transactional and relational psychological contract, and the fulfillment of these psychological contracts impacts their work engagement. The finding of this study also supports the empirical position of Akinbode (2017) in Nigeria that employees reciprocated the breach and violation of their psychological contract through fraudulent self-enrichment tendencies, theft, and deception, cutting corners and diversion of resources, sabotage and dishonesty behaviors, and impropriety/sharp corrupt practices and high-level effort withholding behaviors.

The study revealed that relational psychological contract breach negatively influences the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This finding supports the empirical position of Malik and Khalid (2016) that psychological contract breach negatively and significantly influences work engagement, which in turn influences turnover intention negatively. It confirms the study of Chi and Chen (2007) that observed that the failure of the organization to live up to promised obligations results in negative attitudes and behaviors such as frustration, psychological strain, intention to quit, and low organizational citizenship behavior. It also affirms the study of Bal, De-Cooman, and Mol's (2013) psychological contract fulfilment influence work engagement positively but negatively influence turnover intentions among employees. The finding of this study also agreed with the position of Chahar (2019) that relational and transactional psychological contract breach results in a violation, which increases negative behaviors (job alienation, increase absenteeism, protest, strike, tardiness, and disengagement) and exit from a job and the organization. It also supports the study of Hamilton and Kathryn (2012) that relational, transactional, and balanced psychological contract fulfillment significantly and positively influences intention to turnover. It supports the study done in Nigeria by Umar and Ringim (2015) that transactional psychological contract, relational and balance psychological contract dimensions were significantly related to turnover intention to leave private organizations.

Finally, the study also revealed that balanced psychological contract breach has a negative influence on the engagement of academics in tertiary institutions in Nigeria. This finding is consistent with the position of Rayton et al. (2014) psychological contract breach is occasioned by a sense of loss of resources and has

a negative influence on work engagement through the mediating effect of job satisfaction. It also supports the study of Xanthi-Evangelia and Panagiotis (2014) psychological contract breach significantly and negatively influences organizational commitment and this influence is lower among employees experiencing a high level of job satisfaction. It aligned with the study of Balogun, et. al. (2017) that fulfillment of a psychological contract of police increases their satisfaction with work, and in turn, lessens their deviant behavior of collecting bribes. It collaborated with the study of Chambel Lorente, et al. (2019) that the unfulfillment of the content of balanced psychological contracts harms employee engagement. This finding is consistent with the studies of Hamilton and Kathryn (2012) and Umar and Ringim (2015) that balanced psychological contract breach/fulfillment significantly related to turnover intention.

5 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The conclusion derived from this study is that academics in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria reciprocate breach of contractual obligations with a low engagement to work, which is characterized by a poor physical, mental and emotional commitment to working. The study concluded that academics that perceived unfulfillment of promised obligations were less engaged in the tertiary institutions in Edo State. It further concluded that poor engagement of academics is more intense among those who perceived and experienced a breach of the relational psychological contract, which is based on the open-ended relationship where trust, research funding, long-term emotional commitment, and loyalty are the focus of the exchange. The breach of these relationships was found to elicit anger, resentment, bitterness, outrage, distrust, and a state of uncertainty among academic staff with a decrease in engagement in work, which appears to have cost disruptions in the quality of teaching, research, and graduates produced in Nigeria.

Based on the findings of this study, we made the following recommendations:

1. The government of Nigeria and the management of tertiary institutions should fulfil the transactional promised obligations or agreements they entered with academics. This can be done by releasing the earned allowance promised to academics, increasing their basic salary, training them in their current job, and providing them with research grants.
2. The government of Nigeria and the management of tertiary institutions should fulfil relational promised obligations. This can be done by being committed to the long-term emotional well-being of academics, supporting them to develop externally marketable skills, and offering them the needed support to meet new and challenging performance requirements that align with industrial standards. It can also be done by providing academics with funding, grant, and time off for research.
3. The government of Nigeria and the management of tertiary institutions should meet balanced promise obligations by constantly living up to and committed to meeting all the promises made to academics.

5.1 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

This study recommends that future studies should extend the geographical scope of this study. This can be done by focusing on all the tertiary institutions in other states in Nigeria to get a broader picture of the link between psychological contract breaches and the engagement of academics in the tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The study also recommends the need for future studies to examine the influence of psychological contract breaches on the engagement of civil servants in Nigeria.

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