



PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT BREACH AND EMPLOYEE INTENTION TO LEAVE: DOES JUSTICE PERCEPTION STEM THE TIDE?

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Abstract: Drawing insights from organisational justice literature, perceived fairness of outcomes received by employees in an organisational setting might enhance positive attitudinal outcomes and prevent counter-productive behaviours. The question is would justice perception stem the tide of outcomes generated as a result of psychological contract breach? This study answered the question by employing descriptive and explanatory research designs, and then investigated the effect of psychological contract breach on employee intention to leave with a view to establishing the moderating effect of justice perception in a University setting in Nigeria. This study identified, through descriptive analysis performed on data collected from 93 respondents, the existence of psychological contract breach and perceived intention to leave among staffers in a University setting in Nigeria. The hypothesised relationships were, thereafter, tested using regression statistics, and it was found that psychological contract breach had significant effect on employee intention to leave. Furthermore, the study also found insignificant moderating effect of perceived justice on the relationship between psychological contract breach and employee intention to leave. The study concluded that perception of fairness as a construct to stem the effect of negative organisational events on employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes varies across contexts. The practical and policy implications of the findings were discussed in the study

Keywords: *psychological contract breach, intention to leave, justice perception, Nigeria.*

Introduction

Abound in existing studies are inconsistent evidences resulting from empirical investigation of the relationship between psychological contract breach (PCB) and employee-related outcomes. While a plethora of studies registered evidence of significant effect of PCB on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Azeem, *et al.*, 2020; Al-Abrow, *et al.*, 2019; Balogun, *et al.*, 2018), however, evidence of insignificant effect of PCB on employee-organisational outcomes relationship has been documented in other existing empirical studies (Abdalla, *et al.*, 2021; Suarthana & Riana, 2016; Zhao, *et al.*, 2007). The inconsistency of findings in PCB and employee-organisational outcomes relationship investigation is therefore an indication of call for scholarly attention to additional PCB-outcome investigation across contexts.

Furthermore, a theoretical insight from Social Exchange Theory (SET) offers understanding of employee-employer relationship in line with the norms of reciprocity (Blau, 1968; Gouldner, 1960), and thus provides a ground that buoys the perception that

unfavourable employee or organisational outcomes might be generated when there is perception of psychological contract breach or violation (Harrington & Lee, 2015; Biswas, *et al.*, 2012). However, a position has been canvassed in literature that despite violation or breach of psychological contract agreement, positive employee and organisational outcomes might still be generated provided there is perception of fairness of outcomes received in an organisational context (Siegel, *et al.*, 2005; Kickul, *et al.*, 2001). This position, therefore, demands for scholarly empirical investigation in Nigeria where empirical studies on PCB-attitudinal

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and behavioural outcomes relationships have received less-scholarly attention.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Literature Review

2.1.1 Social Exchange Theory

Social exchange theory (SET) is a theoretical framework put forward to explain social exchange relationship between two parties in a given situation (Homans, 1958; Blau, 1964). The social exchange relationship, therefore, arises because the interactions and actions between the parties involved in a relationship are mutually inclusive. Existing studies have, therefore, borrowed from the theoretical lens of SET perspective to underpin the effect of reciprocal actions in employment relationship (Owoeye, *et al*, 2020; Nosiri & Njemanze, 2017). As remarked by Umar and Ringim (2015), an employee perception of unfulfilled obligations on the part of employer may create feeling of imbalance, and therefore such an employee may resort to reducing the imbalance by way of negative attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. In a similar vein, Li and Chen (2018), having drawn insight from SET, argued that the perception of psychological contract breach by employees may generate counter-productive behaviour in workplace setting.

Furthermore, when there is perception of psychological contract fulfilment, existing studies, drawing insights from SET framework, argued that employees may reciprocate the fulfilment in terms of positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such as employee intention to stay, organisational commitment, employee engagement, organisational citizen behaviours (OCBs), and among others (Mmamel *et al.*, 2021; Ernest, 2020; Raj, 2020; Amasi, 2017). Therefore, SET provides a ground for comprehending employer-employee relationship in terms of reciprocal social exchange transactions.

2.1.2 Equity Theory

Equity theory, developed by Stacy Adams in 1965, is a theory of motivation that emphasises on the people's perception of fairness and equality between investments and rewards or benefits based on social comparisons. The insight from equity theory provided illustration that

inequity or unfairness will arise in the workplace setting if there is perception of imbalance between the investments and benefits received by employees in comparisons with what others contributed (investments) and received (benefits) in the organisations.

Therefore, a chunk of existing studies has leaned on the theoretical lens of equity theory to explain the consequences of what perception of fairness and unfairness could generate in an organisational setting. Cao, *et al.* (2020) hinged on the theoretical lens of equity theory and investigated the link connecting organisational justice, work engagement, and nurse's perception of care quality on turnover intention. In the study of Emeji (2018), the theoretical framework of equity theory was employed to ground the relationship between organisational justice and turnover intention in a workplace setting. As posited by Calecas (2019), drawing insight from equity theory, perception of fairness will induce job satisfaction, employee engagement, and reduce turnover intention among employees in an organisational setting. In a similar vein, Yurtkoru and Ensari (2018) argued from the perspective of equity theory that the perception of balance in the ethical climates operating in an organisation might in turn reduce employee intention to leave. Therefore, equity theory is an important theory of motivation that offers explanation on the understanding of the causes and consequences of perception of fairness in workplace setting.

2.2 Conceptual and Empirical Literature Review

2.2.1 Psychological contract Breach

Psychological contract is different from formal employment contract or explicit agreement; rather it is perceptual and largely hinges on the perception of parties in employer-employee relationship on reciprocal expectations and obligations (Botha & Moalusi, 2010). As posited by Agarwal (2011), psychological contract entails the beliefs regarding the terms and conditions governing reciprocal exchange agreement between two parties. In the employer-employee relationship, psychological contract refers to the beliefs or perception of what employee expects to receive from and is obliged



to provide for the employer (Botha & Moalusi, 2010). Boxtel (2011) argued that psychological contract is a subjective contract and it is all about the beliefs and promises made between the employers and their employees. Psychological contract is therefore based on the perception that any contribution in employer-employee relationship is governed by the norm of reciprocity.

Employees' perceptions and beliefs that their employers have kept to the terms and conditions in a reciprocal exchange agreement indicate a psychological contract fulfilment; otherwise it is amounted to psychological contract breaches or violations. Suartha and Riana (2016) averred that failure of employers to fulfil the promises or obligations implied by employees constitutes psychological contract breach. As posited by Iyayi and Obeki (2018), psychological contract breach occurs when employees perceived gaps in promises made by the employers and what they have actually received in their organisations. Employees may therefore reciprocate psychological contract breach in form of exhibiting negative attitudinal outcomes and counterproductive work behaviours (Balogun, *et al.*, 2018; Gabriel, 2017; Umar & Ringim, 2015).

In the quest to justify the effect of psychological breach on various organisational outcomes, a handful of studies have been investigated and evidences documented in literature. Sandhya and Sulphrey (2020) found positive relationship between psychological contract breach, work engagement and turnover intention in IT industry. In a similar vein, Sheehan, *et al.* (2019) found that the fulfilment of psychological contract negatively related to intention to leave in the nursing profession. The evidence of positive relationship in the aforementioned studies supported findings in previous studies that under-fulfilment of psychological contract generated positive effect on voluntary turnover and intention to leave (Clinton & Guest, 2014; Paille & Dufour, 2013; Van der Vaart, *et al.*, 2013), and also negative effect on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes such work engagement, psychological climate, employee

commitment, and other extra-role behaviours (Hartmann & Rutherford, 2015; Rayton & Yalabik, 2014).

However, there are contrary documented evidences of insignificant findings of PCB-employee outcomes relationship in literature. In the study of Suartha and Riana (2016), psychological contract breach was found with no significant effect on employee intention to leave. The evidence of insignificant effect was in consonance with findings in previous studies that no significant relationship existed between psychological contract and turnover behaviours (Zhao, *et al.*, 2007). The findings of insignificant effect corroborated claims in previous studies that a positive relationship between psychological contract breach and favourable employee and organisational outcomes could still be enhanced provided employees perceive fairness in outcomes received in their organisations (Siegel, *et al.*, 2005; Kickul, *et al.*, 2001).

2.2.2 Justice Perception

Justice perception is often operationalised in literature as perception of fairness or perceived organisational justice (Estreder, *et al.*, 2020). Justice perception, based on its conceptualisation, refers to employees' perception of fairness of outcomes and allocation of resources received, procedures determining the outcomes and allocation of resources received, and the quality of social relationship in workplace (Estreder, *et al.*, 2020; Rosenbaum & McCarty, 2017). Justice perception is often explained based on its three major components- distributive, procedural, and interactional. Distributive justice refers to fairness of distribution of outcome and allocation of resources received by employees in an organisational setting, while the explanation of justice in terms of the procedures that determined allocation of resources and outcomes received by employees is termed procedural justices, and the justice perception in terms of quality of social relationship in work setting has been conceptualised in terms of interactional justice (Owoeye, *et al.*, 2020; Nimmo, 2018; Chih, *et al.*, 2017).

The components of organisational justice-distributive, procedural, and interactional have been conceptualised in literature as a composite measure of what employees



perceived as fairness in terms of outcomes received. Therefore, employees' perception of fairness of outcomes received and procedures determining decision making relating to distribution of outcomes might enhance positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. As evidenced in existing studies, justice perception served as an antecedent of favourable outcomes at both employees and organisational levels. The evidence of positive relationship between justice perception and employee attitudinal outcomes such as employee engagement was documented in Ohiorojo and Eguavoen's (2019) study. In addition, Chih, *et al.* (2017), found high level of justice perception to have influenced positive behavioural intentions in an organisational setting. In a similar vein, Kim's, *et al.* (2017) study found that the relationship between psychological contract congruence and commitment was moderated by perceived distributive justice.

Furthermore, perception of fairness (justice) could also function to stem the effect of negative organisational events on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes at both employee and organisational levels (Siegel, *et al.*, 2005). As averred by Virgolino, *et al.* (2017), adverse reactions to violations of psychological contract could be mitigated or reduced by perceived organisational justice. This means even when there is psychological contract breach; employees still perceive themselves as important organisational members and they might likely exhibit positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Virgolino, *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, there is need for scholarly attention to be paid to how perception of fairness can serve to moderate the relationship between PSB and employee outcome such as intention to leave.

2.2.3 Intention to Leave

Intention to leave, otherwise operationalised as turnover intention, is conceptualised in literature as willingness of an employee to leave or quit his/her job for any job opportunity in the near future (Fasanmi, 2018). Intention to leave, as interchangeably used as turnover intention, refers to a subjective tendency on the part of employees to quit their jobs at a certain period of time, and such intention may be to voluntarily leave the organisation

(Umar & Ringim, 2015). As posited by Malik and Khalid (2016), intention to leave refers to the degree or extent to which an employee plans to quit job, and at times, such plan is conscious, tenacious, and intentional wilfulness to leave the organisation. A lot of organisational events have been identified as catalysts of intention to leave in an organisational setting. Uchenna (2015) posited that non-fulfilment of unwritten expectations and promises (psychological contract) by employers to the employees may trigger unfavourably attitudinal outcome such as employee intention to leave the organisations. Therefore, employee intention to leave or turnover intention has come under investigation as an outcome to various organisational events including human resource management practices, psychological contracts, internal corporate social responsibilities, work engagement, and among others (Arasli, *et al.*, 2019; Malik & Khalid, 2016; Nwokocha, 2015).

3. Hypotheses Development and Conceptual Framework

Psychological contract is a subjective agreement and it indicates the belief or perception of what employee is expected to receive from and obliged to do for the employer (Boxtel, 2011; Botha & Moalusi, 2010). Therefore, when employee observed that the terms and conditions governing psychological contracts have been kept by the employer, there is perception of psychological contract fulfilment, and however a psychological contract breach has occurred when employee perceived that the psychological contract agreement has not been kept by the employer (Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2020; Balogun, *et al.*, 2018). While existing studies have documented evidence of positive effect of psychological contract fulfilment on positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Azeem, *et al.*, 2021; Sandhya & Sulphrey, 2020; Sheehan, *et al.*, 2019), however, findings from existing studies on the effect of PSB on employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes have generated inconsistent results. A set of studies provided evidence that PSB had a significant effect of negative employee attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Hartmann & Rutherford, 2015; Clinton & Guest, 2014),

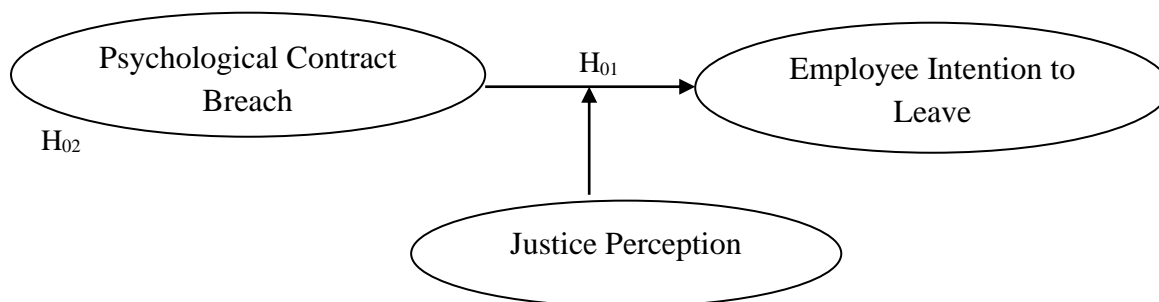


while other handful of studies documented evidence of insignificant effect of PSB on negative attitudinal and behavioural outcomes at employee and organisational level (Abdalla, *et al.*, 2021; Suarthana & Riana, 2016; Zhao, *et al.*, 2007). Therefore, the inconsistency of findings of PSB-attitudinal and behavioural outcomes relationship calls the need for scholarly empirical enquiry. Therefore, drawing from the theoretical lens of SET that reciprocal actions will define performance of obligations between the parties in employment relationship, and coupled with inconsistent of findings and dearth of recent empirical studies on PSB-employee attitudinal outcome in Nigerian context, this study thus hypothesised that:

H₀₁: Psychological contract breach has no significant effect on employee intention to leave in a University setting in Nigeria

Equity theory of motivation provided a theoretical framework that buoys understanding that perception of fairness of contribution-reward received by employee on the basis of social comparisons will stimulate motivation at workplace (Adams, 1965). Existing studies have, therefore, drawn insights from equity theory to buffer explanations that a perception of justice or fairness by employee in an organisational setting may help in mitigating the effect of unfavourable organisational events on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Uchenna, 2015; Siegel, *et al.*, 2005). For instance,

Figure 1. Conceptual Framework



4. Methodology

4.1 Research Design, Participants, and Procedures

Virgolino, *et al.* (2017) observed that adverse reactions to psychological contract violation could be stemmed or mitigated by perception of justice among employees in an organisational setting. Therefore, a need for scholarly enquiry is expedient in Nigerian context where dearth of existing studies is observed on the influence of justice perception in PSB-employee attitudinal relationship. Drawing from theoretical lens of Equity theory and existing studies averring that contrary to the psychological contract breach, justice perception could make employee to feel as an important organisational member, this study therefore hypothesised that:

H₀₂: Justice perception has no moderating effect on the relationship between psychological contract breach and employee intention to leave in a University setting in Nigeria.

From the foregoing explanation, the framework of this study (as presented in Figure 1) was designed as conceptual model guiding the web of relationships among the constructs of PSB, justice perception, and intention to leave as investigated in this study. As shown in Figure 1, PSB was investigated as the independent variable and the intention to leave is dependent variable. The construct of justice perception is investigated as a moderating variable to establish the strength of the relationship between PSB and intention to leave relationship.

This study adopted both descriptive and explanatory research designs. As it applies to existing research studies, descriptive research design is employed for the



purpose of describing the attributes of survey data, while explanatory design enables statistical analysis to be carried so as to establish the relationship between the constructs under investigation (Owoeye, *et al.*, 2020; Muli, 2014). Therefore, with the descriptive research design, the biographic profile of the study participants and the characteristics of survey data in respect to responses to the items of instrument were discussed. The study focused on 153 participants who were randomly selected from both teaching and non-teaching staff in a University setting in South West, Nigeria. An Online Survey Questionnaire (Google Form) was an instrument of data collection, and it was designed and sent electronically (e-mail, Gmail, WhatsApp) to all the selected participants, and 93 responses constituting 61% of the total participants were harvested. The responses harvested were screened, sorted, and arranged as data thereafter subjected to both descriptive and inferential analysis.

4.2 Measures

Psychological contract breach was measured with 5-item adapted from a PSB scale developed by Robinson and Morrison (2000). However, the items were modified from its negative form to positive version so as to determine the reality of PSB under investigation. Sample items included, ‘I have received everything promised to

me in exchange for my contributions’ and ‘almost all the promises made by my employer during recruitment have been kept so far’. Justice perception was measured using a modified version of 9-item adapted from Justice Scale developed by Moorman (1991). Sample items included, ‘Fairly rewarded for job well done may influence my stay in my institution’ and ‘Fairness of the procedures that determine the outcomes i received may induce my stay in my institution’. Intention to leave was measured using 3-item adapted from Raj (2020). Sample item included, ‘I never consider leaving my institution’. All items measuring the constructs used in this study were measured on 5-point Likert’s scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

4.3 Data Analysis

4.3.1 Reliability Analysis of Research Instrument

The research items measuring the constructs of this study were subjected to reliability analysis and Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient was used to determine whether those items are internally consistent or not. As remarked by Fashina, *et al.* (2020), a Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient greater than or equal to .5 ($\alpha \geq 0.5$) is considered satisfactory and indicates that items of instrument are reliable, and therefore alpha coefficient of 0.5 was set as a benchmark in this study. The results of the reliability analysis are thus presented in Table 1.

Table1. Results of Reliability Analysis

Construct	Number of Items	Alpha Coefficient	Remark
Psychological Contract Breach	5	.986	Reliable
Justice Perception	9	.974	Reliable
Intention to Leave	3	.586	Reliable

Source: Field Report, 2022

As shown in Table 1, Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for PSB, justice perception, and intention to leave stood at .986, .974, and, 568 respectively. These coefficients exceeded the benchmark set in this study, and therefore it was concluded that the items are reliable and internally consistent. The results of the reliability analysis obtained in this study are a further affirmation of internal consistency of instrument of the items measuring PSB, justice perception, and intention to leave across studies.

4.3.2 Descriptive Analysis

Data collected in this study were subjected to descriptive analysis. The descriptive analysis performed on the data covered two aspects: analysis of demographic profiles of the respondents and analysis of survey responses to the study constructs. The demographic profiles of the respondents were addressed with variables such as age, gender, status, and work experience. Percentage was used as a descriptive parameter for describing the information about the profiles of the respondents, and the results are presented in Table 2.



Table 2: Analysis of Demographic Profiles of Respondents

Age		
Item	Frequency	Percent
20-30yrs	4	4.3
31-40 yrs	37	39.8
41-50 yrs	46	49.5
51 yrs and above	6	6.5
Total	93	100.0
Gender		
	Frequency	Percent
Female	15	16.1
Male	78	83.9
Total	93	100.0
Status		
	Frequency	Percent
Non-Teaching Staff	25	26.9
Teaching Staff	68	73.1
Total	93	100.0
Work Experience		
	Frequency	Percent
1-10 yrs	58	62.4
11-20 yrs	31	33.3
21-30 yrs	4	4.3
Total	93	100

Source: Field Report, 2022

As shown in Table 2, age distribution indicates that respondents within the age bracket of 41-50 years constituted the majority with 49.5 percent, followed by respondents within the age bracket of 31-40 years constituting 39.8 percent, respondents above 50 years constituted 6.5 percent, and respondents within the age bracket of 20-30 years constituting 4.3 percent of the total participants in this study. In terms of gender distribution, male respondents constituted the majority with 83.9 percent, and the female respondents constituted 16.1 percent of the total participants. The distribution of the respondents in terms of status revealed that the teaching staff constituted the majority of the participant while the non-teaching staff category constituted 26.9 percent. In terms of work experience of

the participants, respondents who had spent 1-10 years constituted the majority with 62.4 percent followed by respondents who have had 10-20 years of work experience constituting 33.3 percent, and respondents with 21-30 years of work experience constituting 4.3 percent. The results from the descriptive analysis of the demographic profile of respondents indicated that the respondents had the attributes needed to adequately comprehend and respond to the items measuring the investigated constructs in this study.

The constructs investigated in this study were PSB, justice perception, and employee intention to leave respectively. Questionnaire sent to the respondents contained items measured on 5-point Likert's scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1 =



strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). Data collected were descriptively analysed and descriptive

parameters such as mean and standard deviation were used to interpret the results of the analysis. The results of the analysis are therefore presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Results of the Descriptive Analysis on Survey Responses

S/N	Construct	Mean	Standard Deviation
1	Psychological Contract Breach	2.4387	1.1436
2	Justice Perception	3.6047	1.2085
3	Intention to leave	3.2150	1.1694

Source: Field Report, 2022

The items measuring PSB were adapted and thereafter constructed in a positive form different from its initial negative construction. The essence of the positive construction is to actually determine the reality of PSB in the domain of investigation. As shown in Table 3, the aggregate mean score of items measuring PSB stood at 2.8387 and aggregate standard deviation score stood at 1.1436 respectively. The aggregate mean score, in line with the Likert's scale adopted in this study, indicates that majority of the respondents were in disagreement with items measuring the fulfillment of psychological contract. Therefore, the means score of 2 (disagree) indicates the element of PSB in the domain of investigation. The standard deviation score of 1 is an indication of moderate clustering which therefore portends large number of responses tilted towards disagreement based on the scale adopted in this study. The aggregate mean and standard deviation scores for justice perception stood at 3.6047 and 1.2085 respectively. The aggregate mean score, based on the scale adopted in this study, indicates agreement on the part of the respondents to the items measuring justice perception. The standard deviation score of 1 is also an

indication of low variability of responses. The aggregate mean and standard deviation scores for intention to leave stood at 3.2150 and 1.1694 respectively. The aggregate mean score of 3.2150, based on the 5-point scale adopted, is an indication of neither agreement nor disagreement on the responses to items measuring employee turnover (intention to leave). The standard deviation score of 1 is an indication of low variability of responses among the respondents.

4.3.3 Test of Hypotheses

There were two hypotheses stated in null form in this study: first, it was formulated that PSB had no significant effect on intention to stay, and second, justice perception had no significant moderating effect on the relationship between PSB and intention to stay. Regression analysis was employed to test the two hypotheses formulated, and the decision to reject or accept the null hypothesis was based on 0.05 level of significance. Simple linear regression model was run on the data collected where intention to leave (dependent variable) was regressed against PSB (independent variable). The results of the analysis are presented in Table 4.



Table 4: Results of Regression Analysis

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	6.697	.780		8.587	.000
	Psycontract	.208	.052	.386	3.990	.000
R = .386 R ² = .149 Adj R ² = .140 F-value = 15.919; p = .000 (p < 0.05)						

Source: Field Report, 2022

As indicated in Table 4, evidence of correlation was found between PSB and intention to leave ($R = 0.386$), and the coefficient of determination (R^2) with a value of 0.149 indicates 14.9% variation in intention to leave was explained by PSB. In addition, the fit between the regression model and data collected was ascertained via the evidence of significant coefficient of F-value (F-value = 15.919; $p = 0.000$). With these significant values, it can be concluded that PSB predicted employee intention to leave. Furthermore, the hypothesis of no significant effect of PSB on intention to leave (H_{01}) was tested at 0.05 level of significance, and statistically significant results were revealed ($\beta = .208$; $t = 3.990$; $p = 0.000$). Hence, the earlier null hypothesis was not supported, and the study concluded that PSB had a significant effect on employee intention to leave in an organization. In addition, the results also revealed that a unit increase in PSB contributed to .208 positive increase in employee intention to leave their organization.

The study also investigated the moderating effect of justice perception on the relationship between PSB and intention to leave. Therefore, a null hypothesis was formulated that justice perception had no significant effect on the relationship between PSB and intention to leave. To test this hypothesis, two model specifications, in line with regression equation models for testing moderation effect as proposed by Baron and Kenny (1982) were constructed. In the first model, intention to leave was regressed against PSB and justice perception, and in the second model intention to leave was regressed against PSB, justice perception, and interactional term (PSB*justice perception). According to Baron and Kenny (1982), a change in the significant value of coefficient of determination, or statistically significant value of hypothesis test ($p < 0.05$), when an interactional term is run in regression analysis, confirms the existence of moderation effect. The results of the regression analyses performed to determine moderation effect were presented in Table 5.



Table 4: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis for Moderating Effect

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	4.955	.870		5.693	.000
	Psycontract	.072	.061	.133	1.170	.245
	Justice Perception	.085	.023	.419	3.690	.000
2	(Constant)	1.561	2.556		.611	.543
	PSB	.366	.217	.680	1.684	.096
	Justice Perception	.161	.059	.797	2.742	.007
	Interactional term (PSB*Justice perception)	-.006	.004	-.841	-1.411	.162

R1 = .511, R2 = .526
R²1 = 261, R²2 = 277
R² Change:
Model 2 = .016, p = .162 (p > 0.05)

Source: Field Report, 2022

As shown in Table 4, the value of R² change in model 2 stood at .016 and the p-value stood at .162. The null hypothesis testing of moderating effect also revealed insignificant results (t = -1.411, p = .162). Though, there was a change in the value of R², p-value was not significant. Therefore, the hypothesis of no significant effect of justice perception on the relationship between PSB and intention to leave was supported. It can therefore be concluded in this study that justice perception does not moderate the relationship between PSB and intention to leave.

5. Discussion

Existing studies had generated mixed findings from the investigation of the effect of PSB on outcomes at both employee and organisational level, and in addition, studies on the effect of justice (fairness) perception on PSB-employee outcomes relationship have received less scholarly attention. This study therefore investigated the effect of PSB on employee intention to leave with a view to determining the moderating effect of justice perception in a University setting in Nigerian context characterised with anecdotal PSB-attitudinal outcome studies. Like other existing studies that found

evidence of significant effect of PSB on negative attitudinal and behavioural outcomes (Azeem, *et al.*, 2020; Al-Abrow, *et al.*, 2019; Balogun, *et al.*, 2018), this study found evidence of significant effect of PSB on employee intention to leave in a University setting in Nigeria. Though some previous studies documented insignificant evidence of PSB on employee outcomes mostly in high-income economies (Abdalla, *et al.*, 2021; Suarhana & Riana, 2016; Zhao, *et al.*, 2007), in the context of low-income economies such as Nigeria, a breach of psychological contract would generate negative attitudinal and behavioural outcomes.

In addition, it was also argued in some existing studies that perception of fairness (justice) functioned to stem or mitigate the negative effect on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. That is, when an employee perceived justice in an organisational setting, irrespective of PSB, a positive outcome could still be generated (Virgolino, *et al.* 2017; Siegel, *et al.* 2005). Findings from this study revealed evidence of insignificant effect of justice perception on the relationship between PSB and employee intention to leave. Therefore, the findings of insignificant effect of



justice perception in the relationship between PSB and employee intention to leave in a University setting in Nigerian context is a departure from contexts where perception of justice could stem the negative effect of violation of agreement in employment relationship on outcomes at both employee and organisational levels.

6. Conclusion

A university setting, based on the review of literature in this study, is a less-researched unit in the context of low-income economies in respect to PSB and its effect on attitudinal and behavioural outcomes. Therefore, an important population gap has been filled in this study. This study contributes to the PSB and outcomes literature by the evidence of significant effect of PSB on employee intention to leave in a university setting in Nigeria. The findings of this study supported previous empirical results that attributed negative outcomes to the perception of PSB in an organisational setting. The study also found insignificant moderating effect of justice perception on the relationship between PSB and intention to leave in a university in Nigeria. Therefore, the findings did not support the position canvassed in literature that a favourable outcome could still be attained despite violation of both implied and explicit agreements if there were perception of fairness in employment relationship.

Human capital elements in the higher institutions of learning are one of the essential resources needed for achieving national development. The national development can therefore be attained by the chunk of manpower churned out in the higher institution of learning such as a university. The expectations of the personnel that are central to achieving this process of national development need to be respected and fulfilled by the necessary employers. Therefore, employers must ensure that employees are fairly treated in terms of respecting and honouring the terms and conditions governing both explicit and implied contractual agreement as this will serve as a basis for encouraging and enhancing positive attitudinal and behavioural outcomes.

Like other studies, this study has some limitations that call the need for further scholarly enquiries. In the first place, this study was carried out in a university in South western part of Nigeria and therefore its findings may lack generalisation across the other regions of the country because of different cultural characteristics. Future research studies can therefore front empirical studies by factoring into consideration the role that culture plays in the investigation of the relationship between PSB and employees' attitudinal and behavioural outcomes so to enhance generalisation of findings. Furthermore, this study, like other empirical studies, concentrated on aspect of the obligations of the employers to the employees at the expense of employees to employers. It is therefore suggested that future research studies should front empirical investigation to identify the resultant outcomes if employees' obligations to the terms and conditions characterising implied agreements are not fulfilled.

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