

Psychological Contract Violation on the Turnover Intention: A Concept Paper on The Role of Job Dissatisfaction and Perceived Self-employment Opportunities

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Abstract: In the current competitive business world, labour turnover has become a challenging issue. Therefore, managing and retaining employees has become a crucial task in today's business environment and extant literature has recognised the significance of employee turnover in organisations. This has drawn substantial attention of both managers and researchers alike and investigations on the antecedents of turnover intention is still emerging. The aim of this paper is to examine one specific source of frustration which employees may encounter at work, namely psychological contract violation as the antecedent of employee turnover intention. It also explores the role of job dissatisfaction and perceived self-employment opportunities as the sequential underlying mechanism of a positive effect of psychological contract violation on employee turnover intention. This theoretical association between the employee attitude and behaviour, and turnover intentions of skilled professionals in IT sector will reveal significant managerial implications and insights for future research.

Keywords: Turnover intention, psychological contract violation, job dissatisfaction, perceived self-employment opportunities

1. Introduction

In developing countries, knowledge workers employed in organisations are developing intentions to quit their jobs and look for alternate work opportunities. In literature, this phenomenon is referred as 'voluntary turnover' and it applies mainly to employees leaving the job when the organisations fail to meet the desired expectation of reciprocity (Robinson & Morrison, 2000). Over the years many organisations worldwide are plagued with a high turnover rate causing variabilities in employee behaviours and intentions (Azeem et al.2020). Voluntary turnover is becoming an acute problem in the Information Technology (IT) industry in many countries (Hartmann et al., 2010; Joseph et al., 2007; MM, 2021) where professionals have plenty of job opportunities in both developed and emerging economies. Scholars have begun studies on this phenomenon since 1925 (Hom et al., 2017).

Social Exchange Theory is a widely used theoretical lens which explains how people tend to maintain a balance between their efforts and respective rewards when entering a social contract (Rodwell and Ellershaw, 2015). Theory suggests that employees' perceptions of negative treatment by an organisation might be reciprocated in the form of negative attitudes and behaviours (Rai and Agarwal, 2018a; Durairatnam et al.,2020b), that is, broken organisational promises are frustrating for employees and might increase their job dissatisfaction (De Clercq and Pereira, 2023; Priesemuth and Taylor, 2016). Consequently, employees may experience less enthusiasm and excitement towards their work where they follow the psychological norm of reciprocity and detach themselves from work as a coping strategy to balance their feeling of organisational betrayal to the extent that they might doubt their long-term career prospects in the organisation (Arshad, 2016; Rai and Agarwal, 2018a, 2018b) and even develop intentions to leave the organisation. This study will apply Social Exchange Theory to propose and show that contemplated psychological contract violations can spread like an infection and increase turnover intentions. Lv and Xu (2018) also emphasise that a deeper underlying mechanism linking psychological contract violation with employee turnover intentions must be tested by considering the mediation by job dissatisfaction. Mediation of the psychological contract breach and turnover relationship by work attitudes has been further asserted by Manolopoulos et al. (2022) Moreover, adding to the inaugural theory of voluntary turnover presented

by March and Simon (1958), researchers (Mobley, 1977) theorised central constructs of movement desirability and ease, defining them as job satisfaction and perceived job opportunities. Perceived alternative employment opportunities refers to an individual's perception of the availability of opportunities in the labour market which prompts them to consider alternatives (Hulin et al., 1985; Ramlawati et al., 2021). However, turnover theories in literature do not adequately consider the external environmental factors influencing turnover intentions built up by employees. (Joseph et al., 2007) also argues that limited theoretical work is written on effects of external labour market conditions on voluntary turnover which reveals not only the deficit of research but also the theoretical gap.

Among the extant research, conceptualisation of psychological contract violation formulated by Morrison and Robinson (1997) is notable. It follows psychological contract violation as a primary affective state where employees develop strong emotional responses to broken organisational promises. Although the concept of psychological contract violation has received burgeoning research attention, its persistence and its threat to employee's mental well-being highlights the need of investigation into its negative outcomes (Azeem et al., 2020). Existing research offers several rationales for why perceived violations may lead to negative work outcomes by examining the mediating role of organisational commitment (Arshad and Sparrow, 2010), job performance (Hekman et al., 2009; Raja et al., 2011; Suazo and Stone-Romero, 2011), mistrust (Lily, 2020) and lack of resources (Deng et al., 2018). Psychological contract breaches linked to paid employment, can lead to the choice to leave paid employment and become self-employed (Abord de Chatillon, 2023). To contribute to this body of research, this study proposes to examine the mediation of job dissatisfaction, which may also translate psychological contract violation, which is not a hitherto overlooked factor in IT turnover literature according to Moquin et al. (2019), into heightened turnover intentions. Earlier research has shown that job dissatisfaction may not be the only determinant of turnover intentions in times of changing labour markets (Hom et al., 2017). Examining the link between psychological contract violation and turnover intention of employees, perceived job opportunities can be identified to be amplifying effects of voluntary turnover (Joseph et al., 2007). Accordingly, it can be assumed that knowledge workers, driven by negative emotions due to psychological contract violation, will develop quit intentions when perceived self-employment opportunities are ubiquitous. Despite that, to the best of researcher's knowledge, no researcher in Sri Lanka or any other country has made a comprehensive attempt to explore the relationship between perceived self-employment opportunities and employees' intentions to leave the organisations. Consequently, these gaps in the literature lead to the following research question; how does job dissatisfaction and perceived self-employment opportunities affect employee turnover intention caused by psychological contract violation?

In answering the above research question, this paper proposes a conceptual framework for the relationship between psychological contract violation and turnover intention of employees. The theoretical framework by Mobley (1979) and Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964; Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005) lay the theoretical foundation for the suggested conceptual model. Emanated from the employee attitude and behaviour components of Social Exchange Theory, the constructs psychological contract violation and job dissatisfaction are derived as antecedents of turnover intention (Azeem et al., 2020). It can be hypothesised that psychological contract violation creates dissatisfaction among employees, and consequently lead to the development of intentions to leave the organisation. In addition, the framework by Mobley (1979) highlights that the perceived job opportunities are a key determinant in voluntary turnover. It can be hypothesised that desire to move (low job satisfaction) and ease of movement (perceived job alternatives) intensify turnover intention. Accordingly, the proposed conceptual framework suggests that perceived self-employment opportunities moderate the relationships with psychological contract violation, job dissatisfaction and turnover intention of employees.

Theoretically, this study will contribute to the turnover literature by explaining the moderating role of perceived self-employment opportunities in managing employees' intentions for turnover caused by violations in the psychological contract. The relationship between external work opportunities and turnover has not been adequately explained in the literature (Joseph et al., 2007; Ramlawati et al., 2021) and thereby this study intends to explore it. Exploring the potential role of perceived self-employment opportunities as the moderating factor will provide a better understanding of how organisations violating psychological contracts with their employees lead to turnover is consistently affected by the external environment. Secondly, the study responds to the calls of previous researchers for further investigation of psychological contract challenges in non-Western contexts (Antonaki and Trivellas, 2014; Arain et al., 2012; Biswas, 2016; Choi et al., 2014; Jamil et al., 2013). Even though existing literature explores the mediating effect of job dissatisfaction on psychological contract violation and turnover

intention, recent studies identify the importance of exploring this relationship with regard to Asian context. Retaining employees in an industry with ample work opportunities is an immense challenge for most of the organisations (Joseph, 2007). In this context, with increasing self-employment opportunities in the labour market, employees will heighten their turnover intentions that will make organisations lose valuable knowledge workers.

The remainder of this paper is divided into six sections. The ensuing section presents a literature review on the theoretical domains of the study, namely, turnover intention, psychological contract violation, job dissatisfaction and perceived self-employment opportunities. In the third section, hypotheses are formulated with respect to the proposed conceptual framework. The subsequent sections discuss the theoretical and managerial implications followed by the future research implications. Finally, the paper outlines a brief conclusion.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Turnover Intention

Turnover in research can be regarded as the voluntary and conscious departure of an employee from an organisation (Tett and Meyer, 1993) where turnover intention is more focused on circumstance where an employee speculates the possibility of quitting their employment in the near future before actually leaving (Mowday et al., 1982). Correspondingly, the study will operationalize turnover intention using an attitudinal measurement scale.

Antecedents of turnover intention

Chen et al. (2011) and Liu et al. (2012) show that whether one's job satisfaction is increasing or decreasing greatly enhances predictions of turnover intentions and behaviours over and beyond a static satisfaction measure. Besides satisfaction, commitment and job embeddedness (Bentein et al., 2005; Ng and Feldman, 2012), the momentum for a host of common (such as job involvement, absenteeism) or less common (such as justice perceptions, perceived organisational support), organisational justice and culture (Durairatnam, et al., 2019) antecedents might be studied. For instance, Hausknecht et al. (2011) found that "justice trajectories" predict quit intentions after controlling for current justice levels, suggesting that employees use past perceptions or experiences to forecast future workplace conditions. Inquiries into trajectories can meaningfully bolster understanding of turnover's etiology and consequences (Call et al., 2015).

Even though a plethora of exploration exists on actual turnover, organisations still feel challenged to determine the real causes for the purpose of reducing high propensity of employee turnover. Consequently, scholars conform with Mobley (1982) that studies on turnover intentions of employees will in turn help yielding accurate results that will produce a better understanding on the actual reasons behind turnover (Perryer et al., 2010). Nevertheless, employee attitude and behaviour before taking the decision to quit from their employment can depend on diverse amount of control variables. Accordingly, Udechukwu and Mujtaba (2007) suggest that the notion of employee turnover must be illuminated as a blend of economic, social, and psychological progressions. This further implies that, for the purpose of understanding an individual's intention to leave an employment, the principal factors, economic, social, and psychological factors, should be considered. Employees generally decide on quitting their occupations after going through a careful thought process. They do an assessment of the situation, weigh out distinctive options, look for available opportunities and ponder their own feelings. Research (Carley, 1992) identifies that an employee's decision to quit an occupation is the outcome of a comprehensive and elaborate process. Scholars (March and Simons, 1958) further claims that employees begin this process when their desires of job quitting are born and when they begin to feel that the movement is straightforward. Thus, employees' willingness to quit their occupation is predominantly synonymous with their turnover intention (Lee and Mitchell, 1994; Tett and Meyer, 1993). In extant IT turnover literature, no research has explored psychological contract violation as an antecedent to turnover (Moquin et al., 2019). Accordingly, this study is scoped to the organisational based antecedents, and the construct, namely, psychological contract violation as the independent variable that translate into heightening turnover intentions of employees.

2.2 Psychological Contract Violation

Employees develop an exchange relationship with their employers that goes beyond more formal contracts (Rousseau, 1995). Hence, psychological contract refers to the belief of the employee concerning the existence of an unwritten contract of mutual obligation in the employer-employee relationship that involves elements of trust, a sense of relationship and expectations concerning future benefits (Rousseau, 1989). A perceived breach causes an affective reaction, known as psychological contract violation, which leads to diminished effort and behavioural engagement (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Further, according to Morrison and Robinson's conceptualisation of Psychological Contract Violation is a primarily affective state where employees develop strong emotional responses to broken organisational promises. It is different from psychological contract breach, which only covers the cognitive awareness of employees of their employers' failures to meet obligations (Cassar and Briner, 2011; Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Such anticipated infringements of a psychological contract are consistent with Social Exchange Theory (Blau, 1964) and the norm of reciprocity (Gouldner, 1960), suggest that if employees perceive that their employer has not reciprocated their contributions, then employees may restore the social exchange balance by changing the level of their contributions to the organisation or considering leaving the organisation. This explanation by Gouldner (1960) has been widely adopted in recent empirical studies (Azeem et al, 2020; Zhang et al.,2024) to measure employees' perspective of psychological contract violation.

2.3 Job Dissatisfaction

Locke (1969) defines job dissatisfaction as the unpleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job as frustrating or blocking the attainment of one's job values or as entailing disvalues and asserts that it is a function of the perceived relationship between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives it as offering or entailing. Later, the definition was refined by many scholars (Farrell, 1983; Hirschman, 1970) where job dissatisfaction is referred to an employee's negative feelings toward both the working environment and the job itself. This definition implies that in the face of discrepancies between promised and received outcomes, feelings of imbalance may arise among employees and lead to job dissatisfaction (Newell and Dopson, 1996).

Moreover, when employees feel anger towards their organisation and a sense of betrayal, they likely believe that their daily work efforts are not appreciated and not considered important (Bao et al., 2011; Biswas, 2016; Durairatnam et al., 2020a). Such attributions likely generate negative emotions, including dissatisfaction with their job and a perception that the organisation is not trustworthy to build a career with (Chang, 2008; Frederiksen, 2017; Geddes and Callister, 2007; Terera and Ngirande, 2014). The current study explores this circumstance with regard to employees' level of job dissatisfaction.

2.4 Perceived Self-employment Opportunities

Organisational Equilibrium Theory, perhaps the most influential theory, presented by March and Simon (1958) argue that turnover occurs when individuals perceive that their contributions to an organisation exceed the inducements they receive from that organisation. This inducement-contribution balance is broadly influenced by two factors, namely, one's desire to move (which is generally a function of one's satisfaction with the work environment) and one's ease of movement (which is influenced by external factors that determine employability).

Perceived job alternative is defined as the perception of a person regarding the availability of external alternative jobs (Josephson et al., 2008). The consideration made in this study is mostly based on the concept of perceived effortlessness of movement from current job to self-employment. It must be noted that the other the alternative job (self-employment) is perceived to be outside of the organisation. Perceived availability refers to the how easy it is to move from one job to another job. In IT industry, where the abundant self-employment opportunities are available, the ease of movement according to March and Simon (1958) is high. Accordingly, perceived self-employment opportunities can be operationalized by deriving from the employees' perception about the jobs or job alternatives being available or attainable to them.

3. Hypothesis and Conceptual Framework

3.1 Psychological contract violation and employee turnover intentions

Psychological contract violation is a predominantly affective state where employees develop strong emotional responses to broken organisational promises. The existing literature highlights the significant negative impact of these perceived violations on employee attitudes and behaviours like turnover intentions (Arshad, 2016; He et al., 2023; Raja et al., 2004; Zhao et al., 2007).

Rooted in Social Exchange Theory, the theory of psychological contracts suggests that employee-employer relationships are based on the norms of exchange and reciprocity (Bordia et al., 2017; Gardner et al., 2021). When employees feel that their organisation has betrayed them and that their efforts are not reciprocated (Bal et al., 2013), they may interpret this as a lack of appreciation of their contributions, which enhances their intention to leave the organisation (Arshad, 2016; Bao et al., 2011; Biswas, 2016). Thus, employees first consider the option of quitting their job in the near future before leaving referred to as turnover intention (Mowday et al., 1982). Accordingly, it can be proposed that:

H1: Psychological contract violation is positively related to employee turnover intentions.

3.2 Psychological contract violation and job dissatisfaction

The concept of psychological contract violation has received burgeoning research attention, but its persistence and its threat to employees' mental wellbeing highlights the need for ongoing investigation, particularly of its negative outcomes (Arshad, 2016; Boles et al., 2012; Rai and Agarwal, 2018a). For example, the existing literature has highlighted the significant negative impact of perceived violations on various employee attitudes and behaviours like job dissatisfaction (Dupre and Day, 2007; Johnson and O'Leary-Kelly, 2003).

Literature (Azeem et al., 2020; Geddes and Callister, 2007; Sutton and Griffin, 2004;) argues that a positive relationship can exist between employees perceived psychological contract violation and their job dissatisfaction can be predicted by arguing that employees' feelings of organisational betrayal diminish their satisfaction with their current jobs.

H2: Psychological contract violation is positively related to job dissatisfaction of employees.

3.3 Job dissatisfaction and turnover intention

Moreover, when employees feel anger towards their organisation and a sense of betrayal, they likely believe that their daily work efforts are not appreciated and not considered important (Bao et al., 2011; Biswas, 2016). Such attributions likely generate negative emotions, including dissatisfaction with their job and a perception that the organisation is not trustworthy to build a career with (Chang, 2008; Frederiksen, 2017; Sutton and Griffin, 2004; Geddes and Callister, 2007; Terera and Ngirande, 2014).

Mobley's (1977) linkage model which has received substantial empirical support in the management literature (Horn et al., 1992), proposes a series of intermediate linkages between job satisfaction and turnover. Specifically, job dissatisfaction is proposed to trigger a series of withdrawal cognitions such as thoughts of quitting, job search utility evaluations, and job search intentions, that result in job search behaviours. When an alternative job is found and evaluated as more attractive than the current job, an individual develops an intention to quit and, consequently, leaves the organisation.

H3: Job dissatisfaction of employees is positively related to turnover intention.

3.4 Perceptions of job dissatisfaction on psychological contract violation and turnover intention

Employees experiencing psychological contract violation raise their turnover intentions because of a feeling of organisational betrayal which makes them dissatisfied and detached from their work (Azeem et al., 2020; He et al., 2023). Moreover, when employees feel anger towards their organisation and a sense of betrayal, they likely believe that their daily work efforts are not appreciated and not considered important (Bao et al., 2011; Biswas, 2016). Such attributions likely generate negative emotions, including dissatisfaction with their job and a perception that the organisation is not trustworthy to build a career with (Chang, 2008; Frederiksen, 2017; Geddes & Callister,

2007; Sutton and Griffin, 2004; Terera and Ngirande, 2014) leading to amplified turnover intentions (Owusu,2021; Sukarela, (2020)).

In countries where economic distress is common and employees feel that their employer has not kept promises, job dissatisfaction alone is not enough to explain heightened turnover intentions. Instead, job dissatisfaction induced by felt violations causes employees to lose interest in their work, which results in increased turnover intentions (Chrobot-Mason, 2003). In turnover literature context, studies reveal job satisfaction as significant mediator between employee behavior in organisations (Saifi and Shahzad, 2017). Accordingly, it can be proposed that:

H4: Job dissatisfaction mediates the relationship between psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention.

3.5 Perceptions of self-employment opportunities psychological contract violation and turnover intention

March and Simon (1958) have suggested that individual employees develop a benchmark based on their current position and experience of work and, utilise this benchmark as a comparison level upon which alternatives are evaluated. Based on the Organisational Equilibrium Theory (March and Simon, 1958), when the comparison does not meet expectations, the employees become dissatisfied leading to movement towards an alternate job. A high perceived alternative employment opportunity implies that the employee perceives more or better alternatives available externally. This raises the comparison level, and the employee becomes more susceptible to dissatisfaction, which may result in turnover intentions (Ramlawati et al., 2021). Salancik and Pfeffer (1978) also found that employees with more options express less satisfaction with their jobs. Thus, it follows logically that higher perceived alternative employment opportunities lead to higher turnover intention.

Actual turnover is strongly predicted by external factors like economic conditions and the associated availability of alternative job opportunities (Mano-Negrin and Tzafir, 2004). Amankwaa and Anku-Tsede (2015) examined the influence of transactional leadership behaviours on employees' turnover intention with the moderating effect of alternative job opportunity in the Ghanaian banking industry. Even though transactional leadership was found not to statistically mitigate employees' voluntary turnover intention, the availability of alternative job opportunities was found to moderate the transactional leadership-turnover intention nexus. Similarly, Amjad (2014) examined the relationship between organisational justice and employee job satisfaction and the extent of its moderation by perceived alternative job opportunities where the results demonstrated that perceived alternative job opportunities moderate the relationship between organisational justice and job satisfaction.

Other studies that have used perceived alternative job opportunities includes a study by Addae et al. (2008) revealing that perceived alternative employment moderated the association between continuance commitment and employee turnover. Drawing upon these findings of prior studies, it can be hypothesised that:

H5: Perceived self-employment opportunities mediate the relationship between job dissatisfaction and employee turnover intention.

H6: Perceived self-employment opportunities mediate the relationship between psychological contract violation and employee turnover intention.

3.6 Conceptual Framework

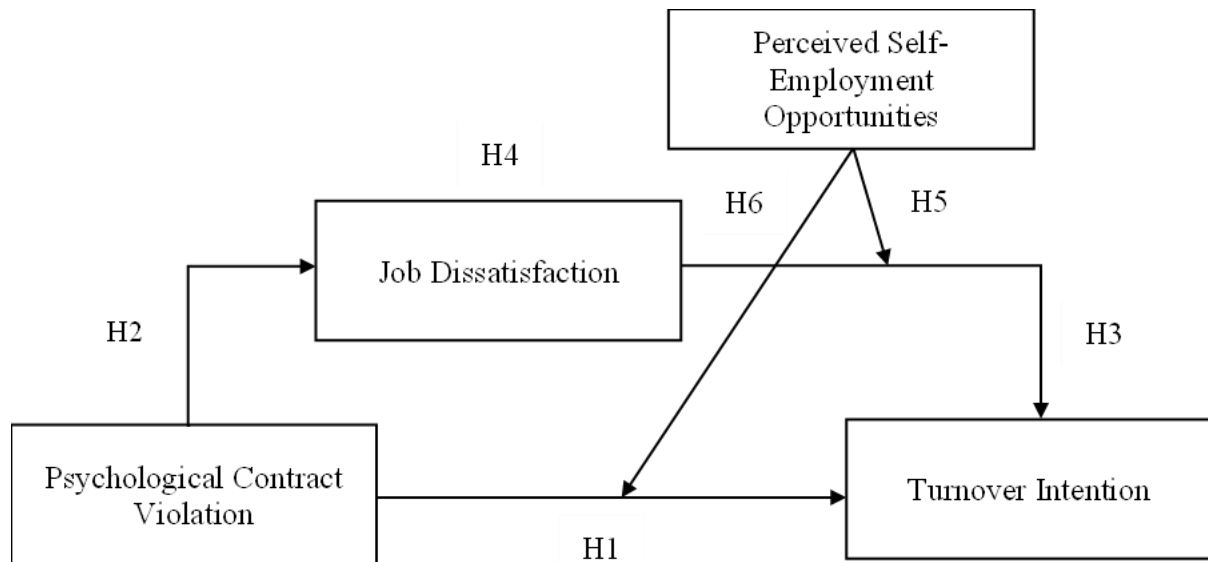


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

4. Theoretical Implications

An employee's awareness of a missed reciprocation or psychological contract violation signals a breakdown in the employee-employer relationship (Morrison and Robinson, 1997). Mutual obligations that constitute the IT worker's psychological contract may occur early in the employee-employer relationship (Kotter, 1973). However, it is not until a missed reciprocation occurs later in the employee's tenure that a crack in the relationship materialises. Individual breaches of the employee's psychological contract are not likely to occur simultaneously, suggesting that a damaged employee-employer relationship may prevail for some time prior to the final break that results in turnover. Hence, based on the Social Exchange Theory, turnover intention is likely to arise from an accumulation of psychological contract violations in which the relative magnitude of each may vary. A review of the literature reveals that although past studies have explored the outcomes of psychological contract violations, little attention has been paid to its effects on attitudes and behaviours of employees in IT industry. In the process, the present study contributes to the existing literature on turnover by providing more theoretical explanations for the employee attitude and behavioural factors affecting the intention to quit jobs.

Secondly, in addition to the above-mentioned employee attitude and behavioural factors, the literature suggests that there could be other external environmental factors that are associated with the turnover intentions of employees. Based on March and Simon's theory of organisational equilibrium, it can be expected that ease of movement formulated by perceived job alternatives is another factor contributing to the turnover intention of employees. The current research will enrich the theoretical and empirical literature in the IT sector, as perceived self-employment opportunities is relatively a new construct long overdue for attention from the IT industry (Joseph et al., 2007). The study will therefore be an attempt to direct the attention of turnover scholars toward this important phenomenon in the context of high employee turnover within this industry (Gannon, 2013; Gefen et al., 2015)

Finally, the conceptualisation related to turnover intention can be taken as a significant theoretical and research implication of this study. Literature (Joseph et al., 2007) argues that female IT professionals are more likely to perceive greater desire to move (that is higher job dissatisfaction) and lower ease of movement. The proposed conceptual model will not only explain how psychological contract violation is linked to employee turnover intentions, but also explores job dissatisfaction and perceived self-employment opportunities as an underlying mechanism in this phenomenon.

5. Managerial Implications

The financial cost of replacing a knowledge worker had been estimated to be more than a year's salary (Michaud, 2000). This is incurred in addition to the indirect loss to the organisations through loss of knowledge and organisational memory (Hansen et al., 1999), decreased productivity (Roth and Roth, 1995), lowered morale of existing staffs (Tziner and Birati, 1996) financial performance (Li et al., 2022), and customer dissatisfaction (Hansen et al., 1999). The findings of the study will suggest that organisational leaders, especially in the IT sectors, need to be mindful of the presence and negative effects of psychological contract violation. This study's new insights will be that turnover is not necessarily an immediate outcome of psychological contract violation, but manifests as a process, providing an opportunity for organisations to develop leadership's capacity to understand this temporal process and design appropriate interventions to deal with proximal symptoms of psychological contract violation before it translates into the distant outcome of employees exiting from the organisation.

Interventions in the aftermath of psychological contract violation, such as open communication, compassion and personal relationships, will not only mitigate its negative repercussions for employee attitudes but also help managers to reduce turnover behaviours (Kutaula et al., 2019; Peng et al., 2016). In Asia's predominantly collectivist societies, the psychological contract's formation and interpretation is greatly influenced by relational ties and peer feedback (Kutaula et al., 2019), so organisations should ensure strong ties and compassionate formal and informal relationships with employees which give them a feeling of belonging and being part of an extended family (Agarwala et al., 2014; Budhwar et al., 2016; Cooke et al., 2018; Shahzad and Muller, 2016).

Review and exit interviews could be beneficial to help organisations understand the reasons behind employees' intentions to stay or to leave (Kutaula et al., 2019) and which expectations the organisation has been able to meet. The literature indicates that the feelings in psychological contract violations can be reduced or managed through effective communication, because organisations can influence employee evaluations and interpretations of their actions and policies (Coyle-Shapiro and Kessler, 2000; Guest and Conway, 2002). It is also important to regulate promises that are communicated to employees because sometimes organisations, intentionally or unintentionally, make false or exaggerated promises during the recruitment process or in the allocation of targets and rewards, which later leads to a feeling of betrayal when the organisation does not deliver accordingly (Deery et al., 2006).

Finally, the study on effect of perceived self-employment opportunities will further point out that in order to retain their valuable employees, organisations may have to adopt more innovative, non-traditional and integrated solutions like flexible working arrangements which are inherently more difficult to implement than direct pay adjustments. Study further highlights that it is also critical for human resource departments to be aware of implications of labour conditions and industry benchmarks so that compensation packages can be managed equitably and competitively and be able to manage the dynamic staffing needs of the organisations.

6. Reflections on further research

The study does not identify the antecedents of psychological contract violations, so it is not possible to determine if the mechanism of the relationship between psychological contract violations and turnover intention identified in this study applies to all stimuli or situations. The literature indicates that employees' reactions to PCV differ with the nature and type of violation (Turnley and Feldman, 2000). Future studies could include investigation of organisational and individual-level antecedents to identify the differential explanatory power of different stimuli.

There is a possibility that employees may experience different levels of violation, and also its adverse effects, based on their tenure. Extant research has confirmed that employees with long tenures contain little intentions to leave because of their feelings of commitment to stay in the organisation (Bal et al., 2013). Future studies could use the proposed research model while also differentiating between employees based on job tenure, expecting that longer tenured employees may have less intense reactions to perceived violations.

Moreover, future studies could also usefully extend the research by examining other adverse behavioural and attitudinal outcomes resulting from psychological contract violations, especially in the context of developing countries. As suggested in previous research (Jahanzeb and Fatima, 2017), employees have different mechanisms for coping with unfavourable circumstances in different cultures. Furthermore, considering the importance of employee job dissatisfaction, it may be fruitful to study the mechanisms that influence job dissatisfaction due to psychological contract violations.

7. Conclusion

The aim of this study is to contribute to the existing knowledge regarding the antecedents of turnover by providing a better theorization of both employee attitude and behavioural factors and external environmental factors affecting turnover intention of knowledge workers in developing countries. In summary, the conceptualisation of the study on how psychological contract violation influences the turnover intentions of IT sector professionals is explained by considering the mediation and moderation by job dissatisfaction and perceived self-employment opportunities respectively. Consequently, this research will demonstrate significant empirical implications such as explaining the influence of job dissatisfaction and perceived self-employment opportunities on turnover intention, as well as highlighting such managerial implications as the importance of having fair and effective career growth opportunities and incentive schemes in the organisations as remedial measures implemented in order to mitigate turnover of employees. Finally, this research will further open up directions for future research to examine other adverse behavioural and attitudinal outcomes resulting from psychological contract violations.

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